

近代西方哲学

Modern Western Philosophy

Course Number:	30690633	
Professor:	Tang Hao (唐浩)	cogitang@yahoo.com
Teaching Assistant:	黄睿昕	huang-rx25@mails.tsinghua.edu.cn
Lectures:	Tuesdays, 19:20 – 21:45	六教 6A112
Open Office Hours:	TBA	人文楼 524

Course Description:

In this course we will read and discuss works by several important philosophers in the Early Modern period of Western philosophy, namely Descartes, Malebranche, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley and Hume. The central topics will be in metaphysics and epistemology.

This is an **upper-level undergraduate** course. It is open to lower-level undergraduate students, but such students should consult the professor before enrolling. Prior training in philosophy is likely to be helpful, but is not strictly required.

All reading materials will be in English and will be provided by the professor. **All lectures will be in English.** Students can use either English or Chinese in discussion and in writing papers.

Student Work and Grades:

Participation: Live discussion is an important part of philosophy. Active participation in class is strongly encouraged and may help determine your grade (see below).

Papers: There will be two **paper assignments**: one required and one optional.

Oral Exam: There may be an oral exam.

Final Exam: There will be a **final exam**. The exam will cover everything that is covered in the course, but with greater emphasis on materials covered in the latter half of the course. It will be a closed-book, no-notes exam (闭卷考试).

Grades: Grades will be determined primarily by the quality of the papers and the final exam. Participation in class discussion might also be considered, but this would at most be a small factor. The oral exam, if it occurs, can impact your grade (either negatively or positively).

Note on Reading:

It is extremely important that you read the materials assigned for each week **before** attending that week's lecture. The only exception is the first week, for obvious reasons. **Your active engagement** with the reading materials is crucial if you are to do well in this course; attending lectures is only a small part of the work. The more you think independently about the materials before attending lectures on them, the more you will learn.

Schedule

(This schedule is subject to small changes during the course.)

Week 1: Introduction to the course

Allison Excerpts from his *Benedict de Spinoza, An Introduction*, pp. 25-29.
Woolhouse Chapter 1 ("Introduction") of his *Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz*, pp. 1-13.

Week 2: Descartes (Doubt, Certainty, Mind-Body Dualism)

Descartes *Meditation 1 and Meditation 2* (CSM II, pp. 12-23)
Descartes *Principles of Philosophy*, Part I, §§1-12 (CSM I, pp. 193-197)

Week 3: Descartes (Causal Arguments for the Existence of God)

Descartes *Meditation 3* (CSM II, pp. 24-36)
Descartes *Principles of Philosophy*, Part I, §§17-28 (CSM I, pp. 198-203)

Week 4: Malebranche (Occasionalism)

Descartes *Treatise on Man* (excerpt, CSM I, p. 100)
Descartes *Passions of the Soul*, Part I, §§30-36 (CSM I, pp. 339-342)
Malebranche *The Search after Truth*, Book 6, Part 2, Chapter 3 (pp. 446-452)
Nadler "Malebranche on Causation", in *Cambridge Companion to Malebranche* [read pp. 112-133 and skip pp. 133-136 (the final section)]

Week 5: Leibniz (Metaphysics)

Leibniz *Discourse on Metaphysics*, §§1-22 (AG, #8, pp. 35-55)

Week 6: Leibniz (Metaphysics and Epistemology)

Leibniz *Discourse on Metaphysics*, §§23-37 (AG, #8, pp. 55-68)

Leibniz *A New System* (AG, #17, pp. 138-145)

Leibniz *On Nature Itself* (AG, #21), the short editorial introduction (p. 155), §§5-6 (pp. 158-9) and §10 (pp. 160-1).

Jolley (optional) *Leibniz*, Chapter 2, “The metaphysics of substances: unity and activity”

Week 7: Leibniz (Monadology)

Leibniz *Principles of Nature and Grace* (AG, #28, pp. 204-213)

Leibniz *Monadology* (AG, #29, pp. 213-225)

Jolley (optional) *Leibniz*, Chapter 3, “The theory of monads”

Week 8: Locke (Attack on Innate Ideas and Basic Statement of Empiricism)

Locke *Essay concerning Human Understanding*

Book I, Chapters i-ii [skip the long note in I.i]

Book II, Chapter i, Sections 1-8 and 22-25 [skip Sections 9-21]

Book II, Chapters ii, iii, v, vi, vii [skip the long note in II.ii]

Lowe (optional) *The Routledge Guidebook to Locke's Essay* (2013)

Week 9: Locke (Philosophy of Mind and Epistemology)

Locke *Essay concerning Human Understanding*

Book II, Chapters ix-xi

Book II, Chapter xii

Book IV, Chapter I [skip the long note]

Book IV, Chapter ii, Sections 1-3, 6-7, 14

Week 10: [Holiday Break, No Class]**Week 11: Locke (Primary vs. Secondary Qualities and Epistemology)**

Locke *Essay concerning Human Understanding*

Book II, Chapters iv

Book II, Chapter viii

Book IV, Chapter 3, Sections 1-18, 21-22, 28 [skip long note in IV.iii.6]

Book IV, Chapter 4, Sections 1-5

Week 12: **Locke (Personal Identity)**

Locke *Essay concerning Human Understanding*
 Book II, Chapter 27 [skip the long note]

Week 13: **Berkeley (Immaterialism)**

Berkeley *Principles of Human Knowledge*, Part I, §§1-7
Berkeley *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, First Dialogue (pp. 154-190)

Week 14: **Berkeley (Immaterialism)**

Berkeley *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, Second Dialogue (pp. 190-208), Third Dialogue (pp. 208-230)

Week 15: **Hume (Skeptical Doubt and Skeptical Solution)**

Hume *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, §§1-5
 [Skim §1; read §2; read only the first three paragraphs of §3 and skip the rest. Concentrate on §§4-5 (skeptical doubts and skeptical solution).]

Week 16: **Hume (Attack on Necessary Connections, Skeptical Philosophy)**

Hume *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, §§7, 9, 12

Bibliography

- Allison, H. *Benedict de Spinoza, An Introduction*, revised edition, Yale University Press, 1987
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- Descartes, R. *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, translated by John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch, Cambridge University Press, 1985
- Hume, D. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding and Other Writings*, edited by Stephen Buckle, Cambridge University Press, 2007
- Jolley, N. *Leibniz*, 2nd edition, Routledge, 2020

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- Leibniz, G. W. *Philosophical Essays*, edited and translated by Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber, Hackett, 1989
- Locke, J. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 27th edition, 1836
- Lowe, E. J. *The Routledge Guidebook to Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Routledge, 2013
- Malebranche, N. *The Search After Truth*, translated and edited by Thomas Lennon and Paul Olscamp, Cambridge University Press, 1997
- Nadler, S. “Malebranche on Causation”, in *Cambridge Companion to Malebranche*, edited by Steven Nadler, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 112-138
- Woolhouse, R.S. *Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz – the concept of substance in seventeenth-century metaphysics*, Routledge, 1993