Phil 100B: The Rationalists

Winter 2011
Tue. and Thurs., 6–7:45pm, Thiman 1.

Professor: Abe Stone (abestone@ucsc.edu)
Office: Cowell Annex A-106
Phone (office): 459-5723
AIM: abestone3
Website: http://people.ucsc.edu/~abestone/courses
Office hours: Tues. and Thurs., 11am–noon, or by appointment.

Teaching Assistants:

Tim Brown (tebrown@ucsc.edu).
Sections: Wed. 9:30am; Wed. 12:30pm (both in Cowell 222).

Orville Canter (ocanter@ucsc.edu).
Sections: Tues. 2pm; Wed. 2pm (both in Cowell 222).

Andrew Delunas (adelunas@ucsc.edu).
Sections: Tues. 12 noon; Fri. 11am (both in Cowell 222).

Course Requirements

Participation in discussion sections (approximately 10% of grade).

“Metaphysics exercises” (kind of a short take-home multiple choice quiz), due most class days (all exercises together, approximately 30%; graded heavily on a curve). (Exercises due Tues., Jan. 11; Sun., Jan. 16;2 Tues., Jan. 18; Tues., Jan. 25; Thurs., Jan. 27; Thurs., Feb. 3; Tues., Feb. 8; Thurs., Feb. 10; Tues., Feb. 15; Thurs., Feb. 17; Thurs., Feb. 24; Tues., Mar. 1; Thurs., Mar. 10.)

Two short papers (2–3 pages), due Tues., Feb. 1 and Tues., Feb. 22 (approximately 15% each).

One longer paper (6–8 pages) (approximately 30%). The paper is due Wed., Mar. 16, but you must hand in an introductory paragraph and brief outline (approximately one sentence per paragraph of the proposed complete paper) at some time on or before

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1Please feel free to contact the instructor and/or your TA with questions about the substance of the course (philosophical issues, questions about the meaning of the texts, questions about paper topics, etc.). On administrative issues (grades, lateness/extensions, due dates, section times, etc.) please try your TA first.

Tues., Mar. 8. Your TA will send this back to you as soon as possible with suggested
changes, which you should take into account. This preliminary assignment will not be
separately graded, but if you do not hand it in at all or if it is wholly unsatisfactory,
your grade on the final paper will be reduced by one half step (e.g. A to A-).

Papers are due by e-mail: please send to your TA and also cc me. Please send in
MSWord or in a format easily convertible to MSWord (e.g., plain text, HTML, RTF).
The first ME will be handed out in class as a hard copy (also available on-line) and
handed back in the following class. Subsequent ME’s will be run by an on-line system;
please check your UCSC e-mail for details.

All assignments will be available on-line before they are due (hopefully well before).

**Texts**

Descartes, *Selected Philosophical Writings*, tr. J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff and D.
Murdoch (Cambridge).


tr. S. Shirley, ed. S. Feldman (Hackett).

The above texts should be available at the Literary Guillotine. Readings not from
texts on the above list are available on ecommons.

**Readings**

Tues., Jan. 4: (no reading, first class).

I. *Background: Aristotelian Metaphysics*

Thurs., Jan. 6: selections from Aristotle (on substance and accident).

Tues., Jan. 11: selections from Aristotle and Porphyry (on the predicables and the
categories). ME #1 due.

Thurs., Jan. 13: selections from Plotinus, Porphyry, Avicenna, and Thomas Aquinas
(on substance and accident).

Sun., Jan. 16: ME #2 due (originally due Thurs., Jan. 13).

II. *Descartes*
Tues., Jan. 18: Descartes, *Discourse on the Method*, parts 1–3 (pp. 20–35), part 6, first paragraph (p. 46); *Principles of Philosophy* I.1–3 (p. 160), IV.207 (p. 212). ME #3 due.

Thurs., Jan. 20: *First Meditation* (pp. 76–9). No ME due.

Tues., Jan. 25: beginning of *Second Meditation* (pp. 80–83, through the paragraph ending “in this restricted sense of the term it is simply thinking”); *Principles of Philosophy* I.9–10 (p. 162–3), .20 (pp. 166–7); *Objections and Replies*, selection entitled “[Appendix: Arguments Arranged in Geometrical Fashion],” pp. 150–52. ME #4 due.

Thurs., Jan. 27: remainder of *Second Meditation* (pp. 83–6); *Principles of Philosophy* I.8 (p. 162), .11 (p. 163), .45–8 (pp. 174–6), .51–4 (pp. 177–8), .63 (p. 182), .66 (p. 183), II.4 (p. 190). ME #5 due.

Tues., Feb. 1: *Third and Fifth Meditations* (pp. 86–98; 105–110). **First paper due.** No ME due.

Thurs., Feb. 3: *Fourth Meditation* (pp. 98–105); *Principles of Philosophy* I.6 (p. 161); *Objections and Replies*, selection entitled “[The indifference of the will]” (pp. 134–5). ME #6 due. (Note: ME #6 is slightly longer and includes questions covering the previous two readings.)

Tues., Feb. 8: *Sixth Meditation* (pp. 110–22); *Passions of the Soul* I.17–18 (p. 225), .25 (pp. 227–8); .30–35 (pp. 229–32); .39–41 (p. 233); .49–50 (pp. 237–8). ME #7 due.

**III. Spinoza**

Thurs., Feb. 10: Spinoza, *Ethics*, I, beginning through Scholium to Prop. 15 (pp. 31–43). *Theologico-Political Treatise*, ch. 7, tr. Elwes, pp. 98–top of 101 (ending “which occur in the Bible”). (Readings from this text will be available on ecommons.) ME #8 due.


Thurs., Feb. 17: *Ethics*, II, beginning through Scholium to Prop. 18 (pp. 63–79). *Theologico-Political Treatise*, paragraph beginning at the bottom of p. 106 (“We
have thus shown . . .”) and ending on p. 107 (“. . .about the former”); top of p. 114 (beginning “There only remains”)–top of p. 117 (ending “the learned fare alike”). ME #10 due.


Thurs., Feb. 24: Spinoza Ethics, III, beginning through Scholium to Prop. 11 (pp. 102–111) and Prop. 53 (p. 136); IV, Definitions (pp. 155–6) and Prop. 28 (p. 168); V, Preface (pp. 201–3), Prop. 4 (p. 206) and Prop. 14 to end (pp. 210–23). ME #11 due.

IV. Leibniz


Tues., Mar. 8: selections from Thomas Aquinas (on angels); Leibniz, from letters to de Volder, last two paragraphs of B, first paragraph of C, and first paragraph of D (pp. 178–9, 181–2); “Monadology,” §§62–81 (pp. 221–3). Introductory paragraph and outline of final paper due. No ME due.


3Clarke’s replies are not in your book; they are available on ecommons.
4The symbol § stands for “section.”
Timeline

Timeline of various stuff more or less relevant to this course:

399 B.C.  Death of Socrates
322 B.C.  Death of Aristotle
197 B.C.  Roman conquest of Greece
1  Birth of Jesus (approx.)

305  Death of Porphyry (approx.)
410  Sack of Rome by the Visigoths

529  Emp. Justinian closes phil. schools of Athens
622  Muhammad flees from Mecca to Medina

8th–9th c.  Aristotle translated into Arabic

11th–13th c.  Aristotle translated into Latin
1204–1261  Latin (Crusader) rule in Constantinople
1347–1351  The Black Death
1453  Fall of Constantinople to Turks
1517  Martin Luther posts “95 Theses”

1632  Publ. of Galileo’s Two World Systems
1677  Publ. of Spinoza’s Ethics
1781  Publ. of Critique of Pure Reason (1st ed.)

2011  Now

• 270  Death of Plotinus
• 312  Conversion of Constantine to Christianity

529  Emp. Justinian closes phil. schools of Athens
622  Muhammad flees from Mecca to Medina

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2011  Now

• 1037  Death of Avicenna

• 1274  Death of St. Thomas Aquinas

• 1641  Publ. of D.’s Meditations
• 1714  Leibniz composes “Monadology”

1789  French Revolution