

College of San Mateo
Official Course Outline

1. **COURSE ID:** PHIL 175 **TITLE:** History of Modern Philosophy **C-ID:** PHIL 140
Units: 3.0 units **Hours/Semester:** 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours; and 96.0-108.0 Homework hours
Method of Grading: Letter Grade Only
Recommended Preparation:
 ENGL 100 or ENGL 105

2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**
Degree Credit
Transfer credit: CSU; UC
AA/AS Degree Requirements:
 CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E2c. Communication and Analytical Thinking
 CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5c. Humanities
CSU GE:
 CSU GE Area C: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: C2 - Humanities (Literature, Philosophy, Languages Other than English)
IGETC:
 IGETC Area 3: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: B: Humanities

3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**
Catalog Description:
 This course addresses 16th through 18th century philosophy with emphasis on broad epistemological and/or metaphysical developments of empiricism and rationalism in philosophical thought from Descartes to Kant and may include approximate precursors and successors.

4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**
 Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:
 1. Compare, contrast, analyze, and evaluate the views of the most influential Western philosophers and philosophical movements from a particular historical period (as found in primary or secondary sources) using the techniques of critical thinking.

5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**
 Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:
 1. Demonstrate mastery of critical philosophical skills to present accurately and to interpret the positions of 16th to 18th century philosophers, based on readings of their primary texts.
 2. Critically analyze and evaluate arguments, assumptions, principles, and methods of 16th through 18th century philosophers.
 3. Identify and understand the central issues and questions of Modern philosophy (metaphysical, epistemological, ethical, or political).
 4. Identify the central figures in the history of philosophy and understand their views.
 5. Study the problems that interested Modern philosophers, and the methods they employed to analyze those problems.
 6. Study the mechanics of arguments; learn how to apply basic principles of logic and critical thinking to philosophical arguments.
 7. Write essays that explicate and critically assess the views of Modern philosophers, or that compare and contrast divergent philosophical theories on some issue.
 8. Embody the qualities of an open-minded but critical thinker in the examination or formation of their worldview.

6. **COURSE CONTENT:**
Lecture Content:
 Instructors may choose any combination of a thematic or topical approach.
 1. Philosophical Theories or Schools of Thought, such as:
 - A. Rationalism
 - B. Empiricism
 - C. Skepticism

- D. Social Contract Theory
- 2. Major Topics in Philosophy, such as:
 - A. Epistemology
 - B. Metaphysics / Cosmology
 - C. Moral Theory
 - D. Political Theory
- 3. Authors / Influential Figures in the History of Western Philosophy, such as:
 - A. Galileo
 - B. Francis Bacon
 - C. Thomas Hobbes
 - D. Descartes
 - E. Leibniz
 - F. Spinoza
 - G. Locke
 - H. Berkeley
 - I. Hume
 - J. Kant

7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Discussion
- C. Guest Speakers

8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

Writing Assignments:

Students will write approximately 6,000 words to compare and contrast the views of influential Modern philosophers.

Sample essay prompts:

Compare and contrast Montaigne and Descartes on epistemological skepticism.

Compare and contrast Hobbes and Locke on their contractarianism: their accounts of human nature, the "state of nature," the rational justification of government, and the resulting Civil Society.

Compare and contrast Hobbes and Kant on morality and its relation to rationality.

Reading Assignments:

Students will read approximated 400-800 pages of texts to understand the issues and problems in philosophy, and to be able to analyze and compare texts using the methods of critical thinking.

Other Outside Assignments:

The recommended preparation for this course is eligibility for English 100/105. This ensures that students are minimally prepared to read sophisticated philosophical texts (primary and/or secondary sources) and produce written work on philosophical texts.

9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Exams/Tests
- C. Homework
- D. Papers
- E. Quizzes
- F. Written examination

10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Hackett Classics, 1996

- B. Descartes, Rene. *Meditations on First Philosophy*, ed. Hackett Publishing Company, 1993
- C. Leibniz, G.W.. *Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Essays*, ed. Hackett Classics, 1991
- D. Kant, Immanuel. *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, ed. Hackett Classics, 2001
- E. Kenny, Anthony. *A New History of Western Philosophy*, ed. Oxford University Press, 2012
- F. Melchert, N.. *The Great Conversation*, ed. Oxford University Press, 2014
- G. Berkeley, George . *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, ed. Hackett Classics, 1982

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Course Originator: Jeremy Ball