

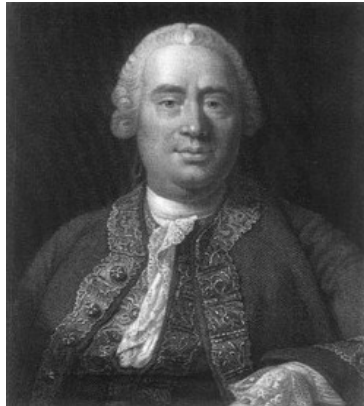
MODERN PHILOSOPHY: DESCARTES, LEIBNIZ, HUME, KANT

Dr. Carl Sachs, csachs@unt.edu
Tu-Th 9:30-10:50
Wooten 221

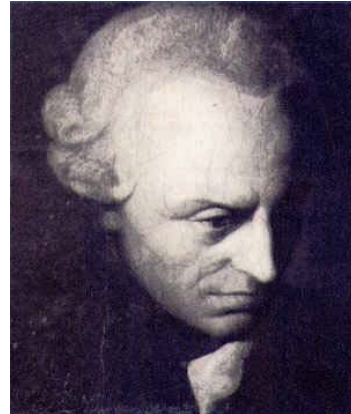
MW 1-2
940-565-2256
ENV 320-F



Rene Descartes, 1596-1650



David Hume, 1711 - 1776



Immanuel Kant, 1724-1804

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A study of four of the most important philosophers of the “modern” period: Descartes, Leibniz, Hume, and Kant. Emphasis will be on contributions to “theoretical philosophy”: the nature of human knowledge, what can and cannot be known, and the interdependence of epistemology with metaphysics, theology, and science. Some attention will be given to the implications of theoretical philosophy for practical philosophy (ethics and politics).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The goal of this course is twofold:

Firstly, it will familiarize students with the primary problems, concepts, and thinkers associated with “modern” philosophy, beginning with Rene Descartes (1596-1650) and ending with Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). The philosophers of this period developed intricate and fascinating systems about the nature of “substance,” “causation,” and “mind.” We will use these notions to navigate through the philosophers of the early modern period.

Secondly, it will help students to develop the skills necessary to conduct scholarly research and writing in philosophy and in related humanities disciplines. This is writing- and research-intensive course designed for philosophy majors and minors. The goal of the research and writing portion of the class is enable students to situate

themselves as writers and researchers with respect to primary texts and secondary scholarship.

TEXTS:

- 1) Descartes, Rene. *Meditations, Objections, and Replies*. Edited and translated Ariew and Cress. Hackett Publishing, 2006.
- 2) Leibniz, G.W. *Philosophical Texts*. Trans. and ed. Woolhouse and Francks
- 3) Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Edited Eric Steinberg. Hackett Publishing, 1993.
- 3) Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Edited and translated Guyer and Wood. Cambridge, 1999.

COURSE POLICIES:

- 1) *Attendance*: There is no formal attendance policy in this class. However, there is a class participation component of the grade, and you will find that participation without attendance is exceedingly difficult. You will not be able to get a B or higher in the class without regular attendance.
- 2) *Plagiarism/Cheating*: No form will be tolerated. This includes copying in part or in whole the work of another, copying anything off the Internet without proper citation, or any instance of using the ideas of others without proper acknowledgement. If you are found guilty of plagiarism, you will receive an "F" for the course and be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Furthermore, you are responsible for asking me if something counts as plagiarism or not.
- 3) *Academic Conduct*: I prohibit the use of laptops, cell phones, i-pods, and all other electronic devices, with the exception of those that have an exclusively educational function (e.g. recorders). These are wholly disruptive to the class. Additionally, perpetual tardiness, talking, sleeping or any other behavior I or others deem disruptive will not be tolerated. Punishments will be swift and creative.
- 4) *Classroom Behavior Policy*: In this class we will be discussing complicated issues that may arouse strong passions, as they should. Contributions to class discussions should be aimed at increasing your own understanding and at assisting the collective understanding of the class as whole. Talking simply in order to show off your knowledge or eloquence is thereby strongly discouraged. Furthermore, a level of minimal basic respect must be maintained towards your fellow classmates at all times, regardless of the intensity of your disagreements.

5) *Disability Accommodation*: Anyone requiring special accommodations should contact me at their discretion during the first week of class. Any special accommodations approved by the ODA will be fully granted to the extent specified by the policies of the ODA and the University of North Texas.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Assessment will be based on written work and on class participation, as follows:

Class Participation:	10%
1 st Short Paper:	20%
2 nd Short Paper:	25%
Final Paper:	45%

Written work will consist of two short papers and one longer research paper.

Short Topic Papers:

- 1) Short papers. There will be two short papers. Each paper will be 4-5 pages, 12-point font, in Garamond or Times New Roman, and with 1" margins.
- 2) Essay prompts will be distributed in class two weeks before the essays are due.
- 3) There will be separate hand-outs on the grading criteria for essays.
- 4) Late Policy: All work turned in after the due date, (if there is no legitimate excuse), or if no arrangements have been made with me beforehand, will be subject to the following late policy:
 - a. *up to one week* after due-date: the essay will be marked down one-third of a grade
 - b. *later than one week* after the due-date: the essay will not be accepted and you will receive a zero on the assignment.

Long Research Paper:

- 1) Students will be responsible for writing one 10-15 pg paper on some problem or issue in modern philosophy. Essay prompts will be circulated one month before the research paper is due, but students are encouraged to develop their own projects.
- 2) Research papers will be due on the day assigned for the final exam.
- 3) Framing of the problem: the paper must clearly identify a problem in interpretation or argument of the philosopher and propose a solution to the problem.
- 4) Structure: the solution to the problem must take the form of an *argument*. See *The Philosopher's Tool-Kit* or talk with me for more explicit guidance.
- 5) Primary Text: the paper must draw on a careful and judicious reading of the primary text under consideration. Particular passages must be identified, cited correctly, and *interpreted*.

- 6) Secondary Texts: the paper must use at least *four* scholarly sources other than those assigned. This can include journal articles and books. *Websites do not count!*
- 7) An abstract for the research paper is due no later than 4/21. The abstract should be between 100 and 200 words and describe the overall paper – what the problem is you wish to discuss, the approach you plan to take, and which secondary sources you intend to use.
- 8) The final paper is due on the *last day of class*.

Class Participation:

- (1) A substantial part of your intellectual development requires taking on the risks and rewards of speaking up in class, with respect to both asking questions about what you don't understand, and with respect to challenging the text, the professor, or another student, as appropriate.
- (2) Should there be sufficient interest, I will set up an on-line discussion group using WebCT. However, participation in that group will not substitute *entirely* for participation in class.
- (3) In a class this large, it will not be possible for everyone to speak in class. Therefore, each of you is required to email me *once* a week with a question or comment on that week's reading or lecture. Failure to do so will result in points deducted from the class participation component of your grade. This shows me that you are engaged, paying attention, and thinking hard about the material. I will do my level best to respond to your email either in lecture or through an emailed response. In some cases I will ask you to come to office hours to further discuss the issues raised in your email.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS/LECTURES:

TUESDAY	THURSDAY
1/20 INTRO TO COURSE: THE CRISIS OF METAPHYSICS IN MODERNITY	1/22 DESCARTES "INTRODUCTORY ESSAYS" AND <i>MED.</i> 1
1/27 DESCARTES <i>MEDITATION 2</i>	1/29 DESCARTES <i>MEDITATION 3</i>
2/3 DESCARTES <i>MEDITATION 4 & 5</i>	2/5 DESCARTES <i>MEDITATION 6</i>
2/10 DESCARTES SYNTHETIC APPENDIX 3 RD AND 4 TH OBJECTIONS/REPLIES	2/12 LEIBNIZ INTRO AND "DISCOURSE ON METAPHYSICS"
2/17 LEIBNIZ	2/19 LEIBNIZ

DISCOURSE ON METAPHYSICS <i>1ST PAPER DUE</i>	NEW SYSTEM OF NATURE
2/24 LEIBNIZ PRINCIPLES OF NATURE AND GRACE	2/26 LEIBNIZ MONADODOLOGY
3/3 HUME <i>ENQUIRY 1-3</i>	3/5 HUME <i>ENQUIRY 4 & 5</i>
3/10 HUME <i>ENQUIRY 7 & 8</i>	3/12 HUME <i>ENQUIRY 10 & 11</i>
3/17 <i>NO CLASS</i>	3/19 <i>NO CLASS</i>
3/24 HUME <i>ENQUIRY 12</i> <i>2ND PAPER DUE</i>	3/26 KANT INTRODUCTION TO CPR PREFACE A & B; B-INTRODUCTION
3/31 KANT TRANSCENDENTAL AESTHETIC A 19-49/P. 155-171 B 66-73 / P. 188-192	4/2 KANT TRANSCENDENTAL LOGIC B 74-94/P. 193-206 B 102-116/P. 210-218
4/7 KANT THE "B-DEDUCTION" B 129-169 P. 245-266	4/9 KANT ANALYTIC OF PRINCIPLES B 169-187/P. 267-277 B 233-256/P. 304-316 B 274-287/P. 326-333
4/14 KANT ANALYTIC OF PRINCIPLES B 169-187/P. 267-277 B 233-256/P. 304-316 B 274-287/P. 326-333	4/16 KANT PHENOMENA AND NOUMENA B 294-315/P. 354-365 B 249-366/P. 384-393
4/21 KANT TRANSCENDENTAL IDEAS B 366-396/P. 394-408 A 367-380/P. 425-431	4/23 KANT CAUSATION AND FREEDOM B 472-479/P. 484-489 B 560-595/P. 532-550
4/28 KANT REGULATIVE USE OF PURE REASON B 670-732/P. 590-623	4/30 KANT THE PURPOSE OF METAPHYSICS B 848-883/P. 684-704 <i>FINAL PAPER DUE</i>

