

Philosophical Inquiry into the Modern World

Course Code:	HUMA 3900 (2516)
Course Title:	Philosophical Inquiry into the Modern World
Course Offered:	Spring Semester 2020 (Feb 11, 2020 —May 9, 2020)
Course Schedule:	TUTH 12:00PM—1:20PM
Course Location:	Rm 2406, Lift 17-18
Course Instructor:	Eric S. NELSON (Professor, Philosophy, HUMA)
Office Hours:	TUTH 2:00PM—4:00PM and by appointment (Rm 2370)

Course Description:

This course will introduce students to basic concepts and arguments in modern European philosophy by examining the development of modern conceptions of knowledge, rationality, politics, the self, science, and technology in European philosophy and culture since Galileo, Descartes, and the emergence of the new sciences.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

1	Develop awareness of modern western thought and culture.
2	Develop skills in recognizing and evaluating ideas and arguments.
3	Develop skills in critical reading of texts and communication.
4	Learn different approaches and perspectives and develop one's own perspective.
5	Develop understanding of the arguments and development of modern European philosophy.

Course Outline

1.	Introduction: February 11 (TU) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the Course and introduction to Galileo, the Copernican Revolution, and the Emergence of the New Sciences
2-4.	First Attempts: February 13, 18, 20 (TH, TU, TH) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge, God, and the Self: A New Paradigm? René Descartes, <i>Meditations</i>• Personal Identity in Descartes and John Locke
5-6.	Good, Evil, and Human Nature: February 25 and 27 (TU, TH) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The New Sciences and Human Nature: Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, selections from <i>Leviathan</i> and <i>The Discourse on the Origins of Inequality</i>.

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7-8.	<p>Theodicy, Nature, and Natural Theology: March 3 and 5 (TU, TH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G.W. Leibniz, <i>Discourse on Metaphysics</i> • G.W. Leibniz, <i>The Natural Theology of the Chinese</i>
9-11.	<p style="text-align: center;">The Paradoxes of Knowledge: March 10, 12, 17 (TU, TH, TU)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Problem of Skepticism: David Hume, <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> • A New Copernican Revolution? Enlightenment and Critique: selections from Immanuel Kant, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i>
12.	<p>March 19: Assignment One In Class Quiz on Descartes to Kant</p>
13-15.	<p>Equality and Liberty: March 24, 26, 31 (TU, TH, TU)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> • John Stuart Mill, <i>On Liberty</i>
16-17.	<p>Worldview, Science, and Philosophy: April 2 and 7 (TH, TU)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilhelm Dilthey, <i>The Essence of Philosophy</i>
18.	<p>The Idea of Philosophy and the Question of Eurocentrism: April 9 (TH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edmund Husserl, <i>Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity</i>
19-20.	<p>Modernity and the Work of Art: April 14 and 16 (TU, TH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walter Benjamin, <i>The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction</i> • Martin Heidegger, <i>The Origin of the Work of Art</i>
21.	<p>Language and the Question of Skepticism: April 21 (TU)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G. E. Moore, <i>Proof of an External World</i> • Ludwig Wittgenstein, <i>On Certainty</i> (selections)
22.	<p>The “Second Sex” and Feminism: April 23 (TH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simone de Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i> (selections)
23.	<p>Philosophy after Auschwitz: April 28 (T)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hannah Arendt, <i>Origins of Totalitarianism</i> and <i>Eichmann in Jerusalem</i> (selections)
	<p>No Class: April 30 (TH) — Buddha’s Birthday Holiday</p>
24.	<p>Communicative Rationality and Democracy: May 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jürgen Habermas, <i>Three Models of Deliberative Democracy</i>
25.	<p>May 7: Assignment Two In Class Quiz on Marx to Habermas</p>

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26.	May 18: Assignment Three Final Short Paper due on Canvas
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Assignments:

- Final grades will be based on papers, quizzes, and participation in class discussion and in any in class individual and group assignments.
- All papers should be about the figures, topics, and questions in the course. Questions will be provided to you. Paper topic one questions will concern the first third of the course; paper topic two questions will concern the last two thirds of the course.
- HKUST upholds academic integrity and has a **no plagiarism policy**. For further information, see: <http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/student-1.html>

Assessment Tasks:

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| 1. Two In-Class Quizzes | 40% |
| 2. Final Paper (8-10 pages due on May 18) | 40% |
| 3. Participation in class and short projects: | 20% |

Attendance

- **There is no attendance requirement.** Attend class, as much as possible and as conditions allow, and be prepared to participate in class discussion when you are present.
- Most classes will be recorded and posted on Canvas. Most powerpoint (ppt) will be posted. When you are absent, you should read the ppt and watch the recorded lecture posted on CANVAS.

Course Readings

Selections in Modern European Philosophy. All readings and videos are available on CANVAS.