

**Phil 100C: The Empiricists**  
Spring, 2026

Tuesday and Thursday, 5:20–6:55pm, Kresge Acad 3101

**Contact Information**

Professor: Abe Stone ([abestone@ucsc.edu](mailto:abestone@ucsc.edu))<sup>1</sup>

Office: Cowell Annex A-106

Website: <https://people.ucsc.edu/~abestone/courses>

Zoom class meeting: [here](#)

Zoom office hours: Mon. 9:30–10:30am; Wed. 5-6pm (or by appointment)

Teaching Assistant:

Maggie Mattinson ([mmattins@ucsc.edu](mailto:mmattins@ucsc.edu))

Office hours: Friday 11:00am–12:00pm in the Faculty Annex, or by appointment.

**Discussion Sections**

Section	Time	Place	TA
A	Fri. 9:20–10:25am	Oaks Acad 222	Maggie
B	Wed. 8:00–9:05am	Oaks Acad 106	Maggie

**Course Description**

We will read (large parts of) some of the fundamental texts of the school known as British Empiricism.

**Modality:** In general, I will lecture in person in our assigned classroom, though I plan also to live-stream every lecture over Zoom. However, there are three classes I need to cancel due to Passover and one because of Shavuot,

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<sup>1</sup>Please 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 to make up for this there will be **four make up lectures on Fridays and Mondays**, 4/6, 4/10, 4/13, and 5/25, **via Zoom only**, at the usual class time (5:20–6:55). I will also make a recording of every lecture available on YouTube.

## Course Requirements

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

Attendance at lectures (either in person or via Zoom) is not required, but is highly recommended. Second best is to watch the recorded lectures on YouTube. Links to the recorded lectures will also appear on this syllabus as they are put up.

“Metaphysics exercises” (kind of a short take-home multiple choice quiz), due on about half the class days (all exercises together are worth 30% of the final grade; graded *heavily* on a curve). These will be made available on-line via the “Quizzes” tool on Canvas.

Two short papers (2–3 pages), due Wednesday, April 29 and Wednesday, May 20, each worth 20% of the final grade. One longer paper (6–8 pages) (worth 30% of the final grade). The paper is due Tuesday, June 9, but an introductory paragraph and brief outline (approximately one sentence per paragraph of the proposed complete paper) are due at some time on or before Tuesday, June 2. Feedback on this will be provided by the TA’s in section (special sections may be scheduled if necessary). 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 be 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 Canvas. Please submit in MSWord format, or in a format easily convertible

to MSWord. 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 Canvas. (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.)

Please do not plagiarize. If you do and I catch you, you will receive no credit for the assignment and may fail the course, and you will also be subject to “disciplinary sanctions” from the University. (In contrast: if you hand in a paper consisting mostly of quotes from or paraphrases of other sources you have consulted, properly cited, you will not get a good grade — a good paper will contain your own interpretations and thoughts — but you will not fail, either.) If you have any questions about what plagiarism is or how to avoid it, you can ask me, or consult the resources listed on the Library website.<sup>2</sup> For possible consequences of plagiarism, see the Academic Misconduct Policy.<sup>3</sup>

AI policy: I encourage the use of AI assistance with proper caution (i.e., keeping in mind that current AI is often wrong). You may use AI assistance basically in any way that would not constitute cheating if you used a human for the same thing. Similarly, you should cite the AI in cases where you would cite a human. If in doubt, feel free to ask me for clarification.

All assignments are due by 11:55pm on the due date.

## Texts

Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (Penguin, 1998) (ISBN: 978-0140434828).

An older edition is available on Google Books and on Wikisource (Book I; Book II; Book III; Book IV). In addition, there are the following LibriVox recordings: books I and II; book II (alternate); book III; book IV.

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<sup>2</sup><https://guides.library.ucsc.edu/c.php?g=1349850&p=9960819>.

<sup>3</sup><https://ue.ucsc.edu/academic-misconduct.html>.

Berkeley, *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (Hackett, 1993) (ISBN: 978-0915145393).

The text is available on Google Books and Wikisource, among other places, and there is also a LibriVox recording.

Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (2d ed., Hackett, 1993) (ISBN: 978-0872202290).

The text, together with that of the other Enquiry, is available on Google and Wikisource, and there is also a LibriVox recording.

Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (Hackett, 1983) (ISBN: 0915145456).

The text, together with that of the other Enquiry, is available on Google and Wikisource, and there is also a LibriVox recording.

Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (Penguin, 1986) (ISBN: 978-0140432442).

The readings are all from Book I, contained in Volume I of the text available on Google Books and LibriVox; both volumes together are available on Wikisource.

The above texts can be ordered and/or purchased as e-books at the UCSC Bookstore (Akademos), and are also on reserve at McHenry.

## Readings

Tuesday, March 31: (no reading, first class). (Lecture on YouTube.)

Thursday, April 2: **No class** due to Passover (which begins this evening).

Monday, April 6: Locke, *Essay*, Book I, ch. I (Introduction), §<sup>4</sup> 8; ch. II (No innate speculative principles<sup>5</sup>), §§1–5 and 15–16; ch. III (No innate

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<sup>4</sup>The symbol § stands for “section”; §§ means “sections.” If you are unsure (or a bit rusty) on how to read Roman numerals, used for the book and chapter numbers here, there is a handy guide on Wolfram MathWorld.

<sup>5</sup>Note that, in some editions, the introduction isn’t included in the numbers of chapters. In those editions, this chapter (“No innate speculative principles”) is chapter I, the following one (“No innate practical principles”) is chapter II, and the last one (“Other proofs against innate principles”) is chapter III.

practical principles), §§1–8; ch. IV (Other proofs against innate principles)), §§1–8 and 17–18. (This lecture will be at the usual class time, 5:20–6:55pm, via Zoom only.) (Lecture on YouTube.)

Tuesday, April 7: **No class** due to the seventh day of Passover (which begins this evening).

Thursday, April 9: **No class** due to the last day of Passover.

Friday, April 10: Book II, ch. I, §§1–6 and 23–5, and ch. II (all). (This lecture will be at the usual class time, 5:20–6:55pm, via Zoom only.) (Lecture on YouTube.)

Monday, April 13: Locke, *Essay*, Book II, ch.'s IV, VI, and VII (all); ch. VIII, §§7–26; ch. IX, §§1–4 and 11–15; ch. X, §§1–2; ch. XI, §§1–10. (This lecture will be at the usual class time, 5:20–6:55pm, via Zoom only.) (Lecture on YouTube.)

Tuesday, April 14: Locke, *Essay*, Book II, ch. XII (all); ch. XIII, §§1–14 and 19; ch. XIV, §§1–6 and 17; ch. XVI, §§1–5; ch. XVII, §§1–3, 7–8, 12, and 15. ME #1 due. (Lecture on YouTube.)

Thursday, April 16: Locke, *Essay*, Book II, ch. XX, §§1–2 and 15–16; ch. XXI, §§1–14, 21–5, and 29; ch. XXII, §§1–4; ch. XXIII, §§1–12; ch. XXV (all); ch. XXVI, §§1–2; ch. XXVII, §§1–3, 8–10, and 26. (Lecture on YouTube.)

Tuesday, April 21: Locke, *Essay*, Book II, ch. XXVIII, §§4–11; ch. XXIX, §§1–6; ch. XXXI (all); and ch. XXXIII, §§1–8 and §17. ME #2 due. (Lecture on YouTube.)

Thursday, April 23: Locke, *Essay*, Book III, ch. I, §§1–2; ch. II (all); ch. III, §§1–8, 11–12, 15–18; ch. IV, §§1–7; ch. VI, §§1–10, 28–30, 33, 39; ch. IX, §§15–16; ch. X, §§1–10, 14, 17–18, 34. due. (Old lecture on YouTube.)

Tuesday, April 28: Locke, *Essay*, Book IV, ch. I (all); ch. II, §§1–7, 14–15; ch. III, §§1–21; ch. IV, §§1–13; ch. VI, §§1–9; ch. VII, §§1–3 and 15–16. ME#3 due. (Old lecture on YouTube.)

Wednesday, April 29: **First paper due.**

Thursday, April 30: Locke, *Essay*, Book IV, ch.'s VIII–IX (all); ch. X, §§1–11; ch. XI, §§1–4, 8, 12–13; ch. XIV (all); ch. XVII, §§1–3, 5–13; ch. XVIII (all). ME #4 due. (Lecture on YouTube.)

Tuesday, May 5: Berkeley, *Principles*, Introduction (pp. 7–23). No ME due. (Lecture on YouTube.)

Thursday, May 7: Berkeley, *Principles*, §§1–84 (pp. 23–56). (Old lecture on YouTube.)

Tuesday, May 12: Berkeley, *Principles*, §§85–end (pp. 56–87). (Lecture on YouTube.)

Thursday, May 14: Hume, *First Enquiry* (i.e., *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*), §§1–4. ME #5 due. (Lecture on YouTube.)

Tuesday, May 19: Hume, *First Enquiry*, §§5–7. No ME due. ME #6 due. (Lecture on YouTube.)

Wednesday, May 20: **Second paper due.**

Thursday, May 21: **No class** due to Shavuot (which begins this evening).

Tuesday, May 26: Hume, *Treatise*, Book I, Part II. ME #7 due. (Old lecture on YouTube.)

Thursday, May 28: Hume, *Treatise*, Book I, Part IV, §§2 and 4. ME #8 due. (Lecture on YouTube.)

Monday, June 1: Hume, *Treatise*, Part IV, §§6–7; Appendix, from “I had entertain’d some hopes” through “that will reconcile those contradictions.” (This lecture will be at the usual class time, 5:20–6:55pm, via Zoom only.) (Lecture on YouTube.)

Tuesday, June 2: *Second Enquiry* (i.e., *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*) §§I–IV. **Introductory paragraph and outline of final paper due.** ME #9 due. (Old lecture on YouTube.)

Thursday, June 4: Hume, *Second Enquiry* §§V and IX. No ME due. (Lecture on YouTube.)

Tuesday, June 9: **Final paper due.**