Fall 2016

Philosophy 326—001

17th and 18th Century Philosophy

**Instructor:**

Charles Joshua Horn, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: MW, 1:00pm—2:00pm; By Appointment

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**Course Information:**

Class Time: MW, 9:35am—10:50am

Class Location:CCC 126

**Course Description:**

November 2016 marks the 300th anniversary of the death of one of the most influential philosophers of the enlightenment, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. Although this course typically focuses on broader intellectual movements in the 17th and 18th centuries, this particular section of the class will aim to celebrate the life and thought of Leibniz, who made important contributions in the fields of metaphysics, epistemology, mathematics, physics, and philosophical theology, just to name a few. In this class, we will examine the major tenets of Leibniz’s philosophy and how they developed over the course of his lifetime—a lifetime which was heavily influenced by other towering figures in early modernity such as Descartes, Spinoza, Arnauld, Locke, and Newton. In particular, we will analyze Leibniz’s arguments that nature is thoroughly intelligible, that God freely created the best of all possible worlds from amongst a plurality of alternatives, that free will is compatible with determinism, and that the world is ultimately grounded in mind-like entities—not material bodies such as tables and chairs.

**Texts:**

Rental:

1. *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources (2nd Ed.)*

Ed. Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins

Hackett Publishing

ISBN: 978-0872209787

1. *Philosophical Essays*

Ed. Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber

Hackett Publishing

ISBN: 978-0872200623

1. *Bloomsbury Companion to Leibniz*

Ed. Brandon Look

Bloomsbury Publishing

ISBN: 1472523520

1. *Leibniz*

Nicholas Jolley

Routledge Publishing

ISBN: 0415283388

**Course Goals:**

By carefully examining metaphysics and epistemology in modern philosophy, students will develop critical thinking skills by engaging, analyzing, and evaluating texts in order to write well, speak articulately, and argue persuasively.

**Expectations:**

Students are encouraged to attend every class and remain for the entire time. Students must complete the necessary readings prior to class and be prepared for discussion and participation. Students will treat other students with respect. This means, turning off all electronic devices (cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc.) and addressing their peers in a respectful tone. It is important to note that the nature of this class will inevitably result in disagreements among colleagues; however, it is essential to maintain respect toward one another despite disagreement. Failure to meet any of these expectations could, and probably will negatively influence your final grade.

Additionally, this course will utilize the Desire2Learn online system to facilitate certain aspects of the class. It is required that you check in with D2L regularly to find class updates, submit assignments, check your grades, etc.

**Grading Criteria:**

Late work will never be accepted unless an extension has been granted by Dr. Horn prior to the due date. Extensions will only be granted in extreme circumstances. Additional prompts will be given out in class for each major assignment.

Final grades will be based upon (1) *three in-class exams* worth 20% each, (2) *one class introduction* worth 10%, (3) *one final essay* worth 10%, and (4) *one final group presentation* worth 20%. Assignments turned in late will *not* be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the professor.

1. Exams will be constituted by short answer and essay questions.
2. Each student must individually introduce a reading from the course schedule. Each presentation should last around 10-15 minutes. The presentation is *not* a summary of the material. Instead, it is a way to offer your own analysis about the reading. Presentations will be chosen on the first day of class.
3. The final essay will be between 5—7 pages and will be a critical response to Leibniz’s philosophical theology and influence on Kant. Additional details will be provided on a separate prompt. The final essay will be due by 2:30pm on December 16, 2016. A copy must be submitted to the DropBox on D2L in order to receive credit.
4. In the last two weeks of class, students will work in small groups to present on one of Leibniz’s famous correspondences with other figures in the 17th and 18th century. Each group will have roughly 30—35 minutes of class to both introduce, explain, and analyze their topic. Additional details will be provided on a separate prompt.

Students will be permitted four unexcused absences. Any absence after four will result in a 5% deduction from the overall grade. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class, so if students are late, they will not be counted present for the day.

Final grades in the course will be based on the following scale.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A Range**  **(90—100%)** | **B Range**  **(80—89%)** | **C Range**  **(70—79%)** | **D Range**  **(64—69%)** | **F Range**  **(0—63%)** |
|  | B+ (87—89) | C+ (77—79) | D+ (67—69) | F (<63) |
| A (94—100) | B (84—86) | C (74—76) | D (64—66) |  |
| A- (90—93) | B- (80—83) | C- (70—73) |  |  |

**Academic Integrity:**

Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism or helping others to commit these acts will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty could result in severe disciplinary action including, but not limited to, failure of the student assessment item or course, and/or dismissal from the University.

**Course Schedule:**

**The Last Universal Genius**

September 7 Syllabus/Course Introduction

September 12 Life and Works L, 14—35

**Leibnizian Idealism**

September 14 The Metaphysics of Substances: Unity and Activity L, 36—65

September 19 The Theory of Monads L, 66—92

September 21 Discourse on Metaphysics PE, 35—68

September 26 Leibniz’s Metaphysics: The Path to the Monadology BCtL, 89—109

September 28 Monadology PE, 213—225

October 3 Exam I

**Leibniz’s Philosophy of Mind**

October 5 Mind, Knowledge, and Ideas L, 93—124

October 10 Locke, *Essay* I. 1-2 MP, 316—322

Leibniz, Preface to the *New Essays* MP, 422—433

October 12 The Theory of Knowledge Handout (D2L)

October 17 Leibniz’s Theory of Cognition BCtL, 136—158

October 19 Exam II

**Leibniz and Freedom and Contingency**

October 24 Spinoza, *Ethics* I MP, 144—164

October 26 Human and Divine Freedom L, 125—154

October 31 Leibniz on Free Will BCtL, 208—222

November 2 Leibniz’s Theory of Modality BCtL, 159—173

November 7 On Freedom and Possibility PE, 19—23

On Contingency PE, 28—30

On Freedom PE, 94—98

The Source of Contingent Truths PE, 98—101

November 9 Exam III

**Leibniz’s Philosophical Theology**

November 14 The Problem of Evil L, 155—175

November 16 Leibniz’s Philosophical Theology BCtL, 192—207

**Leibniz’s Marks and Traces: Kant and Beyond**

November 21 Kant, the Leibnizians and Leibniz BCtL, 289—309

November 23 No Class—Group Presentation Preparation

November 28 Legacy and Influence L, 201—221

November 30 The Reception of Leibniz in the 18th Century Handout (D2L)

**The Leibniz Correspondences**

December 5 Group Presentations 1 & 2

December 7 Group Presentations 3 & 4

December 12 Group Presentations 5 & 6

December 14 Group Presentations 7 & 8