

MODERN PHILOSOPHY

FALL 2020

INSTRUCTOR

Daniel John Sportiello, Ph.D.
Welder Library 103
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701-355-8109

OFFICE HOURS

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays,
1:00 PM–1:50 PM, and
Tuesdays and Thursdays,
10:00 AM–10:50 AM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Analysis of the major philosophical movements in the modern period. Figures may include Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, and Hegel.

COURSE OUTCOMES

This course asks you to do all of these:

- Identify some of the major figures in modern philosophy and summarize their key positions.
- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various philosophical positions.
- Outline the basic sequence of modern philosophy.
- Note that, to measure your attainment of these outcomes, you must do certain assessments.

ASSESSMENTS

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on twenty-two reflections, on three tests, and on an exam:

- Twenty-two reflections will determine twenty-five percent of your final grade. You must submit each reflection on Canvas prior to the start of the relevant class.
- Three tests will determine fifty percent of your final grade. You must submit each test on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.
- An exam will determine twenty-five percent of your final grade. You must submit this exam on Canvas prior to the end of the relevant day.

Note that, if you fail to do an assessment by the time that it is due—for any reason—then you may receive a grade of zero on that assessment. Because of this, you should not wait until the last minute to do any assessment! Note also that, to do well in these assessments, you must do certain readings.

READINGS

These readings are available at the bookstore—though you are free to buy them elsewhere:

- René Descartes. *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Edited and translated by John Cottingham. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. ISBN: 978-0521558181.
- Baruch Spinoza. *Ethics*. Edited by Matthew J. Kisner. Translated by Michael Silverthorne and Matthew J. Kisner. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. ISBN: 978-1107655638.
- David Hume. *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*. Edited by Stephen Buckle. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0521604031.
- David Hume. *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*. Edited by Dorothy Coleman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0521603591.
- Immanuel Kant. *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*. Revised edition. Edited and translated by Gary Hatfield. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. ISBN: 978-0521535359.
- Immanuel Kant. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Revised edition. Edited and translated by Mary Gregor and Jens Timmermann. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. ISBN: 978-1107401068.
- Anthony Kenny. *A New History of Western Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. ISBN: 978-0199656493.

Any other readings are available on Canvas.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP, BENEDICTINE VALUES, AND CORE COMPETENCIES

Servant Leadership, our Benedictine Values, and our Core Competencies are relevant to this course:

- One can be neither a servant nor a leader prior to liberating oneself from whatever stories have been imposed by others; this course is meant to provide that freedom.
- Though all six of our Benedictine Values are implicated in this course, at its heart is Hospitality—that is, a sort of vulnerability to the ideas of others.
- All four of our Core Competencies—Spirituality and Ethics, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Global Stewardship—are implicated in this course.

No doubt there are many ways to see how Servant Leadership, our Benedictine Values, and our Core Competencies are relevant to this course; likely several of these ways are legitimate.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Because discussion plays a crucial role in this course, it is crucial that you not only attend class but also listen attentively and contribute seriously to that discussion—not just

occasionally but every time that we meet. You should, in other words, be present at and participating in every class—unless, of course, you provide an official university excuse.

I reserve the right to fail you if you miss three classes without an official university excuse. This is in accord with the excessive absence policy, which is available for review online at http://catalog.umary.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=115#excessive_absences.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

It should go without saying that academic dishonesty of any sort is wrong. Worse than that, though, academic dishonesty reveals a serious confusion regarding the reasons that one is in a course in philosophy—or, for that matter, at a university—in the first place. Such dishonesty is occasion for as much pity as anger.

Academic dishonesty is presenting the work of another as your own. Whenever you copy the words of another, you must place those words within quotation marks and clearly cite their source. This goes not only for complete sentences but also for phrases.

As a deterrent, let me promise that I will prosecute every instance of academic dishonesty. But do not misinterpret this promise: if you feel that you do not understand something well enough to explain it in your own words—whether in this course or in any other—come to me for help. We will work together to overcome whatever difficulty stands in your way.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Though laptops, tablets, and smartphones are profoundly useful, they are also profoundly distracting. I write this as one too often bound by such distraction. Anyway, you may not use laptops, tablets, and smartphones in class unless, at your request, I have given you permission to do so.

COURSE INFORMATION

This course, PHI 320 01, meets for fifteen weeks on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2:00 PM in Welder Library 208. It is worth three credits, is an elective for the philosophy major and minor, and is graded according to the usual scale. (Note that there won't be any rounding.)

STATEMENT ON WORKLOAD

Since this is a three semester-credit undergraduate-level course lasting fifteen weeks, students can expect to spend a minimum of three hours a week instructional time and another six hours a week studying outside of instructional time.

STATEMENT ON EXCUSED ABSENCES

The University has a policy on excused absences related to sponsored or sanctioned activities and events. The policy is available for review online at <http://bit.ly/2thGRjo>. Students participating in such activities and events are expected to review this policy and comply with it. As long as appropriate prior notification is given according to this policy,

students and faculty reach a mutual agreement concerning make-up work, and students complete the work in question, faculty shall not penalize a student for missing a class or exam when they were granted an excused absence from the university. Any questions concerning the policy may be referred to the course instructor who may refer the question to the athletic director, the student activities director, or academic affairs for an answer.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to read the University of Mary's Academic Honor Code and Honor System and abide by all the standards of conduct and requirements contained therein. When a student is in doubt about whether or not an action might constitute an Academic Honor Code violation, he or she should request clarification from the instructor *before* the action in question is undertaken. The Academic Honor Code is available for review at <http://bit.ly/2t3ORSu>.

STATEMENT ON REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Mary, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and in the spirit of our mission, offers support for disabled students who provide the required documentation. Students with disabilities who need accommodations should apply to the Office of Student Accessibility Services. For further information, contact Dr. Lynn Dodge, coordinator of Student Accessibility Services, in the Student Success Center. You can reach her at 701-355-8264 or ljdodge@umary.edu.

COURSE COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

Dan Sportiello, Assistant Professor of Philosophy > Leroy Huizenga, Administrative Chair of Human and Divine Sciences > David Tamisiea, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences

STATEMENT ON SAFETY REQUIREMENTS (COVID-19)

University of Mary students are required to uphold their commitment to the COVID-19 university honor code, “Commitment to Community Health and Well-Being.” Above and beyond adhering to the agreed-upon standards for social distancing, because of the need to care for vulnerable members in the classroom while respecting their privacy, you may be asked to wear a mask in this class.

If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or have been notified to quarantine as a close contact of someone testing positive, or have tested positive yourself, in order to facilitate communication with me and your other professors, promptly send notice to stlife@umary.edu (just as you would for your residential situation), and the necessary communication process will be implemented. Students who need to be excused from class for reasons related to COVID-19 must follow this process of notification. In addition, if you need to participate in class remotely due to the need to quarantine, isolate, or due to an extended illness, you must complete a Temporary Change of Modality Form. Contact your advisor to receive instructions on accessing this form. Email your instructors a copy of this form as soon as you can so that they can communicate their expectations for remote participation in their courses.

STATEMENT ON EXCUSED ABSENCES (COVID-19)

Students who miss a class because they are awaiting the results of COVID-19 tests will be excused so long as they notify me prior to class and show proof that they were tested. Students who miss several classes because of quarantine, illness, or mitigation of risk will be excused so long as they complete a Temporary Change of Modality Form. (Contact your advisor in order to receive instructions on accessing this form. Please show me a copy of this form as soon as you can so that I can excuse any relevant absences and tell you my expectations for remote participation in the course.)

STATEMENT ON CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDING (COVID-19)

This course may be recorded for students attending remotely. Recordings will be posted to Canvas. They will be available only to students who are registered for this course unless I request your permission to record the course for use in future courses or in professional development—at which point I will ask you to complete a Record Release Form.

No less than I am required to maintain your confidentiality, you are required to maintain the confidentiality of any other students who are registered for this course. This means not making recordings available to students who are not registered for this course. Failure to maintain this confidentiality is a violation of the Academic Honor Code.

STATEMENT ON ETIQUETTE AND NETIQUETTE (COVID-19)

The following rules apply whenever you are participating in this course—whether in the classroom or online:

- Respect persons. This means, for example, raising your hand when you want to speak. The best way to do this online is by using the relevant feature of Zoom.
- Be professional. This means, for example, avoiding distractions to other students. The best way to do this online is by muting your microphone when not speaking.

Students who fail to observe these standards—and, as a result, disrupt the course—will be referred to the appropriate university official for disciplinary action in accordance with university policies.

1	Tuesday	September 8	Introduction		
	Thursday	September 10	Knowing	<i>Meditations</i> , §§ 1–2	Reflection 1
2	Tuesday	September 15	Knowing	<i>Meditations</i> , §§ 3–4	Reflection 2
	Thursday	September 17	Knowing	<i>Meditations</i> , §§ 5–6	Reflection 3
3	Tuesday	September 22	Knowing	<i>Enquiry</i> , §§ 1–5	Reflection 4
	Thursday	September 24	Knowing	<i>Enquiry</i> , §§ 6–9	Reflection 5
4	Tuesday	September 29	Knowing	<i>Enquiry</i> , §§ 10–12	Reflection 6
	Thursday	October 1	Knowing	<i>Prolegomena</i> , §§ 1–5	Reflection 7
5	Tuesday	October 6	Knowing	<i>Prolegomena</i> , §§ 6–13	Reflection 8
	Thursday	October 8	Knowing	<i>Prolegomena</i> , §§ 14–39	Reflection 9
6	Tuesday	October 13	Knowing	<i>Prolegomena</i> , §§ 40–56	Reflection 10
	Thursday	October 15	Catching Up		
7	Tuesday	October 20	Knowing		Test 1
	Thursday	October 22	Hoping	<i>Ethics</i> , § 1	Reflection 11
8	Tuesday	October 27	Hoping	<i>Ethics</i> , § 2	Reflection 12
	Thursday	October 29	Hoping	<i>Dialogues</i> , §§ 1–4	Reflection 13
9	Tuesday	November 3	Hoping	<i>Dialogues</i> , §§ 5–8	Reflection 14
	Thursday	November 5	Hoping	<i>Dialogues</i> , §§ 9–12	Reflection 15
10	Tuesday	November 10	Hoping	<i>Prolegomena</i> , §§ 57–60	Reflection 16
	Thursday	November 12	Hoping		Test 2
11	Tuesday	November 17	Doing	<i>Ethics</i> , § 3	Reflection 17
	Thursday	November 19	Doing	<i>Ethics</i> , § 4	Reflection 18
12	Tuesday	November 24	Doing	<i>Ethics</i> , § 5	Reflection 19
	Thursday	November 26	No Class		

13	Tuesday	December 1	Doing	<i>Groundwork</i> , § 1	Reflection 20
	Thursday	December 3	Doing	<i>Groundwork</i> , § 2	Reflection 21
14	Tuesday	December 8	Doing	<i>Groundwork</i> , § 3	Reflection 22
	Thursday	December 10	Doing		Test 3
15	Tuesday	December 15	Conclusion		
	Thursday	December 17	No Class		
16	Tuesday	December 22	No Class		Exam
	Thursday	December 24	No Class		