PHH 3401  U01A [54971] 16th and 17th Century Philosophy

Course Syllabus For Summer A Term 2011—Dr. Hauptli  Ziff 110

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays from 12:30-1:45

Course Web-site:

www.fiu.edu/~hauptli/PHH3401.html

The web-site has a copy of the syllabus, extensive lecture supplements for each of the readings and lectures, and other information relevant to the course. It will be updated throughout the semester. Students are encouraged to provide me with suggestions and comments about the content, and I am grateful for help in correcting the inevitable typos and grammatical errors!

Course Description:

The basic concerns and teachings of representative European Continental philosophers of the 16th and 17th centuries (especially Descartes, Pascal, Leibniz, and Spinoza) are emphasized in this course.

Course Objectives:

This course introduces students to the philosophical problems, positions, and methodologies which were of central concern to the 16th and 17th philosophers of the European continent. Descartes, Pascal, Leibniz, and Spinoza will be studied and both the historical and contemporary importance of their views will be highlighted. This course is a part of the Department's sequence of courses in the history of philosophy (other such courses include: Ancient Philosophy, Medieval Philosophy, British Empiricism, Late Modern Philosophy, and Twentieth Century Philosophy). All of these courses are intended to provide students with an introduction to philosophy via a study of representative major figures in the different philosophical periods of the Western philosophical tradition. These courses are designed so that students may take them in any order (the study of the later periods is not dependent upon prior study of the earlier ones).

In this course students should become familiar with the problems, positions, and methodologies of the philosophers studied. Students should also become familiar with the interpretation of texts; they should enhance their ability to provide balanced exposition and examination of philosophical problems, positions, and methodologies; and they should come to understand the philosophical activity of criticism of doctrines and things commonly taken for granted. In addition to introducing students to the representative thinkers mentioned above, then, this course is intended to enhance the student's critical reading, writing, and speaking skills.

Texts: there are many translations and editions of the core works we are going to be reading and studying. I am completely comfortable with students using other translations and editions [even with their reading the texts in other languages than English—though note that the lectures, discussions, and student papers must be in English]. The translations and editions listed below
are the best compromise between quality and cost that I have been able to find, and for this reason I have selected them. Indeed, students can find free fully electronic versions of all the required texts and may choose to use them. Please see, however, the note in regard to Pascal's *Pensées* below. All the required and recommended readings are available in the University Bookstore on the Modesto Maidique Campus. The books are listed in the order in which we will be reading them.

Rene Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy* (fourth edition), trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998). ISBN: 0-87220-420-0. We will only be reading the *Meditations*, but there are portions of the *Discourse* which are valuable for students.

Blaise Pascal, *Pensées and Other Writings*, trans. Honor Levi, ed. Anthony Levi (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2008). ISBN: 0199540365. There are two significantly divergent scholarly versions *Pensées* [C₁ and C₂] and I concur with the analysis of Levi in his “Notes on the Text” (pp. xxxviii–xxxix), and have selected his translation and organization of C₂ version. The two versions differ significantly in the ordering and numbering of the textual materials. If students choose another edition, they may find it very difficult to follow along if their text is based upon C₁!


I recommend that students also purchase: *Women Philosophers of the Early Modern Period*, ed. Margret Atherton (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994). ISBN: 0-87220-260-3. I will refer to it at several points in the course (and in the PHH 3402: British Empiricism, which is offered in Fall 2011)—the references to it are listed immediately below in the Readings section. It is not required, however.

**Readings:**

Rene Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy* [1641]:
- Read all six meditations. Also recommended: Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia and Rene Descartes: “Selections from Correspondence” (pp. 9-21 of Atherton text).
Blaise Pascal: *Pensées* [1670]:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fragments</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>141-164</td>
<td>35-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>181</td>
<td>51-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>199-225</td>
<td>60-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230-240</td>
<td>66-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>680-682</td>
<td>152-166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>688-690</td>
<td>168-173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Memorial”</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Baruch Spinoza: *The Ethics* [1677]:

- Part I—read complete Part (including the Appendix);
- Part II—read Definitions, Axioms, and Propositions 1-13, and 31-47;
- Part III—read Preface, Definitions, and Propositions 1-11 (including its scholium);
- Part IV—read Preface, Propositions 1-8, Scholium to Proposition 18, 32-37 (including its two notes), and 62-73 (including its Scholium);
- Part V—read Preface, Propositions 1-4 (including Scholium), and 32-42 (end).

Gottfried Leibniz: *Discourse on Metaphysics* [1686]; and *The Principles of Philosophy, or, The Monadology* [1714].

Also recommended: Anne Viscountess Conway: selections from *Principles of Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy* (pp. 46-76 of Atherton text); and Damaris Cudworth (Lady Marsham) and Gottfried Leibniz: "Selections from Correspondence" (pp. 77-95 of Atherton Text).

**Requirements and Policies:**

The following requirements and policies will apply for this course, and students should read them carefully as I adhere rather strictly to them. I do not accept claims to ignorance in their regard. I apologize in advance for the length, tone, and specificity of this discussion, but irksome experiences over time have shown that it is wise to clearly specify these items.

1. **Regular class attendance is required:** after the first two class meetings attendance will be taken via a roll sheet which will be passed around the class five minutes after class has begun—the roll sheet will quickly circulate and students who arrive later than ten minutes into the class period will need to explain (immediately after class) their lateness to have their attendance count that day (otherwise they will be counted as only partially present). Students must attend for the whole class period, and those who leave before the class period is over will be counted as absent. Students who miss no more than one class will have their course grade raised by one third of a letter grade (B to B+, etc.). Students who miss three classes will have their course grade lowered by one third of a letter grade (C+ to C, etc.), students who miss five classes will have their course grade lowered by two thirds of a letter grade (C+ to C-, etc.), students who miss seven classes will have their course grade lowered by one letter grade (C to D, etc.), additional absences will be treated according to this progression. Students arriving after the roll has circulated will (unless their excuse is accepted after class) be treated as either two-thirds or one-third absent for that day (depending upon the extent of their tardiness).
Jury duty and absence to represent the University at approved events are the only excuses which will be accepted for the first absence, only extraordinary excuses will be accepted for the second and subsequent absences, and multiple excuses for any individual are viewed with ever-increasing skepticism. Only verifiable excuses will be allowed, and they must be presented to me in person—messages on my voice mail do not count as excuses. Excuses should be presented as soon after the absence as possible (students who wait till the end of the semester to offer excuses for early absences need to meet a high burden of verification for the absence to be excused). Please note that I check with Doctors' offices, hospitals and funeral homes; and I will only rarely accept work-related excuses (which should be offered before the absence).

2. **Appropriate conduct is expected in class:** I expect students to **turn off portable phones** and beepers, and to have reset or muted any distracting watch alarms. Courteous consideration others is a fundamental element in the classroom. I expect students to refrain from engaging in private conversations, noisy snacking, and only in the case of emergencies should students momentarily leave the classroom while class is in session. In short, students are expected to comport themselves in a manner which does not interfere with instruction and learning. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

3. **Regular reading is assumed:** students who do not do their readings will have difficulty with the requirements and students who do not attend class will have difficulty with their readings. I strongly recommend that students do the readings several times—at least once before the class in which they will be discussed and once after the class. Extensive lecture supplements are available on-line through my web-site, and I am available in my office to discuss readings, paper topics, etc.

4. **Papers, examinations, and deadlines:** because writing is important to philosophy, students in this course will be required to write two critical, analytical or expository philosophy papers each of which should be approximately 2,000 words long (equivalent to eight double-spaced typewritten pages of 250 words per page). This indication of length is meant as a guide to the student—papers much shorter than the indicated length are unlikely to have adequately addressed one of the assigned topics. Papers may, of course, be longer than the indicated length. The papers should be typed and are due in my office by 4:15 P.M. on the following dates: **Monday, June 6, and Monday, June 20.** There will also be two closed book and closed notes in-class essay exams—a midterm exam on **Thursday, May 26** and a final exam on **Thursday, June 23.**

A supplement entitled "Writing Philosophy Papers" is available on the course web-site. It describes what critical, analytical or expository philosophy papers are like, and this handout also provides a list of "grader's marks" which I employ in grading papers and exams.

Together the papers are worth 60% of the grade (30% each) and the exams are worth 40% (20% each). Students must submit all papers and take all exams to pass the course—that is, failure to complete any of the course requirements will result in a grade of F for the course. Therefore, students who do not turn in a paper or take an exam on time must nonetheless submit that paper or take a make-up exam if they wish to pass the course (grades higher than an F are...
given only for performance and accomplishment; and late papers and make-up exams may demonstrate these, while unfulfilled requirements demonstrate neither). An incomplete will not be assigned simply because work is late—after the designated final exam day, if a student has not been granted an extension and any required work has not been turned in, the student will receive a grade of F for the course.

5. **Grading Scale:** in grading papers and exams, and in calculating the course grade, I use the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+/A-</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-/B</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C/C+</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The “split” grades (B+/A-, for example) are assigned when the work is between the indicated grades. Of course, these split grades can not be used for the ultimate course grade, and thus the grades for the various individual papers and exams are calculated using the percentages indicated above (and adding or subtracting the appropriate fractional consideration in accordance with the attendance policy). For the overall course grade the above point equivalents constitute the minimum necessary to receive the indicated grade (thus students must earn at least a 3.67 to receive an A-).

6. **Extensions and late work:** I indicate the due dates for the papers and the exam dates above. Moreover, I hand out paper topics so that students generally have at two weekends to work on their papers, and I hand out sample exam questions in advance of examinations. There should, then, be little call for extensions. Before the due date I will consider reasonable requests for extensions. Note, however, that excuses do not guarantee extensions, and excuses offered after due dates are far, far less successful than those offered before due dates. If I grant an extension to a student, that extension will establish a new due date, and that date must be met (or in extraordinary circumstances, an additional extension may be arranged [but only when it is requested prior to the (extended) due date]). Please note that requests for extensions must be made directly to me—neither my secretary nor your doctor may grant extensions for this course, and last minute calls to my voice-mail provide no assurance of extensions. On and after the due date, only an extraordinary request will be accepted (acceptable examples: hospitalization on due date, extremely serious personal problem, death in the immediate family; unacceptable examples: running out of time and flat tires).

Papers are due in my office in the Philosophy Department by 4:15 P.M. on the due date—papers turned in after 4:15 will be treated as if they were turned in the next day. The additional time on the due date beyond the time when the class meets is offered so that students who need additional time that day may attend class on the due date, and avoid suffering from the provisions of the attendance policy noted above. Students who turn their papers in at the office rather than in class should give them to the Department secretary so that the date and time may be noted on the papers. Papers submitted after 4:15 but before 4:15 P.M. the next day will receive a one-third decrease in grade (example: B+ changes to a B), papers turned in two days late will receive a two-thirds grade decrease, additional days will be treated according to this
progression, but papers turned in between 4:15 on Fridays and 9:00 on Mondays will be counted as turned in on Monday morning, and will be assessed a "double penalty" for each weekend day). A paper turned in one week late, then, would receive a 9/3 grade reduction (an A paper would receive a D). Clearly, students have a strong incentive to contact me if they are going to be unable to turn their papers in on time—failure to do so may have serious consequences in terms of the course grade. If your paper is late, then, it makes sense to speak with me (after class, in my office, or on the phone)—when I am provided with a good reason, I will stop the penalties from continuing to pile on to those already assessed for the lateness.

7. Pass/Fail" grades:

In the absence of a University-wide policy, students in my courses must earn a grade of C- or better to receive a “Pass” if they have selected the Pass/Fail grading option.

8. Plagiarism and academic misconduct: when you engage in plagiarism you present as your work the opinions or arguments of someone else. Plagiarism is dishonest since the plagiarist offers for credit what is not her or his own. It is also counter-productive because it defeats a purpose of education—the improvement of the student's own powers of thinking, reasoning, and expression. Plagiarism may even occur when one expresses another's sequence of ideas, arrangement of material, or pattern of thought in one's own words. We have a case of plagiarism when a sequence of ideas is transferred from a source to a paper without a process of digestion, integration, criticism, and inquiry in the writer's mind and without acknowledgment (I have borrowed this statement, to a large extent, with permission, from the FIU English and Sociology/Anthropology Departments' descriptions of plagiarism). Academic misconduct occurs when the norms of inquiry are violated. Examples include students who present false Doctors' notes, who pretend that they have a family or medical emergency, or who seriously hinder other students' scholarly activities. I assign a course grade of F when I confront such cases, and I generally bring such students before the appropriate disciplinary body (the processes are set forth in the Student Handbook).

The University’s policies on Academic Misconduct and Code of Academic Integrity may be found on the FIU web-site at: http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/1acmisconductproc.htm

Penalties for such actions range from not being able to use the forgiveness policy to over-ride the failing grade, to dismissal from the University! Students should not live under the illusion that it is difficult to prove plagiarism or misconduct. Contemporary web-based search engines make it easier than it was ever before to detect such activities, and I routinely filter passages I am suspicious of through one or more such filters.

9. Office Hours (DM 341D):

Mondays and Wednesdays: 2:15-3:30; and by appointment.
Phone/Voice Mail: 305-348-3350
E-Mail: hauptli@fiu.edu
I check both voice and E-Mail several times a day, and I return my calls.

Fax: 305-348-1799—students should be aware that the line is a busy one (especially when papers are due and during exam periods), and they can check with the Departmental Secretary, Ms. Ivonne Carrasco, at 305-348-2185 to see if their faxes have been received.

10. Historical Background and Overview and Supplemental Readings:

Excellent background readings are available in three sources: first, the translator’s and/or editor’s introductions to the texts I have selected; second, Garrett Thompson's *Descartes to Kant: An Introduction to Modern Philosophy* (Prospect Heights: Waveland, 1997) [available at the Reserve Desk in the Green Library]; Richard Popkin’s *The History of Scepticism From Savonarola to Bayle* (N.Y.: Oxford U.P., 2003) [available at the Reserve Desk in the Green Library]; and, finally, *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*—there are lengthy sections on each of the philosophers we will study. Another excellent source is Frederick Copleston, *History of Philosophy: Descartes to Leibniz* v. 4 [1960] (Garden City: Image, 1963). It has chapters on each of the major thinkers we will study. His introductory chapter (pp. 13-73) provides an excellent overview to the historical period covered by this course as well as that covered by the next two “historical periods” (British Empiricism, and Kant’s philosophy) Copleston’s “Concluding Review” to *his* *History of Philosophy: From the French Enlightenment to Kant* v. 6 [1960] (N.Y.: Image, 1994], pp. 393-439 has an excellent summary of these three historical periods. In addition, the web-site version of this syllabus lists an extended number of recommended works for each of the authors we are studying.