

Syllabus

PHIL 316
Modern Philosophy

MWF 2-2:50 p.m.
Instructor: Scott Hill

This course considers the metaphysical and epistemological systems of early modern philosophers starting with Descartes and ending with Kant. The main issue to be considered is the development of the idea that the physical world is a machine that can be explained mathematically and the implications of this view for debates about causation, knowledge, God, personhood, perception, and freewill.

Required Reading

I will put all reading assignments on Canvas.

Grading

Your grade will be determined by:

- Discussion: 12%
- 4 papers: 22% each

Discussion: Each member of the class will receive three color-coded single-use question cards with his or her name on them. The ranking of the cards will determine who is called on next. The ranking of the cards is as follows:

Red > Yellow > Green > hand with no card

If you want to ask a question or make a comment and would like to use a card, raise that card when attempting to get called on. Once called on, I'll collect your card. In order to get full credit in the participation category in a given two-week period, each member of the class needs to use all of their cards. At the beginning of each two-week period, I'll redistribute your cards. No more than two cards can be used on a single day. Cards are not transferable. If you lose your cards sometime during the two-week period, you won't be able to get full participation credit for that stretch of time. To use a card, the questions and comments need to be relevant and thoughtful. Also, to get credit for discussion over a two-week period, one must avoid use of electronic devices in class during that period. So remember to put away phones, computers, etc.

You may withdraw (although with a W on your transcript) until midsemester.

Academic Integrity

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and

adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and honorcode.colorado.edu.

Anyone caught violating CU's academic integrity policy (in any way) will automatically receive an F for this course, and may be subject to expulsion from the university. I take cheating very seriously.

Disability Services

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from [Disability Services](#) in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see the [Temporary Injuries](#) page and discuss your needs.

Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. Please let me know well in advance about any such conflicts, and we'll work together to resolve them. For more information about the university's policies on these matters, see colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor

with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.

Discrimination and Harassment

We at CU Boulder are committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at hr.colorado.edu/dh/.

Office and Office Hours

Scott's Office #: N210A, Kittredge Central, North Wing, 2nd Floor

Office Hours: Monday 12pm to 1:30pm and by appointment

I especially welcome questions through email.

Scott's Email: scott.hill-1@colorado.edu . (Note: I don't check my email on evenings or weekends.)

Class Schedule

(Tentative: Subject to Change)

Descartes' *The Meditations*

Week 1: 8/26, 8/21, 8/30

The Meditations I-IV

Week 2: 9/2, 9/4, 9/6

The Meditations V-VI

Elisabeth and Descartes *The Correspondence between Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia and Rene Descartes* (selected passages)

Week 3: 9/9, 9/11, 9/13

Cavendish *Philosophical Letters* (selected passages)

Cavendish *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* (selected passages)

First Paper Due

Leibniz's *The Monadology* and *Discourse on Metaphysics*

Week 4: 9/16, 9/18, 9/20

The Monadology (selected passages)

Week 5: 9/23, 9/25, 9/27

The Monadology (selected passages)

Discourse on Metaphysics

Spinoza's *The Ethics*

Week 6: 9/30, 10/2, 10/4

The Ethics (selected passages)

Week 7: 10/7, 10/9, 10/11

The Ethics (selected passages)

Second Paper Due

Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*

Week 9: 10/14, 10/16, 10/18

Essay Concerning Human Understanding Books I and II and III

Week 11: 10/28, 10/30, 11/1

Essay Concerning Human Understanding Books IV

Astell *The Christian Religion* (selected passages)

Berkeley's *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous* and *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*

Week 12: 11/4, 11/6, 11/8

Three Dialogues

Week 13: 11/11, 11/13, 11/15

Principles of Human Knowledge

Third Paper Due

Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* and *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*

Week 15: 11/25, 11/27, 11/29

Enquiry

Week 16: 12/2, 12/4, 12/6

Dialogues

Kant's *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*

Week 17: 12/9, 12/11

Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics

Fourth Paper Due