

**Saint Leo University**  
**PHI 310**  
**History of Philosophy II: The Modern World**

**Course Description:**

A survey of Western philosophical thought from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries; includes the reading and analysis of fundamental texts by significant figures of the period, such as Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche.

**Prerequisites:** Prerequisites include PHI 101-The Quest for Wisdom and REL 123-Foundations of Christian Faith or REL 124-Introduction to the Old Testament or REL 201-Introduction to the New Testament or REL 223-Religions of the World I: Western.

**Textbooks:**

Custom Text Book: History of Philosophy I & II; McGraw-Hill Education 2017;  
ISBN-10:1307191924/ISBN-13:9781307191929

Baird, Forrest E. *Philosophic Classics, Volume III: Modern Philosophy*. 6th ed. New York: Prentice Hall, 2011. Print. ISBN-13: 978-0-205-78389-2; ISBN-10: 0-205-78389-9

Baird, Forrest E., and Walter Kaufmann. *Philosophic Classics, Volume IV: Nineteenth-Century Philosophy*. 3rd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2003. Print. ISBN: 0-13-048550-0

Montaigne, Michel de. *Selections from the Essays*. Found here:

[http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3600?msg=welcome\\_stranger](http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3600?msg=welcome_stranger)

Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* Found here:

<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1641.pdf>

David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* Found here:

<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/hume1748.pdf>

Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics* Found Here:

<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/kant1783.pdf>

**Learning Outcomes:**

As a result of this course, students will:

1. Describe the historical evolution of philosophical ideas and schools of thought in the West from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.
2. Identify and evaluate some of the major ideas attributed to significant figures of the period, including Descartes, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche.
3. Demonstrate the ability to articulate their understanding of the major schools of thought of the period covered in relation to a critical reading and analysis of selected original texts (in translation).

**Core Values:**

*Excellence* (arête = virtue): One of the core values of Saint Leo University is excellence: "All of us, individually and collectively, work hard to ensure that our students develop the character, learn the skills and assimilate the knowledge essential to become morally responsible leaders." According to the ancient philosopher Aristotle a thing is excellent (virtuous) if it performs its function well, and since the proper function of a human being is to exercise reason, an excellent human being is one who thinks critically,

wonders contemplatively, and brings his or her reason to bear on action through the exercise of practical wisdom (*phronesis*). Reflecting this core value of excellence (*arête*), it is hoped that each student in this course will flourish both intellectually and ethically as a result of the encounter with classical texts of the Western tradition.

**Personal Development:** Another core value that is central to Saint Leo University's mission is the value of personal development: "All members of the Saint Leo University community must demonstrate their commitment to personal development to help strengthen the character of our community." It is hoped that through this course students will come to fulfill the Socratic injunction: "Know thyself!" Personal development begins by knowing where one stands. This is not an easy process, and it is more often than not quite painful, but the project of self-knowledge is nonetheless a rewarding effort, and it is hoped that the students of this course will work tirelessly to undertake this project as the opportunity for such reflection will be present at every turn.

#### Evaluation:

Personal Development Assignment	7%
2 Analytical Essays	15%
8 Quizzes – 3% each	24%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%
Discussions – 3% each	24%
Total	100%

#### Grading Scale:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	0-59

#### **Personal Development Assignment:** Due by no later than Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT of Module 8

In keeping with the Saint Leo core value of personal development, the primary purpose of this assignment is to give students an opportunity to reflect explicitly on how the material in this course has contributed to their personal development.

Directions: Write a 900 to 1200 word reflection in which you delve more deeply into the *single issue* that you enjoyed most in this course. The issue may be drawn from any one of the readings for any of the eight modules. This assignment must deal with a single issue and it *should not be limited to a summary* of some aspect of the module materials. In addition to, 1) explaining the issue, you must also 2) discuss your personal reaction to this issue and how it is relevant to your life-experience and 3) explain clearly how studying this issue has contributed to your personal development.

Please use a standard 10-12 pt. font and double space your paper.

The paper **must** contain citations to the text. All sources must be properly cited using MLA format. Information on the MLA guidelines is accessible via the Doc Sharing tab.

The grading rubric for the personal development assignment is also accessible via Doc Sharing.

### **Analytical Essays:**

The student will respond to each topic as stated below. The analytical essays are to be 1000 to 1500 words long and must be submitted to the Assignment box in DOC, DOCX, or RTF format. (The Assignment box is linked to Turnitin.) Please use a standard 10-12 pt. font and double space your paper.

The paper **must** contain citations to the text. All sources must be properly cited using MLA format. Information on the MLA guidelines is accessible via the Doc Sharing tab.

The grading rubric for analytical essay assignments is also accessible via Doc Sharing.

#### **Analytical Essay 1:** *Due by no later than Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT of Module 4*

Compare and contrast Hume's empiricist skepticism with Kant's transcendental idealism by focusing on the single issue of *causality*. Why does Hume reject real causality? How does Kant answer Hume's skeptical view of causality? Do you find Kant's response to Hume adequate? Why or why not?

#### **Analytical Essay 2:** *Due by no later than Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT of Module 7*

Compare and contrast Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics with the critique of metaphysical knowledge offered by Kant. In what ways does Nietzsche "go further" than Kant in his critique of metaphysics? Do you think Nietzsche's radical critique of metaphysics is justified? Why or why not?

### **Quizzes:**

At the end of each module students will take a short quiz on the material covered in the readings, lectures, and visuals for that module. Each quiz consists of eight multiple-choice questions.

### **Midterm Exam:**

The midterm exam consists of two short answer questions and one longer essay. The midterm will cover a selection of material from Modules 1 through 4.

### **Final Exam:**

The final exam consists of two short answer questions and one longer essay. The final will cover a selection of material from Modules 5 through 8.

### **Discussions:**

Class participation is an important, graded component of the course. All students are expected to adhere to the course syllabus and schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of what is happening in the class.

When preparing for the discussion assignments, the student should plan on, at a minimum, three separate discussion postings.

**Initial posting:** The first posting is due by midnight (Eastern Time) Thursday of the week in which the assignment is due. That first posting will reflect the student's take on the assigned material. That posting should be well thought-out and well-written and include appropriately cited online research and text references. A posting of at least 200 words is required.

**Response postings:** Everyone is expected to build the discussion by posting thoughtful and substantive interactive responses to your classmates' posts. Two instances of interaction are required and more are encouraged. Interaction should include constructive criticism (positive and negative) offered in a supportive, collegial spirit. In an active learning experience such as discussion, constructive criticism can be a very powerful learning tool if offered in this manner.

The deadline to post responses to peers is midnight (Eastern Time) Sunday. Responses of at least 100 words each are required.

### Course Schedule:

#### Module 1 Introduction and Background for Early Modern Philosophy

##### Objectives: When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Identify whether a deductive argument is valid or invalid, sound or unsound.
- Identify the historical factors contributing to the so-called “problem of authority” at the dawn of the modern era.
- Explain and evaluate the argument for skepticism (i.e., the problem of the criterion) raised in Montaigne’s *Apology of Raymond Sebond*.
- Identify the main features of Montaigne’s claim the powers of human reason to establish divine truths.
- Identify key components of Montaigne’s argument from Pyrrhonist skepticism to fideism.
- Identify the meaning and historical factors surrounding Montaigne’s position with respect to the arbitrariness of religious affiliation.

##### Assignments:

Items to be Completed:	Due no later than:
Read assigned materials	
Post an introduction to the class	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 1	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

#### Module 2 Early Modern Rationalism: Rene Descartes

##### Objectives When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Define the components of Cartesian foundationalism.
- Identify the major components of Descartes’ use of skeptical arguments in the first *Meditation*.
- Describe the key parts of Descartes’ solution to the problem of skepticism, i.e., the argument from *Cogito* to God to existence of the external world.
- Identify the major components of Descartes’ trademark argument for the existence of God.
- Explain and evaluate Descartes’ ontological argument for the existence of God.
- Identify the components and objections of at least one of Descartes’ arguments for mind-body dualism.

##### Assignments:

Items to be Completed:	Due no later than:
Read assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Quiz 2	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

### Module 3

#### Early Modern Empiricism: David Hume

#### Objectives

**When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Contrast Hume's empiricism with Descartes' rationalism.
- Distinguish between analytic *a priori* and synthetic *a posteriori* knowledge claims and identify with respect to Hume's Fork.
- Identify the key components of the problem of induction.
- Explain Hume's reduction of causality to "constant conjunction."
- Identify features of Hume's epistemological evidentialism.
- Evaluate Hume's argument against belief in miracles.

#### Assignments:

Assignment	Due no later than
Read assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 3	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

### Module 4

#### Copernican Revolution of the Mind: Immanuel Kant

#### Objectives:

**When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Identify the key components of Kant's argument against Hume's Fork with respect to mathematical judgments and the notion of the synthetic *a priori*.
- Identify the main features of Kant's conception of the ideality of space and time.
- Explain and evaluate how Kant's "Copernican revolution of the mind" enables a synthesis of rationalism and empiricism.
- Identify the key components of Kant's critique of dogmatic metaphysics as transcendental illusion.
- Compare and contrast Hume's empiricist skepticism and Kant's transcendental idealism.

#### Assignments:

Items to be Completed:	Due no later than:
Read assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Analytical Essay 1	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Complete Quiz 4	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
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## Module 5

### The March of God in Time: G.W.F. Hegel

#### Objectives:

**When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Compare and contrast Kant's critical philosophy and Hegel's absolute idealism regarding the ability of speculative reason to know unconditioned objects (God, freedom, and spirit).
- Identify the key features of Hegel's discussion of abstract thinking.
- Identify the major components of Hegel's notion of dialectical mediation.
- Explain and evaluate Hegel's notion of history as the dialectical movement of divine self-mediation of *Geist*.
- Identify key features of Hegel's arguments regarding the individual in history and the "cunning of reason."

#### Assignments:

Items to be Completed:	Due no later than:
Read assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 5	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Midterm Exam	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

## Module 6

### Materialism and History: Ludwig Feurbach and Karl Marx

#### Objectives:

**When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Identify key features of Feuerbach's critique of religion on the basis of the thesis that theology is anthropology.
- Compare and contrast Marx's historical dialectical materialism with Feuerbach's materialist humanism.
- Compare and contrast Marx's historical dialectical materialism with Hegel's historical dialectical idealism.
- Explain and evaluate Marx's theory of alienation in relation to his critique of capitalism.
- Identify the key components of Marx's argument that religion is the opiate of the masses.

#### Assignments:

Items to be Completed:	Due no later than:
Read assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 6	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

## Module 7

### The End of Metaphysics and the Death of God: Friedrich Nietzsche

#### Objectives:

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Identify the key components of Nietzsche's critique of morality.
- Identify the main features of Nietzsche's epistemological perspectivism and his argument against the existence of a "true" world beyond the world of appearance.
- Explain and assess Nietzsche's claim that God is dead.
- Compare and contrast Nietzsche's critique of metaphysics with the critiques of metaphysical knowledge offered by Hume and Kant.

#### Assignments:

Items to be Completed:	Due no later than:
Read assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post response to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Analytical Essay 2	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 7	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

## Module 8

### Truth is Subjectivity: Soren Kierkegaard

#### Objectives:

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Identify the key features of Kierkegaard's theory of the three stages of existence.
- Identify the main components of Kierkegaard's notion of the teleological suspension of the ethical.
- Explain and evaluate Kierkegaard's claim that truth is subjectivity.
- Compare and contrast Kierkegaard's conception of the individual with that of Hegel.
- Compare and contrast Kierkegaard's Christian existentialism with Nietzsche's atheistic existentialism.

#### Assignments:

Items to be Completed:	Due no later than:
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Read assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post response to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Personal development assignment	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 8	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Final exam	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT