

## **SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE**

### Early Modern Philosophy

This is a proposed design for a course and not one I have already taught. It is to be adapted to suit nature of particular class and to be in line with the relevant department goals and guidelines.

Course description: This course will trace several lines of debate through the early modern period. We will read and address debates about some of the following questions: What is the nature of existence and how can we come to know about it? What is our role in the universe and how best can we fulfill it? What is the nature of human psychology and what role does it play in our metaphysics? Does progress on these matters help us answer questions about the nature of perception and point us to the best methods of inquiry?

### List of philosophical works and excerpts from correspondences:

- 1641 - Descartes: *Meditations*
  - 1643 - Correspondence between Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia and Rene Descartes
  - 1659 - More, H.: *Of the Immortality of the Soul*
  - 1678 - Cudworth, R.: *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*
  - 1682 - Correspondence between Lady Masham and John Locke
  - 1688 - Norris, J.: *The Theory and Regulation of Love*
  - 1690 - Locke, J.: *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*
  - 1690-1695 - Correspondence between Lady Astell and John Norris
  - 1692 - Conway, A.: *Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*
  - 1696 - Lady Masham: *A Discourse Concerning the Love of God*
  - 1704-1705/6 - Correspondence between Lady Masham and Gottfried W. Leibniz
  - 1705 - Lady Masham: *Thoughts in Reference to a Vertuous or Christian Life*
  - 1709 - Berkeley, G.R.: *An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision*
  - 1710 - Leibniz, G.W.: *Theodicy*
  - 1713 - Berkeley, G.R.: *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*
  - 1714 - Leibniz, G.W.: *Monadology*
  - 1739 - Hume, D.: *A Treatise of Human Nature*
  - 1748 - Hume, D.: *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
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<b>Readings by week</b>
A philosophical toolkit (provided in class)
Selections from Descartes <i>Meditations</i> Selections from Nadler, S. (2013) <i>The Philosopher, the Priest, and the Painter: A Portrait of Descartes</i>
Further selections from Descartes <i>Meditations</i> Correspondence between Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia and Rene Descartes
Selections from More, H.: <i>Of the Immortality of the Soul</i> Selections from Cudworth, R.: <i>The True Intellectual System of the Universe</i>
Selections from correspondence between Lady Masham and John Locke Selections from Locke, J. <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i>
Selections from Norris, J. <i>The Theory and Regulation of Love</i> Selections from correspondence between Lady Astell and John Norris
Selections from Conway, A. <i>Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy</i> Selections from Lady Masham <i>A Discourse Concerning the Love of God</i>
Selections from Correspondence between Lady Masham and Gottfried W. Leibniz Nadler, S. (2008) <i>The Best of All Possible Worlds: A Story of Philosophers, God, and Evil</i>
Lady Masham: <i>Thoughts in Reference to a Vertuous or Christian Life</i> Selections from Leibniz, G.W. <i>Theodicy</i>
Selections from Conway, A.: <i>Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy</i> Selections from Leibniz, G.W. <i>Monadology</i>
Selections from Berkeley, G.R. <i>An Essay Towards a New Theory of Vision</i> Selections from Hume, D. <i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i>
Selections from Berkeley, G.R. <i>Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous</i> Selections from Hume, D. <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i>
Looking forward: how contemporary debates have been influenced by early modern philosophy

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<b>Component</b>	<b>Portion of Grade</b>
Attendance and participation	10%
Short writing assignments	25%
Presentation	30%
Term paper (with topic proposal and draft)	35%

Further reading (recommended, but not required)

1. Schechtman, A. (2014) "Descartes' Argument for the Existence of an Idea of an Infinite Being", *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 52 (3): 487-517
  2. Shapiro, L. (1999) "Princess Elizabeth and Descartes: The Union of Mind and Body and the Practice of Philosophy", *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 7(3): 503-520
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