

Phil 100B: The Rationalists
Winter, 2015

Tuesday and Thursday, 6–7:45pm, Soc Sci 1 110

Contact Information

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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 Tuesday, February 3 and Tuesday, February 24.

One longer paper (6–8 pages) (worth 35% of the final grade). The paper is due Tuesday, March 17, but you must hand in an introductory paragraph

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.

and brief outline (approximately one sentence per paragraph of the proposed complete paper) at some time on or before Tuesday, March 10. 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-).

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. You can find answers to some commonly asked questions about my assignments and grading in my FAQ (<https://people.ucsc.edu/~abestone/courses/faq.html>).

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, 1988) (ISBN: 0521358124).

Most, if not all, of the assigned readings from this text are available, in a different translation, on Google Books and Wikisource. There are LibriVox recordings (again, in a different translation) of the *Discourse on the Method* and the *Meditations*.

Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, ed. R. Ariew and D. Garber (Hackett, 1989)

(ISBN: 0872200620).

This collection is available on-line (free to read, but costs to download) on Scribd. Many of (but not all) of the assigned readings are to be found free on Google Books. There is a LibriVox recording of the *Monadology*.

Spinoza, *The Ethics, Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect, and Selected Letters*, tr. S. Shirley, ed. S. Feldman (Hackett, 1991) (ISBN: 0872201309).

Again, there are free versions of the *Ethics* on Google Books and LibriVox, though not in the same translation.

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

Tuesday, January 6: (no reading, first class).

Background: Aristotelian Metaphysics

Thursday, January 8: selections from Aristotle (on substance and accident).

Tuesday, January 13: selections from Aristotle and Porphyry (on the predicables and the categories). ME #1 due.

Thursday, January 15: selections from Plotinus, Porphyry, Avicenna, and Thomas Aquinas (on substance and accident). ME #2 due.

Descartes

Tuesday, January 20: 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.

Thursday, January 22: *First Meditation* (pp. 76–9). No ME due.

Tuesday, January 27: 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.

Thursday, January 29: 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.

Tuesday, February 3: *Third and Fifth Meditations* (pp. 86–98; 105–110). **First paper due.** No ME due.

Thursday, February 5: *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.

Tuesday, February 10: *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.

Spinoza

Thursday, February 12: 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 the *Theologico-Political Treatise* are available as a single file on eCommons.) ME #8 due.

Tuesday, February 17: *Ethics* I, Prop. 16 through end (pp. 43–62). *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 101–4 (ending “its meaning concerning them”). ME #9 due.

Thursday, February 19: *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.

Tuesday, February 24: *Ethics* II, Prop. 19 to end (pp. 80–101). *Theologico-Political Treatise*, pp. 117–119. **Second paper due.** No ME due.

Thursday, February 26: *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.

Leibniz

Tuesday, March 3: 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.

Thursday, March 5: “A New System of Nature,” remaining part (pp. 139–45); “Monadology,” §§1–61 (pp. 213–21). No ME due.

Tuesday, March 10: 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.

Thursday, March 12: Leibniz, “Dialogue on Human Freedom,” pp. 111–17; letter to Coste (pp. 193–6); “Discourse on Metaphysics,” §§13–16, 19–20, 30–32, 35–7 (pp. 44–9, 52–3, 60–64, 66–8); “Monadology,” §§82–end (pp. 223–5). ME #13 due.

Tuesday, March 17: **final paper due.**

²The symbol § stands for “section”; §§ means “sections.”

Timeline

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

399 B.C. Death of Socrates	—	
322 B.C. Death of Aristotle	●	347 B.C. Death of Plato
197 B.C. <i>Roman conquest of Greece</i>	—	
1 <i>Birth of Jesus (approx.)</i>	—	
305 Death of Porphyry (approx.)	●	270 Death of Plotinus
410 <i>Sack of Rome by the Visigoths</i>	—	312 <i>Conversion of Constantine to Christianity</i>
529 <i>Emp. Justinian closes phil. schools of Athens</i>	—	6th c. John Philoponus
622 <i>Muhammad flees from Mecca to Medina</i>	—	
8th–9th c. <i>Aristotle translated into Arabic</i>		
11th–13th c. <i>Aristotle translated into Latin</i>		1037 Death of Avicenna
1204–1261 <i>Latin (Crusader) rule in Constantinople</i>	●	1274 Death of St. Thomas Aquinas
1347–1351 <i>The Black Death</i>	—	
1453 <i>Fall of Constantinople to Turks</i>	—	1517 <i>Martin Luther posts “95 Theses”</i>
1677 Publ. of Spinoza’s <i>Ethics</i>	●	1641 Publ. of D.’s <i>Meditations</i>
1781 Publ. of <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> (1st ed.)	—	1714 Leibniz composes “ <i>Monadology</i> ”
	—	1789 <i>French Revolution</i>
2015 <i>Now</i>	—	