

Phil. 555 MODERN PHILOSOPHY
301 Willard M 6:00-9:00 p.m. Fall Semester 2010

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Office Hours: W 12-1 F 11-12 or by appointment

Professor Grosholz is a member of the editorial board of *Studia Leibnitiana*; she is currently editing a special issue of *Studia Leibnitiana* on Leibniz's treatment of natural and historical time and how we can understand their relation. She is also a member of the board of directors and the editorial board of the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, and the author of three books on Descartes and Leibniz.

Overview of the Course:

The beginning of the seventeenth century witnesses a profound transformation in the way that Europeans understand the world and human knowledge. The Copernican Revolution (d. 1543) and the work of Kepler (d. 1630) and Galileo (d. 1642) set the stage for the Scientific Revolution. Luther (d. 1546) and Calvin (d. 1564) inaugurate the Protestant Revolution within European Christianity. Cromwell (d. 1658), along with restive nobles and a rising mercantile bourgeoisie in many countries, call the European monarchy into question as well as the feudalism on which it rests. His 'Glorious Revolution' foreshadows the French and American revolutions.

Early modern philosophy witnesses the rise of both idealism and materialism. Descartes' first two *Meditations* change Western philosophy forever by offering consciousness itself (apart from any of the objects of consciousness) as a philosophical topic. There is an almost obsessive tendency in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to approach philosophically things that cannot be grasped by the senses: consciousness itself, space and time, force and causal connection, the infinite (including of course God) and the infinitesimal. Sense perception is subordinated to an aetherialized reason.

At the same time, there is a resurrection of materialism, abetted by anti-religious sentiment, the re-editing of classical Epicurean texts in Greek and Latin, and the growing conviction that terrestrial phenomena can be explained by sub-microscopic material structures and that the heavens are no different in principle from the earth. Sense perception is thus given precedence over a reason that is only a kind of summation of material states. Leibniz reads both Descartes and Locke, Spinoza is a careful reader of Descartes and a strong influence on Leibniz, Locke fails to respond to the young Leibniz but Berkeley reads Leibniz and Malebranche, Hume responds to Descartes, Berkeley, and Locke, and Kant (whom we shall not read in this course) tries to circumvent and encompass them all. Despite the Kantian synthesis, we are left with an unresolved tug of war between the ideal and the material, the abstract and the concrete, evident in both logical positivism and phenomenology.

We will pursue as a philosophical *Leitfaden* the theme of temporality in the writings of these authors. Is time real, or is it only a manifestation of a deeper causal or logical underlying structure? What kind of temporality do the things of nature exhibit? Are human consciousness and human discourse temporal or transcendent of time? Is time an empirical feature of natural systems, a metaphysical condition of intelligibility, or a transcendental condition of human experience? Is temporality given or constructed? As we work through these questions, and the answers given by various Rationalists and Empiricists, we will discover not only the genealogical line that leads to Kant's doctrine of time as a transcendental form of intuition, but also another that leads via Leibniz to Goethe's theory of organic development and Romanticism. We will look closely at the treatment of consciousness and human action, as well as of matter, and space and time, in the writings of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley and Hume.

We will also be studying methods of scholarship: how texts are edited and translated, how traditions of scholarship are created and revised, and how we ourselves can make good use of the print and electronic resources offered by the libraries at University Park (and the wider network available through inter-library loan). Work on the final paper will begin mid-semester. Students will share information about their bibliographical searches and the development of their topics, give 60 minute presentations of their papers at the end of the semester, and meet with the instructor for guidance. Papers that involve work with primary sources are encouraged, as are papers that involve a related set of secondary sources. Most students will use at least one primary or secondary source in a foreign language.

Text:

Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins (eds.), *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources* (Hackett, 2009).

Schedule of Classes:

August 23 Introductory Lecture.
 30 *Descartes. Discourse on Method* and related texts. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 1-47

Labor Day

September 13 *Meditations* and related texts. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 47-105
 20 *Spinoza. Ethics*. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 111-151
 27 *Ethics* and related texts. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 151-195

October 4 *Leibniz. Discourse on Metaphysics*. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 200-247.
 11 *Monadology* and related texts. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 248-303
 18 *Locke. Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 305-357
 25 *Essay* and related texts. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 357-403. Paper topic, 1 paragraph.

November. 1 *Berkeley. Principles of Human Knowledge*. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 403-453. Paper topic, 3 pars. Essay review 1.
 8 *Hume. Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* and related texts. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 509-564. Paper topic development, 3 pages.
 15 *Enquiry* and related texts. Ariew & Watkins, pp. 564-600, 641-653. Bibliography. Essay review 2 and 3.

Thanksgiving Holiday

 29 Student presentations

December 6 Student presentations

Final Papers due in my office, December 15.

Requirements:

Attendance and class participation are mandatory; good or bad attendance will have an effect on your grade: every student counts, especially in a philosophy class. Each student will choose one philosopher, and give an informal presentation on the treatment of time in that philosopher's writings, and help lead the discussion, usually on the second Monday that we discuss the philosopher. Final papers are due in my office by the end of December 15. Your grade is determined by your informal class presentation (10%); your bibliographical search, your 3 essay reviews and topic drafts (20%); your seminar presentation (20%); and your final 20 page research paper (50%). I encourage you to think of this paper as the draft of an article, and will be glad to help anyone revise a paper to be sent out for publication.

To write an essay review, choose an article from a significant journal pertinent to the study of early modern philosophy (see below). Read the article and then write a one or two page review of it, with three paragraphs:

Par. 1. Give a summary of the argument of the essay.

Par. 2. Locate the essay in the scholarly conversation: the footnotes are your guideline. You may want to take a look at some of the collections of essays or monographs the footnotes point to, in order to see a bigger picture.

Par. 3. Evaluate the essay in terms of its faithfulness to the texts, its responsiveness to scholarly context, its consistency, its use of textual evidence, its fidelity to certain philosophical ideas, and so forth. This is your chance to be critical, as long as you give good grounds for your criticism.

One of the essays you use for your final paper should be in a foreign language; if this is a problem for you, come in and talk to me.

Here are some journals where you can find likely essays, many in foreign languages. Your search need not be limited to these journals, but they are a good place to start.

Studia Cartesiana

Studia Leibnitiana

Acts, Internazionaler Leibniz-Kongress I - VIII

Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie

Journal of the History of Ideas

Journal of the History of Philosophy

British Journal for the History of Philosophy

Studies in History and Philosophy of Science

Midwest Studies in Philosophy

Southern Journal of Philosophy

History of Philosophy Quarterly

Revista di Storia della Filosofia

Studi Filosofici

Revista di Filosofia

Revista Latinoamericana de Filosofia

Revue Internationale de Philosophie

Revue d'Histoire des Sciences

Archives de Philosophie

Internationale Zeitschrift fuer Philosophie

Mind

Monist

Journal of Philosophy

Philosophical Quarterly

Philosophical Review

Policies:

Non-Discrimination Statement: The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA. 16802, tel. (814) 863-0471.

Academic Integrity: Definition and expectations: Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at the Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University's Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts. Academic integrity includes a commitment not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others. To protect the rights and maintain the trust of honest students and support appropriate behavior, faculty and administrators should regularly communicate high standards of integrity and reinforce them by taking reasonable steps to anticipate and deter acts of dishonesty in all assignments. At the beginning of each course, the instructor must provide students with a statement clarifying the application of University and College academic integrity policies to that course.

Class Attendance: A student should attend every class for which the course is scheduled, and should be held responsible for all work covered in the courses taken. The instructor will provide, within reason, opportunity to make up work for students who miss class for illness, a death in the family, musical and athletic travel, and field trips for other classes.

Instruction Assessments and Evaluations: The instructor will distribute assessment questionnaires at the beginning, midpoint, and end of the semester, to monitor instruction apropos both students and instructor, since everyone in the classroom a responsibility for its success. Midsemester evaluations of first and second semester students and provisional students will be filled out by the instructor during the sixth week of the semester. End of semester course evaluations (SRTEs) will be filled out by students in the last week of the semester.