

SYLLABUS FOR HIS3465: THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION (FALL 2021)



CLASS SCHEDULE: T: 10:40AM–11:30AM/R: 10:40AM–12:35PM in 117 Keene-Flint Hall

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Office: 230 Keene-Flint Hall

Office Hours: Tuesdays: 1–2PM, Thursdays: 2–3PM, or by appointment in KF230 or via Zoom:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/8985099947>

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will explore a period of unprecedented changes in European intellectual culture. Shaken by the encounter with the New World, by a new cosmological perspective, and by the rediscovery of previously unknown ancient sources, European learned society attempted to rethink the very foundations on which its knowledge of the surrounding world rested. The course will begin by looking at the medieval universities and the nascent challenges to Aristotelian philosophy that emerged from the rediscovery of ancient schools of thought. We will explore debates about the proper sources of knowledge in cosmology and natural philosophy that led to a decoupling of religion and science, giving rise to new types of explanations about the structure and origin of the universe.

LEARNING GOALS:

(1) The main goal of this course is to provide students with a complex understanding of the intellectual culture of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Our aim is to understand the internal logic of a wide spectrum of worldviews and to think in the manner of the authors we are reading. Students will also make sense of the causes and nature of intellectual change.

(2) Students will learn to read primary sources in a critical fashion, seeking to understand how and why the texts they encounter were produced and how they were received both by contemporaneous audiences and by modern historians.

(3) The written assignments will enable students to analyze these primary sources while improving their ability to express ideas and arguments in a clear and convincing fashion.

(4) The discussions will allow students to actively engage with the readings, their professor, and their peers. Students will be asked to argue a variety of perspectives and defend different points of view.

CONDUCT OF COURSES:

This course is scheduled to meet face-to-face. It will not have a HyFlex option or any other kind of online attendance component, unless I decide to change this policy based on the unpredictable circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. Francis Bacon, *Selected Philosophical Writings* (Hackett, 1999) ISBN: 9780872204706
2. Galileo Galilei, *The Essential Galileo* (Hackett, 2008) ISBN: 9780872209374
3. René Descartes, *Philosophical Essays and Correspondence* (Hackett, 2000) ISBN: 9780872205024
4. Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan* (Hackett Classics, 1994) ISBN: 9780872201774
5. Margaret Cavendish, *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* (Hackett Classics, 2016) ISBN: 9781624665141
6. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Hackett Classics, 1996) ISBN: 9780872202160
7. Isaac Newton, *Newton's Philosophy of Nature: Selections from his Writings* (Dover Publications, 2010) ISBN: 9780486445939
8. Nicolas Malebranche, *Philosophical Selections* (Hackett Classics, 1992) ISBN: 9780872201521
9. Pierre Bayle, *The Historical and Critical Dictionary* (Hackett Classics, 1991) ISBN: 9780872201033
10. Julien Offray de la Mettrie, *Machine Man and Other Writings* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy, 1996) ISBN: 9780521478496
11. G. W. Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Essays* (Hackett, 1991) ISBN: 9780872201323
12. Baruch Spinoza, *The Essential Spinoza: Ethics and Related Writings* (Hackett, 2006) ISBN: 9780872208032

Note: Readings Marked as (C) are available for download on Canvas

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION:

Participation and Professionalism: 15%

Two Primary Source Analyses: 20% (10% each)

Two Mid-Term Papers: 40% (20% each)

Final Paper: 25%

Note: You must complete all assignments in order to pass the course.

Grading Scale:

A = 100–93 (4.0) B = 86–83 (3.0) C = 74–71 (2.0) D = 62–60 (1.0)

A- = 92–90 (3.67) B- = 82–79 (2.67) C- = 70–67 (1.63) D- = 59–56 (0.67)

B+ = 89–87 (3.33) C+ = 78–75 (2.33) D+ = 66–63 (1.33) F = below 55 (0)

For more information see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Participation and Professionalism (15%):

A) Attendance: In the first two hours of each week, I will attempt to introduce the thinker(s) and text(s) we will be reading. I will provide an overview of the political, social, economic, cultural, and

intellectual circumstances in which the work(s) in question appeared. During the second part of our Thursday meetings, we will discuss the texts together. You are expected to attend all scheduled meetings, complete all the assigned readings, participate in discussion, and behave in a respectable and collegial manner. You will be permitted **three absences** over the course of the term; every unexcused absence thereafter will **lower your participation grade by one third**. It is also important to arrive to class on time. Punctuality is a show of respect for your instructor and classmates, and it is important not just in class but in a job and your eventual career.

Given the unusual circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, **accommodations will be provided** to any student who needs to miss class meetings for **documented medical reasons**.

Given the unusual circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, **accommodations will be provided** to any student who needs to miss class meetings for **documented medical reasons**. You must be “cleared for campus” to attend this or any other in-person class. Please contact me if you are “not cleared” in the system, so that we can figure out a way for you to make up missed material. If you are feeling ill, I urge you to be on the side of caution and stay home to protect your classmates. I will be flexible with my attendance policy over the course of the semester. Guidelines for excused absences can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#absencestext>

B) Readings: Please come to each discussion having completed the assigned readings for that week. “To complete the readings” means allowing yourself sufficient time both to read through the assigned materials and to think about them. Please bring all assigned readings to class on the day for which the reading has been assigned. It is your responsibility to contact me if you have difficulty locating the reading assignments.

C) Discussion: At the start of each week, I will send out a series of questions about the readings in order to frame our discussions. You are encouraged to think of these as you complete the readings. You should be able to provide a **formal two- or three-minute answer** to at least one of the questions if called on. Bear in mind that “active participation” means asking good questions as well as proposing good answers. You are strongly encouraged to bring questions about the readings to class. If one of you had questions or difficulties, others certainly did as well. Active participation is essential for the success of this course.

Two Primary Source Analyses (20% total/10% each): As preparation for the longer papers, you will write two primary sources analysis papers. You will pick a particular primary source they have read by that point in the semester and analyze a theme of their choice. The papers should be focused on discussing a specific question. You are welcome to engage with some of the discussion questions or write about topics you find of particular interest. The source analyses will be due **Friday, September 17th** and **Friday, November 5th**, respectively. The response papers should be between **750 and 1,000 words**, and they should be turned in via Canvas.

Two Mid-Term Papers (40% total/20% each): For the two paper assignments, you will be asked to **compare** and **contrast three authors** we read in the course. I will provide you with a selection of possible themes and topics, though you may also write about a subject of your choosing (pending approval). The papers will be due on **Friday, October 8th** and **Friday, November 19th**, respectively. The essays should be between **1,000 and 1,500 words**, and it should be based on your reading and understanding of the texts. No outside research is required or expected. Your essays will be turned in via the Canvas e-learning website and monitored with the Turnitin Anti-Plagiarism Service.

Final Paper (25%): The final paper will be due on **Wednesday, December 15th**, by **9:30AM**. For the final assignment you will write **three distinct** *Encyclopédie* **articles** about three of the authors we read in the course. Your articles reviews should have a clear introduction and conclusion. They should highlight what you see as the most important **agreements** and **disagreements** between Diderot/d’Alembert and the authors you are writing about. Since this is a creative exercise, you have a relatively significant leeway in interpreting what these thinkers might have thought. However, your interpretations should be based on a solid understanding of the relevant texts. The articles should be between 750 and 1,000 words each for a total of 2,200-3,000 words.

COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS:

Extensions and Late Penalties: In general, the penalty for turning in late assignments is one letter grade (A to B, B to C, and C to D) for each day that the assignment is late. Assignments that are over three days late will not be accepted and will automatically receive an F. Extensions will only be granted in case of extenuating circumstances, such as documented medical emergencies. **Please note that you must complete all of the assignments in order to pass the course.**

Classroom Etiquette: Unless otherwise specified, **computers, tablet** devices, and **phones** are **not permitted** in the classroom. Please **refrain from using any electronic devices** during our meetings, as they can be distracting to both you and your fellow classmates. In cases where your readings are available on Canvas, please **print** the readings out and bring them to class. According UF’s to regulations regarding COVID-19, you are **expected to wear approved face coverings** at all times **during class** and **within buildings even if you are vaccinated.**

Diversity and Inclusiveness in the Classroom: An open, inclusive environment in the classroom is key to our collective success and is something that the university and I value enormously. I hold myself and each student responsible for fostering a productive learning environment that supports and encourages diversity and inclusiveness. Diversity can include, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, and immigration status. Diversity also entails different perspectives, philosophies, and life experiences. I believe that by hearing and learning from a variety of sources and viewpoints, each of us will gain competence in communication, critical thinking, and cultural understanding, as well as an awareness of our implicit biases and how they shape our interactions with others and the world. This will make us better scholars, better citizens, and better people.

Contact: The University of Florida requires that you use your UF Gatorlink account for university related e-mail communication. Please see <http://www.it.ufl.edu/policies/#email> to read more on this policy. It is important to check Canvas and your UF e-mail accounts regularly. I will do my best to respond to all course-related emails within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends and during breaks. Please note that if you contact me about an assignment at the last minute, I may not have time to respond. Like most UF faculty, I treat e-mail as a formal means of communication. Your e-mails should be written with a basic greeting (i.e. *Dear, Hello, Hi*, then my name), body, and salutation (i.e. *Thank you, Sincerely, Best*, then your name). Proper grammar is expected.

Office Hours: My office hours are **Tuesdays 1–2PM** and **Thursdays 2–3PM** in Keene-Flint 230; or by appointment. You are highly encouraged to attend office hours at least once during the semester. I would like to get to know each of you individually. Please make sure to **wear a mask** when **attending office hours**. If you would prefer to attend office hours via Zoom, feel free to email me and use this link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/8985099947>

STATEMENT REGARDING ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code of the University of Florida. The Academic Honor Code is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the University community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and responsibility on the part of the University community. For a full explanation visit: www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html. An excellent website that discusses plagiarism, correct citing of references, and correct use of quotations is: <http://mediasite.video.ufl.edu/mediasite/Viewer/?peid=adaa44500eaf460a84f238e6b9a558f9>.

COURSE EVALUATIONS:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing [online evaluations](#). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open.

UNIVERSITY COVID EXPECTATIONS:

In response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.uflhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.
- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated. Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing. Following these practices is our responsibility as Gators.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in classrooms if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down or at the end of the class. Hand sanitizing stations are located in every classroom.
- If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website](#) for more information.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.
- If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES:

Disability Accommodations: Students requesting accommodation should first register with the Dean of Students Office so that you have documentation for all your courses. For more information

about services available to University of Florida students: Dean of Students Office Disability Resource Center, 202 Peabody Hall or 0020 Reid Hall Phone: (352) 392-1261/(352) 392-8570 or at: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

UF Counseling and Academic Resources: On-campus services are available for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals. They include:

1. U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or (352) 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.
2. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1575,
3. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, (352) 392-1171
4. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, (352) 392-1161
5. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, (352) 392-1601 <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>
6. E-learning technical support: (352) 392-4357/ email: Learningsupport@ufl.edu
<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.
7. Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>
8. Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, (352) 846-1138 <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

WEEK 1 (AUGUST 23–27): INTRODUCTION

Readings: Thomas Aquinas, *On Being and Essence*, 227–249 and *The Five Ways* 1–4 (C)

WEEK 2 (AUGUST 30–SEPTEMBER 3): THE PRESUMPTIVE AUTHORITY OF THE PAST

Readings: Francis Bacon, *Selected Philosophical Works*, 4–9, 31–36, 44–55, 86–133, 145–148

WEEK 3 (SEPTEMBER 6–10): REVOLUTIONS IN THE HEAVENS

Readings: Nicolaus Copernicus, “Dedication to Paul III” in *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (C); Galileo Galilei, *The Essential Galileo*, 45–59, 63–67, 109–145, 185–192, 267–271

WEEK 4 (SEPTEMBER 13–17): COGITO ERGO SUM: DESCARTES’S EPISTEMOLOGY

Readings: René Descartes, *Philosophical Essays and Correspondence*, 46–56, 60–73, 97–141

FIRST PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS DUE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH AT 4PM

WEEK 5 (SEPTEMBER 20–24): TWO-SUBSTANCE METAPHYSICS: CARTESIAN DUALISM

Readings: René Descartes, *Philosophical Essays and Correspondence*, 30–43, 222–246, 253–272, 297–315; *Correspondence between Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia and René Descartes*, 1–13 (C)

WEEK 6 (SEPTEMBER 27–OCTOBER 1): EMPIRICISM, MATERIALISM, AND DETERMINISM

Readings: Thomas Hobbes, “Objections” in René Descartes, *Philosophical Essays and Correspondence*, 167–176; Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, 3–100, 106–110, 136–145

WEEK 7 (OCTOBER 4–8): RADICAL CARTESIANISM

Readings: Nicolas Malebranche, *Philosophical Selections*, 3–59, 147–167, 183–191

FIRST MID-TERM PAPER ONE DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8TH AT 4PM

WEEK 8 (OCTOBER 11–15): CRITIQUES OF THE NEW PHILOSOPHY

Readings: Margaret Cavendish, *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*, 3–82

WEEK 9 (OCTOBER 18–22): SPINOZA’S PANTHEISM

Readings: Baruch Spinoza, *The Essential Spinoza*, 3–60, 102–104, 143–161, 191–215

WEEK 10 (OCTOBER 25–29): ENGLISH EMPIRICISM

Readings: John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1–78, 117–129, 138–147, 192–195, 235–246, 250–257

WEEK 11 (NOVEMBER 1–5): NEWTONIAN PHYSICS

Readings: Isaac Newton, *Newton's Philosophy of Nature*, 3–29, 41–67, 99–112, 116–134; *Newton: Texts, Backgrounds and Commentaries*, 301–308, 342–356 (C)

SECOND PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS DUE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH AT 4PM

WEEK 12 (NOVEMBER 8–12): SKEPTICISM AND SCIENCE

Readings: Pierre Bayle, *The Historical and Critical Dictionary*, 124–139, 144–153, 166–209, 288–316, 350–358, 399–420

NO CLASS Thursday, November 11 (Veterans Day)

WEEK 13 (NOVEMBER 15-19): LEIBNIZIAN METAPHYSICS

Readings: Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics and Other Essays*, 1–81; *A New System*, 1–8 (C)

SECOND MID-TERM PAPER ONE DUE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH AT 4PM

WEEK 14 (NOVEMBER 22–26): THANKSGIVING BREAK

NO CLASS Tuesday, November 23

WEEK 15 (NOVEMBER 29–DECEMBER 3): THE RISE OF MATERIALISM

Readings: Julien Offray de la Mettrie, *Machine Man and Other Writings*, 3–73, 89–115, 145–173

WEEK 16 (DECEMBER 6–8): CONSOLIDATING THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION

Readings: Voltaire, *Letters Concerning the English Nation*, 44–75 (C); Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, *The Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopédie*, 3–31, 45–55, 70–97 (C); Pick two articles from here:

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/did/title/A.html>

FINAL PAPER DUE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15TH AT 9:30AM