

# Modern Philosophy – PHH 3400

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<b><u>Professor:</u></b>	Jon Rick Philosophy Department <a href="mailto:jrick@ufl.edu">jrick@ufl.edu</a> Office: FLO 302 / Griffin-Floyd Hall, Room 302
<b><u>Professor's Office Hours:</u></b>	Wednesdays from 9-11 or by appointment
<b><u>Course Location/Times:</u></b>	Tuesday: Periods 5-6 (11:45am-1:40pm) in MAT 0116 Thursday: Period 6 (12:50pm-1:40pm) in MAT 0116
<b><u>Course Website:</u></b>	<a href="https://elearning.ufl.edu">https://elearning.ufl.edu</a> (Canvas)

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Modern Philosophy is an introduction to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European philosophy. In the first half of the term, we will focus on Early Modern-to-Modern theories of metaphysics and epistemology. In the second half of the term, we will turn our attention towards Early Modern-to-Modern theories of ethics and political philosophy. The thinkers we will cover will include René Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, Elisabeth of Bohemia, John Locke, David Hume, Lady Mary Shepherd, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

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## **REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS:**

No purchase of books is necessary for this course. All assigned readings will be available through the class Canvas page. Students are expected to have read the day's assigned reading prior to each class and discussion section meeting. A full list of the required readings for this course can be found in the Course Schedule, below.

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## **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES & DISTRIBUTION CREDITS:**

### **General Education Requirement and Objective:**

PHH 3400 is a Humanities (H) subject area course in the UF General Education Program. Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives. A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.  
<http://gened.aa.ufl.edu/program-area-objectives.aspx>

**Humanities Gen Ed SLOs:**

	<b>Content</b>	<b>Critical Thinking</b>	<b>Communication</b>
Humanities	Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used.	Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives.	Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively.

**Course Goals:**

This course is designed to introduce students to the practice of philosophy through the study of central political questions and arguments, as represented by a selection of historical readings in philosophy. Students will learn some of the basic principles of good reasoning, including how to understand arguments, represent them clearly and fairly, and evaluate them for cogency. Students will also learn to develop their own arguments and views regarding the philosophical questions studied in the course in a compelling fashion. In these ways the course aims to develop students' own reasoning and communication skills in ways that will be useful in any further study of philosophy they undertake and beyond the bounds of philosophy itself.

**Course Objectives:**

Students will demonstrate their competencies in understanding and assessing the philosophical theories studied in the course primarily via a set of assigned papers, in which they will be assessed for their abilities to: (i) understand and apply basic concepts of good reasoning, (ii) accurately and fairly describe and explain philosophical views represented in works assigned for the course, (iii) formulate arguments of their own while anticipating possible lines of objections and responding in a conscientious fashion, and (iv) speak and write clearly and persuasively about abstract and challenging matters of the sort raised by the philosophical material in the course.

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**REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS**

**Required Readings**

No purchase of books is necessary for this course. All assigned readings will be available through the class Canvas page. Students are expected to have read the day's assigned reading prior to each class meeting or breakout discussion section meeting. A full list of the required readings for this course can be found in the Course Schedule, below.

**Recommended Readings**

A terrific guide to general writing rules is Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*. The first edition is available online for free: <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>

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## COURSE REQUIREMENTS, EXPECTATIONS & ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Class Attendance:** You will be expected to attend all class meetings. But, you are permitted to miss 3 class meetings, without penalty, no-questions asked. For each class meeting missed (after the 3 freebies), without a legitimate excuse, you will lose 5 points – each student starts with 100 out of a possible 100 points. **Class Attendance is worth 5% of your final grade.**
2. **Participation:** Humanities learning is best realized through conversation. Participation will be assessed on the basis of contributing actively and with engagement as well as by completion of any in-section or discussion board assignments. **Participation is worth 20% of your final grade.**
3. **Short Paper Assignments:** You will be required to write three short papers for this course. Detailed instructions and prompts will be distributed two weeks prior to the due date of the short paper assignment.
  - (i) **Paper #1:** This paper will be due by 5:00pm on Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. Papers will be submitted via a canvas assignment link. **Paper #1 is worth 20% of the final grade.**
  - (ii) **Paper #2:** This paper will be due by 5:00pm on Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. Papers will be submitted via a canvas assignment link. **Short Paper #2 is worth 25% of the final grade.**
  - (iii) **Paper #3:** This paper will be due by 5:00pm on Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. Papers will be submitted via a canvas assignment link. **Short Paper #3 is worth 30% of the final grade.**

## ADDITIONAL COURSE EXPECTATIONS

1. **Short Paper Source Materials:** Unless otherwise specified, any source materials appealed to in your short paper assignments that do not come from assigned course texts, *must* be cleared with the professor at least 1 week prior to the due date of the assignment. If you do not clear additional sources with the professor 1 week prior to turning in your paper, you will be penalized (10% for each source not-cleared, *only if* the source is cited). None of the assignments for this class will require resources beyond the required readings.
2. **Text and Note Taking:** In each class meeting, we will be taking an in-depth look at the assigned readings for that session. You are expected to have a copy of the text available to you for reference, and you will benefit from being able to note the passages that are focused on in our discussion.

## SUMMARY OF GRADED REQUIREMENTS

5%	Class Attendance
20%	Participation
20%	Short Paper Assignment #1
25%	Short Paper Assignment #2
30%	Short Paper Assignment #3

Grading Scale		
Letter	4 pt. scale	100 pt. scale
A	4.0 (3.835-4.0)	94-100
A-	3.67 (3.495-3.834)	90-93
B+	3.33 (3.165-3.494)	87-89
B	3.0 (2.835-3.164)	84-86
B-	2.67 (2.495-2.834)	80-83
C+	2.33 (2.165-2.494)	77-79
C	2.0 (1.835-2.164)	74-76
C-	1.67 (1.495-1.834)	70-73
D+	1.33 (1.165-1.494)	67-69
D	1.0 (0.835-1.164)	64-66
D-	0.67 (0.495-0.834)	60-63
E	0.0 (0.0-0.494)	0-59

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## ESSAY SUBMISSION AND LATE SUBMISSION POLICY

In general, requirements for attendance, assignments, make-up work, and other work are consistent with university policies specified at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

More specifically, the following policies will be adhered to:

1. Any in-class assignments or activities will need to be completed during the class meeting in which they are assigned. These will If you have extenuating circumstances (consistent with the University guidelines detailed in the link above and are able to present a written excuse), accommodations may be made (but there are no guarantees here). You will need to contact the professor within 48 hours of the missed class meeting in order to determine whether accommodations can be made.
2. All written assignments will be submitted online via an Assignment/Turnitin.com link on the course's Canvas page. Essays must be submitted as either .doc or .docx files. Failure to submit in these formats will result in penalties and will require resubmission in the proper format.
3. Late submission of papers will be penalized 3% for each day that the assignment is late. For instance, if a paper is due on Friday at 5:00pm, it will be counted as 1 day late if submitted between 5:01pm Friday and 5:00pm Saturday (submissions between 5:01pm Saturday and 5:00pm Sunday will count as 2 days late, and so on). Late submissions will be made via Canvas/Turnitin.

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## COURSE WEBSITE

This course is supplemented by online content in the e-Learning environment known as "Canvas." To login to the e-Learning site for this course, go to <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>, click the **e-Learning**

in **Canvas** button, and on the next page enter your Gatorlink username and password. You can then access the course e-Learning environment by selecting PHI 3930 from the **Courses** pull-down menu at the top of the page. **If you encounter any difficulties logging in or accessing any of the course content, contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-4537.**

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### CLASS CONDUCT

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, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, 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.

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### CLASS RECORDING PROTOCOLS

Students are requested to ask permission of the Professor and Teaching Assistant if they wish to make audio or visual recordings of class lectures or discussion sections. Some class lectures and discussion sections may be recorded, and if they are, the following University of Florida guidelines apply: Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

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### HONOR CODE & PLAGIARISM POLICY

Most instances of academic dishonesty can be avoided by thoroughly citing the resources you have used to help you understand the topic on which you're writing. **If you have read something that helped you understand the material, cite it!** Failure to cite sources is the most common (and easily avoidable) academic offence. Use of Artificial Intelligence resources (e.g. ChatGPT) will result in a zero grade on a given assignment and may result in failure of the course. Detailed citation instructions will be provided with your essay assignments.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states:

“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is

either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of “E” for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows:

“A student shall not represent as the student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.”

Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

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## **COVID-19 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit [one.ufl](http://one.ufl) for screening/testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

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## **IMPORTANT CAMPUS & ACADEMIC RESOURCES**

### **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Health and Wellness U Matter, We Care**

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

**Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)** Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

**Counseling and Wellness Center:** <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575

**University Police Department:** 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies

**E-learning Technical Support**, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to

[Learningsupport@ufl.edu](mailto:Learningsupport@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

**Library Support** <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>

**Writing Studio** 2215 Turlington Hall, 846-1138. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

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### **EMAIL POLICY**

(1) If you need some practical information about the course you should **look at most recently updated syllabus or on the website.**

(2) If you want to discuss a substantive philosophical question you should bring it up in class or come to office hours. We will not be able to respond to in-depth, substantive questions about the readings or assignments over email. However, we are *more* than happy to discuss substantive questions of these sorts in office hours. So, please join our regularly scheduled office hours or schedule a separate zoom appointment. We will be happy to address short, logistical, non-substantive questions over email.

If, after reading (1) & (2) you still think you should email the Professor, you are welcome to do so at the 'ufl' address listed at the top of this syllabus. Please use your 'ufl' address.

**Emails received after 5pm may not be responded to until after 9am the following day.**

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### **COURSE EVALUATION PROCESS**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

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## HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE!

1. **Be sure to read the assigned material before class meetings.** This will help to ensure that our class time is quality time.
2. **After a class meeting, re-read the material for the session:** pay special attention to the questions that you had before. Hopefully the material will make much more sense to you now!
3. **Bring specific questions with you to class meetings.** If there are aspects of the readings you didn't fully grasp, you're probably not alone. Come to class ready to ask!
4. **See us in office hours:** Many of our course topics are complex. It's natural to have lurking (and new) questions even after class. That's what office hours are for! Come and see us. Don't be shy!
5. **Manage your time well.** Many students make the mistake of waiting until a few days before papers are due to start writing. This is not a helpful way to manage your time and efforts. Getting started early on your papers by formulating outlines and drafts will *really, really* help to improve your final product. The **same number of hours** devoted to the material BEFORE class can lead to a much more efficient use of your time, better understanding, and higher grades.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

**NOTE: COURSE CONTENT & SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

### WEEK 1: OVERVIEW & DESCARTES

#### Tuesday 1/9 – Course Overview

1. Review of Course Syllabus & Course Objectives

#### Thursday 1/11 – The Method of Doubt

1. René Descartes – *Meditations* (I)

### WEEK 2: DESCARTES

#### Tuesday 1/16 – The Quest for Certainty

1. René Descartes – *Meditations* (II-III)

#### Thursday 1/18 – An Epistemological Problem of Evil

1. René Descartes – *Meditations* (IV)



### WEEK 3: DESCARTES & ELISABETH

#### Tuesday 1/23 – What We Can Know & the Mind/Body Problem

1. René Descartes – *Meditations* (V-VI)

#### Thursday 1/25 – Elisabeth’s Challenge to Descartes

1. Elisabeth of Bohemia - “Letters to Descartes” (selections)

### WEEK 4: LEIBNIZ

#### Tuesday 1/30 – Leibniz’s Challenge to Descartes & Views on God and World

1. Gottfried Leibniz – “Letter to Elizabeth”
2. Gottfried Leibniz – “Letter to Molanus”
3. Gottfried Leibniz – *Discourse on Metaphysics* (1-9)

#### Thursday 2/1 – Truth, Causation, Harmony & Freedom

1. Gottfried Leibniz – *Discourse on Metaphysics* (10-22)
2. Gottfried Leibniz – “Primary Truths”

### WEEK 5: LOCKE

#### Tuesday 2/6 – Against Innate Ideas

1. John Locke – *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1.1-1.4)
2. John Locke – *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (2.1-2.8)

#### Thursday 2/8 – Substance, Mind, Body & Identity

1. John Locke – *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (2.22, 2.23, & 2.27)

**First Paper is Due by 5:00pm on Saturday, 2/11 via Canvas/Turnitin**

### WEEK 6: LOCKE

#### Tuesday 2/13 – Knowledge

1. John Locke – *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (4.1-4.4)

#### Thursday 2/15 – Power & Freedom

1. John Locke – *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (2.21)

**WEEK 7: LOCKE**

**Tuesday 2/20 – TBD**

1. **John Locke** – *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (tbd)

**Thursday 2/22 – TBD**

1. **John Locke** – *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (tbd)

**WEEK 8: LOCKE**

**Tuesday 2/27 – Faith, Reason & Enthusiasm**

1. **John Locke** – *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (4.17-4.19)

**Thursday 2/29 – God & Morality**

1. **John Locke** – *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (4.10, 2.20, 2.22, 2.28)

**WEEK 9: HUME**

**Tuesday 3/5 – Ideas & Reason**

1. **David Hume** – *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (1-3)

**Thursday 3/7 – Sceptical Doubts**

1. **David Hume** – *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (4-5)

**Second Paper is Due by 5:00pm on Sunday, 3/10 via Canvas/Turnitin**

**WEEK 10: SPRING BREAK**

**Tuesday 3/12 – No Class**

**Thursday 3/14 – No Class**

**WEEK 11: HUME**

**Tuesday 3/19 – Causation**

1. **David Hume** – *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (6-8)

**Thursday 3/21 – Liberty & Necessity**

1. **David Hume** – *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (9-10)

## WEEK 12: HUME & SHEPHERD

### Tuesday 3/26 – Providence & Skepticism

1. David Hume – *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* (11-12)

### Thursday 3/28 – Lady Shepherd’s Critic of Hume

2. Lady Mary Shepherd – *Essay Upon The Relation of Cause and Effect* (extract)

## WEEK 13: HOBBS

### Tuesday 4/2 – State of Nature

1. Hobbes – *Leviathan*: Chps. 10-11, 13

### Thursday 4/4 – State of Authority

1. Hobbes – *Leviathan*: Chps. 14-18

## WEEK 14: LOCKE

### Tuesday 4/9 – Locke’s Political Psychology & Property Rights

1. Locke – *Second Treatise of Government*: Parts I-V

### Thursday 4/11 – Locke’s Social Contract

1. Locke – *Second Treatise of Government*: Parts XI, XVI (175-6), XVIII, XIX

## WEEK 15: ROUSSEAU

### Tuesday 4/16 – Rousseau’s Moral/Political Psychology

1. Rousseau – *Discourse on Inequality*: Part I

### Thursday 4/18 – Rousseau on Property & the Specious Contract

1. Rousseau – *Discourse on Inequality*: Part II

## WEEK 16: REVIEW

### Tuesday 4/23 – Review

- *No New Readings*

**Third Paper is Due by 5:00pm on Friday, 4/26 via Canvas/Turnitin**