

Schedule of Lecture Topics, Readings, and Dates for Papers and Examinations

Note: if a reading is listed for a particular date, that's the date on which you must have the reading done!

Week Topic, (Reading)

Week #1

Aug. 24 (1) Introduction, (2) syllabus, (3-16) some historical, cultural and intellectual background concerning the early modern period (1620-1796) (List of philosophers)

Aug. 26 Why study the history of modern philosophy? Background to the *Meditations*: (1) mechanism vs. teleology; (2) Geometry of Matter vs. Rich Phenomenal Life World; (3) the Mathesis Universalis; (4) the 'frameworks clash' in *The Meditations*; (5) short refresher on validity and soundness (No readings--Logic Handout; History handout)

PART I: RATIONALISM

Aug. 28 Meditation 1: The quest for certainty, methodological skepticism, and the critique of common sense. (READINGS: Meditation I; OBJREP.ZIP 63-67)

Week #2

Aug. 31 Meditation 2: The cogito and the nature of the ego. (READINGS: Meditation II; OBJREP.ZIP 68-77)

Sep. 2 Med. 2 continued: the wax, Descartes' truth criterion and the role of rational intuition in applying it; Background for Meditation 3: Descartes' taxonomy of ideas, the distinction between objective and formal reality, and the grades of being. (READINGS: Meditation II *continued*; Handout #1—SAVE THE HANDOUTS!)

Sep. 4 Meditation 3: Stepping through Descartes's proof for God's existence from the nature of ideas. (READINGS: Meditation III; OBJREP.ZIP 78-89; plus Handout #2 & 2Suppl)

Week #3

Sep. 7 Labor Day (no class)

Sep. 9 Meditation 3 continued: Criticism of Med. III proof, Other Proofs, the Cartesian Circle. (bring Handouts 2 & 2Suppl with you)

Sep. 11 Meditation 4: Why God isn't a deceiver; how error is possible. (READINGS: Meditation IV; OBJREP.ZIP 90-94)

Week #4

Sep. 14 Meditation 4 cont'd/Meditation 5: The nature of the external world, Descartes's Med. 5 "ontological" proof for God's existence, and the role of Med. 5 in preparing for Med. 6's proof for the existence of an External World (EW). (READINGS: Meditation V; OBJREP.ZIP 95-106, plus Handout #3)

Sep. 16 Meditation 6: The existence of the external world and the mind-body problem. (READINGS: Meditation VI; OBJREP.ZIP 107-115)

Sep. 18 Meditation 6 cont'd: wrapping up Descartes. Intro to Leibniz. (no new readings)

Week #5

Sep. 21 Leibniz's world: The Monadology. (READINGS: To Come Online)

Sep. 23 More on Leibniz's world (same readings)

Sep. 25 Leibniz' most famous argument: The actual world is the best of all possible worlds! (Handout #4) (Same readings)

****First Paper Topics Available on Web/CU Learn.****

Week #6

Sep. 28 You ain't nothing but a Pangloss: Critical analysis of Leibniz's argument. Introduction to Locke. (Same reading.)