Syllabus (8/7/12)

Modern Philosophy (PHH3400)
Dr Stewart Duncan
Fall 2012, Section 07DC

This course is an introduction to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European philosophy. We will focus on four prominent philosophers of the period: Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, and Hume. We will also look more briefly of the work of several of their contemporaries, making particular use of the anthology *Women Philosophers of the Early Modern Period*, edited by Margaret Atherton. The course will focus on the philosophers' views in metaphysics and epistemology, but will also consider views in the physical sciences and in ethics. The class meets on Tuesdays from 1:55 to 2:45pm and on Thursdays from 1:55 to 3:35pm in 0239 Larsen Hall.

The best way to contact me (outside class and office hours) is by email at sdrd@ufl.edu. You can also call my office at 352-273-1808. I will have office hours on Tuesdays from 3:30 to 5:00pm and on Thursdays from 12:00 to 1:00pm in 330A Griffin-Floyd Hall. If you can't meet at these times, you can arrange an appointment: please email me to do this.

This syllabus, and other information about the class, will be available on the e-Learning site at https://elearning2.courses.ufl.edu/portal/site/PHH3400-Fall2012.

Texts

I have ordered four books for the class.


The Past Masters database, to which UF subscribes, has good electronic versions of the Descartes, Locke, and Hume texts. As long as you are on the campus network, you can access these at http://library.nlx.com/xtf/search?browse-collections=true. The Descartes texts are in the 'Continental Rationalists' collection, in the volume *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes. Volume 1*. The Locke and Hume texts are in the 'British Philosophy: 1600-1900' collection. There is also a good electronic edition of the Hume text at davidhume.org. Good electronic versions of the texts in the Atherton volume are harder to find. I will post links to relevant versions during the semester, if I have them.

There are many other editions of Descartes, Locke, and Hume available. The ones listed above are of good quality, and relatively cheap. The best alternative Descartes editions are various books published by Cambridge University Press. These are good, if you have them, but are more expensive than the Hackett volume. The same is true of the Locke and Hume editions published by Oxford University Press. If you have questions about other editions, please ask me. Be particularly careful about editions printed from freely available ebooks or scans of old editions: these are not worth the money.

Some other readings - in particular, three essays of Leibniz's - will be available online. They are in the Past Masters database, and I will link to them from the e-Learning site. If you really want a book, the one you want is Hackett's G.W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, edited by Ariew and Garber. But for three essays, it's probably not worth it.

Assignments

Your grade for the course will be determined by your grades on four assignments, two papers and two exams.

Papers

Each paper assignment will ask you to write a paper of about 1500 words on one of two assigned topics. Each paper will count for 25% of your grade for the course.
The first paper will be due at 5:00pm on Friday September 21. The second paper will be due at 5:00pm on Tuesday November 20. In each case, topics will be made available two weeks before the deadline.

All paper submission will be done on e-Learning. Any papers submitted late without a good excuse will be penalized two points (on a hundred-point scale) for every day they’re late. No papers will be accepted after the end of classes (more precisely, after 11:55pm on Wednesday December 5). If you fail to submit a paper, you will receive a grade of zero for it.

Exams

The midterm exam will count for 20% or your grade for the course, and the final will count for 30%.

The midterm exam will be held in class on Tuesday October 23. Make-up midterm exams will only be given if you have a good, documented excuse. No makeup midterms will be given after December 5.

The final exam will be held on Thursday December 13th, from 10am to 12pm. (The exam schedule code is 13B.) It will be in our usual classroom. Make-up final exams will only be permitted in those few situations that justify the awarding of an incomplete grade for the class.

More details about the format of the exams will be made available during the semester.

Grades

All assignments will be given a numerical grade. At the end of the semester, your overall numerical grade will be calculated, based on your grades for and the relative weights of the assignments. This numerical grade will be converted to a letter grade using the following scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>86.67</td>
<td>89.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>83.33</td>
<td>86.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>83.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>76.67</td>
<td>79.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>73.33</td>
<td>76.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>73.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>66.67</td>
<td>69.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>63.33</td>
<td>66.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>63.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>56.67</td>
<td>59.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>56.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic honesty

You must abide by the university’s academic honesty policy. See http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php.

You should expect the minimum penalty for academic dishonesty to be a grade of E for the class (not just the assignment). All incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. Repeat offenders may be penalized by suspension or expulsion from the university.

You should by this stage have a good idea of what constitutes plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. I will also review this when handing out paper assignments. If you have any questions about this, ask me before it’s too late.

All paper assignments will be automatically submitted to turnitin.com, an anti-plagiarism service to which UF subscribes. You will be able to see its report on your paper.

Accommodations for students with disabilities
Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

**Classroom policies**

You are expected to attend all classes, to arrive on time and not to leave early.

*My aim is to have a classroom atmosphere that is both serious and relaxed. Discussion is encouraged, but talking to your neighbor about what you did last night is not. Things will go well if you (i) come to class prepared and (ii) avoid behavior that is rude or distracts others.*

I'm happy for people to use laptops and other electronic devices for purposes immediately related to the class (taking notes, checking texts, etc). Other use of laptops, phones, etc is a distraction, and is not allowed.

**Schedule**

After an introductory class on 8/23 the class will be divided into four main sections. In each section we will look at the work of one of the four main figures (Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, or Hume) and one or more of their contemporary critics.

Note that we have a single period class on Tuesdays, and a double period class on Thursdays.

Here is a more detailed schedule for the first section, on Descartes.

**Descartes and his critics**

T 8/28 Descartes's *Discourse*, Parts 1-3  
R 8/30 Descartes's *Discourse*, Part 4  
T 9/4 Descartes's *Discourse*, Parts 5-6  
R 9/6 Elizabeth against Descartes (Atherton, 11-21)  
T 9/11 Hobbes against Descartes (online reading)  
R 9/13 Cavendish against Descartes and Hobbes (Atherton, 24-45)