

Philosophy 309-01: Modern Philosophy
T/TH 1:30pm – 2:45pm; Spring Semester 2019
Donahue Hall, Room 236

Instructor: Dr. Darin McGinnis

Office & Office Hours: Don 126B MWF 11am-12pm. T 12:30pm-1:30pm, and by appointment

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Course Description: This course will address many of the major figures and several of the main themes in Modern philosophy. The most notable among these are the emergence of subjectivity as a major philosophical theme and the relationship between Modern philosophical epistemology and the appearance of modern science. Classes should consist of an equal amount of lecture and seminar-style discussion. Students will be expected to lead the course at selected times.

Primary Texts:

Descartes: *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*

Spinoza: *Ethics: With the Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*

Hume: *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*

Kant: *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*

Additional texts available on Blackboard (and as needed based on your research interests)

Graded Assignments:

Quizzes (3) - 15% of grade total

Progressive Summaries (5) - 35% of grade total

1 Class Presentation - 20% of grade total

1 Final Paper (12-14 pages) - 30% of grade total

Grading Scale:

A 100-94% A- 93-90% B+ 89-87% B 86-84% B- 83-80% C+ 79-77%

C 76-74% C- 73-70% D+ 69-67% D 66-60% F 59% and below

Course Schedule and Homework: I expect you to read and study the assigned readings and complete any other homework *before* the class for which they are scheduled. Always be prepared to go over your readings or homework in class. Since we may need to move more quickly or more slowly depending on topics, adjustments to the schedule are very likely. You are responsible for keeping track of these changes to the syllabus and to the course schedule if they are announced. I also reserve the right to amend or change this syllabus as needed.

Course Objectives: By the end of the semester, the student will:

1. Be familiar with the methods and aims of philosophical inquiry, particularly Modern rationalism, Modern empiricism, and Kantian transcendental idealism;

2. Be able to write a research paper in a philosophical manner using premises and evidence;
3. Have an understanding of the history of the relevant philosophical concepts from this period and their applications to other philosophical systems and disciplines.

Conferences: I wholeheartedly encourage you to talk to one another and to me if you have any questions. Talk to me before or after class, email me, or stop by my office hours if you have any questions about the reading, quizzes, papers, exams or if you would like discuss other items relating to the class. If you cannot make my office hours, I can meet with you on any day should the need arise.

Attendance: Class attendance is essential to this course. For students on academic probation, no more than four (4) absences will be permitted. Exceeding these numbers results in a “Fa” grade – or failure. Please note that while I make every effort to stick to the schedule as printed, changes from time to time will be necessary. Not knowing about changes in the schedule therefore will not constitute an excuse. Withdrawal dates are those set by the Registrar.

Last Date to Drop the Course: The last day of the Add/Drop Period for this semester is Friday, 11 January 2019. The last day to withdraw from this course with a grade of a W is 26 March 2019.

Make-up Policy: Quizzes are due and assignments are accepted only on the day that they are due. The following three criteria together constitute grounds for an excuse: (1) the absence is due to serious illness or a death in the family; (2) you have a note from the Dean excusing the absence; (3) you have notified me in advance (this condition may be waived at my discretion for extenuating circumstances). If your absence does not meet these three criteria, do not approach me about making up missed work.

Academic Resource Center: The Academic Resource Center (ARC) is a totally free academic-support service available to all enrolled Wheeling Jesuit University students and staffed almost exclusively by WJU students recommended for employment by WJU faculty. The ARC is located in Bishop Hodges Library and is open five days a week: Sundays 6:00-8:00 p.m., and Mondays-Thursdays 1:00-9:00 p.m. Please visit the ARC's website (the first listing under "Student Services" on the Cardinal homepage) to learn about the ARC's services (emphasizing writing, math, and the sciences) and to schedule appointments; appointments will no longer be available by phone.

Wheeling Jesuit University Disability Services: Wheeling Jesuit University offers students with documented disabilities individual accommodations on a case-by case basis with confidentiality in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In order to receive academic or physical accommodations, students with disabilities must provide current (within three years) and comprehensive documentation concerning the nature and extent of the disability and communicate their needs to the Disability Services Director, located in Ignatius Hall Room G 24 or call 304-243-4484. Students are required to meet with the director to

develop accommodation plans that they will present to their course instructors at the beginning of each semester. Students with disabilities that require specific housing accommodations must contact both the Director of Residence Life and the Disability Services Director. Ultimately, all students with disabilities are responsible for their own academic achievement. They must attend classes, complete course assignments, and fulfill all university requirements for their chosen field of study. It is up to students with disabilities to seek out available assistance on campus and to utilize individualized accommodations that promote academic success.

Academic Integrity: Students are advised that WJU's Academic Integrity Policy will strictly be enforced in this course (see www.wju.edu/studenthandbook). Questions regarding the policy may be directed to the Office of the Academic Vice-President.

Official E-mail: An official WJU e-mail is established for each registered student, each faculty member, and each staff member. All university communications sent via e-mail will be sent to this WJU e-mail address.

Title IX Statement: Wheeling Jesuit University seeks to provide an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have been the victim of sexual harassment, misconduct, or assault we encourage you to report this. If you report this to a faculty member, she or he must notify our college's Title IX coordinator about the basic facts of the incident (you may choose whether you or anyone involved is identified by name). For more information about your options at WJU, please go to <http://wju.edu/titleix/>.

Tentative Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

January 8 – Syllabus review / Introduction / Questionnaire

January 10 – Montaigne, “Of Cannibals”

January 15 – Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Dedication, Preface, Synopsis, Mediations 1-3

January 17 – Descartes, *Meditations*, 4-6

January 22 – Descartes, *Meditations*, Objection and Reply 3 (from Hobbes), **Progressive Summary #1**

January 24 – Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, pp. 25-33, **Quiz #1**

January 29 – Leibniz, “Reflections on the Advancement of True Metaphysics” and “Principles of Nature and Grace”

January 31 – Leibniz, “Principles of Nature and Grace” and “Monadology”

February 5 – Leibniz, “Monadology,” **Progressive Summary #2**

February 7 – Conway, “The Principles of the most Ancient and Modern Philosophy,” Ch. 1-6

February 12 – Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part I, Propositions 1-20

February 14 – Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part I, 21-36 and Appendix

February 19 – Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part II, 1-18, **Quiz #2**

February 21 – Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part II, 19-42

February 26 – Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part II, 43-end, **Progressive Summary #3**

February 28 – Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part III, 1-18 and Scholia 1 and 2

March 4-8 – Spring Break; No Classes

March 12 – Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part IV, Preface and Appendix; Part V, Preface and 42 to end

March 14 – Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Introduction; *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, I-IV

March 19 – Hume, *Treatise*, V-VIII, **Quiz #3**

March 21 – Hume, *Treatise*, IX-XII, **Progressive Summary #4**

March 26 – Ward, “The Roots of Modern Racism”

March 28 – Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Prefaces to A and B Editions

April 2 – Research Day; No Classes

April 4 – Kant, *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*, Preface and §1-3

April 9 – Kant, *Prolegomena*, §4-23, **Progressive Summary #5 (Thesis Statement)**

April 11 – Kant, *Prolegomena*, §24-39

April 16 – Kant, *Prolegomena*, §40-60

April 18 – Easter Break

April 23 – **Presentations**

April 25 – **Presentations**

*****Final Paper Due, Tuesday, 30 April, 11am-1:30pm *****