

Phil 100B: The Rationalists

Winter 2012

Tue. and Thurs., 10–11:45am, Merrill 102.

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Office hours: Tues., 4-5pm; Thurs., 3-4pm.

Teaching Assistants:

Orville Canter (ocanter@ucsc.edu)

Sections: Wed. 8am (Stevenson 151); Thurs. 4pm (Cowell 216).

Jav Cardoza-Kon (jcardoza@ucsc.edu)

Sections: Wed. 11am (Stevenson 151); Fri. 11am (Cowell 216).

Christoph Durt (cdurt@ucsc.edu)

Sections: Thurs. 6pm (Stevenson 151); Thurs. 7:30pm (Stevenson 151).

Course Requirements

Participation in discussion sections (good participation will be possible grounds for raising course grade, especially if it is on a borderline).

“Metaphysics exercises” (kind of a short take-home multiple choice quiz), due most class days (all exercises together are worth 35% of the final grade; graded heavily on a curve). These will be made available on-line via the “Tests & Quizzes” tool on ecommons.

Two short papers (2–3 pages), due Tues., Feb. 7 and Tues., Feb. 28 (worth 15% each of the final grade).

One longer paper (6–8 pages) (worth 35% of the final grade). The paper is due Wed., Mar. 21, 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 Tues., Mar. 13. Your TA will send this back to you as soon as possible with

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.

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-).

All paper assignments are available on-line, and there are links to them from this syllabus as well as from my main course page. I will discuss the assignments in class when the due date draws near.

Papers are to be handed in, as attachments, via the “Assignments” tool on ecommons. Please submit in MSWord format (.doc or .docx), or in a format easily convertible to MSWord (e.g., plain text or RTF). The system will accept late submissions, but late papers may not receive full credit. The system is *not* set up to allow resubmissions: once you press the “submit” button, it will not let you change your response. If, however, you mistakenly submit something and want to change it, please contact me and I can make an exception.

As noted above, the ME’s will be accessed and submitted on-line via ecommons. (The system will accept late submissions, but credit — possibly reduced — will only be given up until the time that the correct answers are announced, either in section or on-line.)

All assignments are due by midnight on the due date.

Texts

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

Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, ed. R. Ariew and D. Garber (Hackett).

Spinoza, *The Ethics, Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect, and Selected Letters*, tr. S. Shirley, ed. S. Feldman (Hackett).

The above texts should be available at the Literary Guillotine, and they will also be put on reserve at McHenry. Readings not from texts on the above list are available on ecommons.

Readings

Tues., Jan. 10: (no reading, first class).

I. Background: Aristotelian Metaphysics

Thurs., Jan. 12: selections from Aristotle (on substance and accident).

Tues., Jan. 17: selections from Aristotle and Porphyry (on the predicables and the categories). ME #1 due.

Thurs., Jan. 19: selections from Plotinus, Porphyry, Avicenna, and Thomas Aquinas (on substance and accident). ME #2 due.

II. Descartes

Tues., Jan. 24: 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. 26: *First Meditation* (pp. 76–9). No ME due.

Tues., Jan. 31: 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., Feb. 2 (Groundhog Day): 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. 7: *Third and Fifth Meditations* (pp. 86–98; 105–110). **First paper due.** No ME due.

Thurs., Feb. 9: *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. 14: *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. 16: 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”). (All readings from this text are available as a single file on ecommons.) ME #8 due.

Tues., Feb. 21: *Ethics*, I, Prop. 16 through end (pp. 43–62). *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 101–4 (ending “its meaning concerning them”). ME #9 due.

Thurs., Feb. 23: *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.

Tues., Feb. 28: Spinoza, *Ethics*, II, Prop. 19 to end (pp. 80–101). *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 117–119. **Second paper due.** No ME due.

Thurs., Mar. 1: **no class** (strike).

Tues., Mar. 6: 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

Thurs., Mar. 8: Leibniz, “A New System of Nature,” first three paragraphs (pp. 138–9); from letters to Clarke: 1.4 (pp. 320–21), 2.12 (p. 324), 3.17 (p. 327), 4.42 (p. 331), 5.107–11 (pp. 343–4), along with Clarke’s replies to each; “A Specimen of Dynamics,” first two paragraphs (pp. 118–19); “Discourse on Metaphysics,” §§² 8–12, 24, 26–8, 33 (pp. 40–44, 56–7, 58–60, 64–5). ME #12 due.

Note: because of the strike, I’ve eliminated some readings and rearranged others. The below two reading assignments are a compressed version of the last three assignments on the original syllabus.

Tues., Mar. 13: “Monadology,” §§1–61 (pp. 213–21). **Introductory paragraph and outline of final paper due.** No ME due.

Thurs., Mar. 15: selections from Thomas Aquinas (on angels); “Monadology,” §§62–end (pp. 221–5). ME #13 due.

²The symbol § stands for “section.”

Wed., Mar. 21: **final paper due.**

Timeline

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

