

St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Philosophy
PHIL 100 Introduction to Philosophy II
Course Outline

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Office Hours: see online schedule: <http://people.stfx.ca/dalmaini/Al-Maini/scheduleDA.htm>

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PLEASE NOTE: LAPTOP COMPUTERS AND PHONES ARE STILL NOT ALLOWED IN CLASS.

Course Description:

A continuation of the first semester's introduction to the field of philosophy. We shall examine classic texts from the modern period forward that draw together deep insights into recurring philosophical topics such as human nature, metaphysics, knowledge, logic, value, art, ethics, and politics. The course aims to continue the work done at familiarizing students with logical ways of thinking, appreciating the value of philosophical enquiry in their own lives, and providing a basic understanding of some fundamental philosophical questions (and answers). Most of our texts were chosen in order to emphasize the on-going nature of the philosophical project: philosophy is a grand discussion about all aspects of reality that you are invited to join in. All of the texts used in this course have an ability to marry literary distinctiveness with profundity, and we shall investigate how both of these aspects work together.

Assignments:

Students will be required to complete in-class assignments, two short essays responding to the ideas presented in the texts and a final exam. The in-class work will be worth 20% of the semester's final grade, each response will be worth 25% of the semester's final grade. The final exam will be worth 30%.

The short essays will consist in an answer to the question provided below. We shall be looking for slightly longer analyses than in the first semester, and each response should be no less than 1500 words in length. Any shorter and your response will seem superficial; any longer and I might question the conciseness of your response.

Schedule:

Week	Topic	Readings
1 Jan 5	Epistemology, Certainty	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> 1-2
2 Jan 12	Dualism	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> 3-4
3 Jan 19	Proof for God's Existence	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> 5-6
4 Jan 26	Perception (1 st outline due)	Berkeley, <i>Dialogues</i> , 1 st Dialogue
5 Feb 2	Idealism (2 nd outline due)	Berkeley, <i>Dialogues</i> 1 st & 2 nd Dialogue
6 Feb 9	Skepticism (1 st essay due)	Berkeley, <i>Dialogues</i> 2 nd Dialogue
7 Feb 16	Atomism	Leibniz, <i>Monadology</i> (1-30)
8 Mar 2	Perception (1 st outline due)	Leibniz, <i>Monadology</i> (31-60)
9 Mar 9	Possible Worlds (2 nd outline due)	Leibniz, <i>Monadology</i> (61-90)
10 Mar 16	Modern Politics (2 nd essay due)	Kant, <i>Cosmopolitanism</i>
11 Mar 23	Alienated Labour	Marx, <i>Economic Manuscripts of 1844</i>
12 March 30	Pragmatism	Pierce, <i>How to Make Our Ideas Clear</i>

Short Assignments:**#1: due Feb 9th (1st Outline due Jan 25th; 2nd Outline due Feb 2nd)**

In Meditation III Descartes gives a proof for the existence of God that reaches its climax in section 22. Provide your best argument against Descartes' reasoning. In this assignment your first outline must give your best understanding of Descartes' argument, and your second outline is to take issue with some premise you stated in the first outline.

#2: due Mar 16th (1st Outline due Mar 2th; 2nd Outline due Mar 9th)

In the *Meditations*, Descartes uses the example of a wax block to support his position of not trusting the senses. What would Berkeley make of Descartes' reasoning here? In this assignment your first outline must provide an explanation of how Descartes' argument concerning the wax works, and in the second outline you must tackle that argument from Berkeley's perspective. Again, referencing of the two primary texts plus an explication of those references is expected in the essay.

Technical Considerations for Written Assignments:

- 1) All written assignments must be typed (black ink, please) and double-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt. font on pages with at most 1 inch margins. No extra line spaces between paragraphs. Indent the first line of a paragraph. Printing on both sides of a sheet of paper is quite acceptable.
- 2) Please no title pages. Also no "Works Cited" or "Bibliography" pages referring to one work; do bibliographic references in a footnote if you must. Please no enormously large-fonted things like titles, names, dates, course numbers, student numbers, phone numbers, or due dates that take up half a page of space. Your title, name, and student number at the top of the first page is quite sufficient. Please visibly number any multiple-page assignments. If for some reason you must hand in the assignment to the office, please include my name at the top of the assignment as well.
- 3) No duo-tangs, folders, binders, or paperclips. Loose sheets are acceptable, but do remember to number them.
- 4) Under no circumstances will emailed assignments be accepted. Please hand in your assignments at the start of class on the day they are due.
- 5) The late policy is a deduction of 3% per day that the assignment is handed in late. This course outline lets you know when assignments are due, and you have been given plenty of time to complete them. Consequently last minute excuses for not completing assignments on time will be met with skepticism.
- 6) Many of the above requirements are arbitrary demands on my part, but they really do facilitate the assessment of your work. If you do not follow them, your "Organization" mark will suffer.
- 7) Plagiarism is completely unacceptable. If you make use of an idea that is not of your own devising, you must cite the source of that idea. Failure to properly cite sources may result from removal from the course and expulsion from the school.