暨南大學
JINAN UNIVERSITY

0101P212

Early Modern Philosophy

Instructor: TBA

Time: December 14, 2026 - January 15, 2027

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact Hours: 60 (50 minutes each)

Credits: 4

E-mail: TBA

Course Description

The transition from the Medieval to the Modern era in philosophy began, roughly, in the late 16th and early 17th centuries and ended, again roughly, in the late 18th century. In this course we will cover the works of various great thinkers from this time period including Descartes, David Hume, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and others. Finally, we will discuss various philosophical topics including the nature of knowledge, identity, the mind, ethics, and politics.

Required Textbook(s)

All readings can be found online, links and/or copies of the assigned text will be provided.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify & interpret key philosophers and theories from the Early Modern Era
- Synthesize information & demonstrate an understanding of key thinkers, text, & lectures.
- Exhibit an understanding of and ability to articulate a connection between theory from the Early modern era and our daily lives.

Course Outline

Please note that the outline is meant to give an overview of the major concepts of this course. Changes may occur in this outline as needed to aid in the students' development.

Module 1: Introduction to Early Modern Philosophy

Main topics covered Module 1: Overview of Early Modern Philosophy & an introduction to philosophical thinking. The assessment of knowledge for this module will be incorporated into quiz 2. This introductory module is an opportunity to set the foundation for learning, thus no reading or quiz – Lecture only.

Theme: Foundations of Philosophy & the Early Modern Period

Module 2: Epistemology (Early Modern Era)

Main topics covered Module 2: Overview of Early Modern Philosophy, An introduction to philosophical thinking (philosophy bootcamp), Epistemological theory of Descartes, Epistemological theory of Locke, Epistemological theory of Kant, and a review.

Theme: Epistemology (Early Modern Era)

- Reading 1: Rene'Descartes "Meditations I and II" (1641)
- Reading 2: John Locke "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding" (Selected Excerpts) (1689)

Module 3: Personhood & Identity (Early Modern Era)

Main topics covered Module 3: An overview of philosophical personhood and personal identity, John Locke's theory of personal identity, A contemporary comparative view of Locke's theory of personal identity by Marya Schecthman, David Hume's theory of personal identity, Critical thinking activities related to personhood and personal identity, an overview of recognition politics in philosophy, and a review.

Theme: Personhood & Identity (Early Modern Era)

- Reading 1: David Hume "A Treatise of Human Nature" Book I, Part IV, Section VI (1739-1740)
- Reading 2: John Locke "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding" (Selected Excerpts) (1748)

Module 4: Ethics (Early Modern Era)

Topic to be covered this Module: Perspectives on philosophical ethics from the early modern period including Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, and John Stuart Mill.

Theme: Ethics (Early Modern Era)

- Reading 1: Immanuel Kant "Critique of Pure Reason" (Selected Excerpts or an overview) (1781)
- Reading 2: Jeremy Bentham "An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation" (1789)

Module 5: Free Will & Freedom (Early Modern Era)

Topic to be covered this Module: Perspectives on free will and freedom from the early modern period

Theme: Free will & Freedom (Early Modern Era)

Module 6: Socio-political Philosophy (Early Modern Era)

Topics to be covered this module: Socio-political philosophical theories from the Early Modern period including Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau.

Theme: Socio-political Philosophy (Early Modern Era)

- Reading 1: Thomas Hobbes "Leviathan" (Selected Excerpts) (1651)
- Reading 2: John Locke "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding" (Selected Excerpts) (1689)

Module 7: Forgotten voices from the Early Modern Era

In this unit we will cover the readings and ideas of various thinkers that are lesser known from the early modern period, including: Beccaria, Mary Astell, Zera Yacob, George Berkely, and Voltaire

Theme: Forgotten voices from the Early Modern Era

- Reading: Select any one of the following readings for this module
  - George Berkeley "**A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge" (1710) Section, "Of the Principles of Human Knowledge**
  - Zera Yacob "Hatata" (1667)
  - Mary Astell "A Serious Proposal to the Ladies" (1694)
  - Blaise Pascal "Pensees" (1670)
  - Voltaire "Candide" (1759)
  - Cesare Beccaria "Crime and Punishment" (1764)

Module 8: Conclusion of The Course

- Submit Final Theory in Application Assignment
- Final Exam Review
- Take Final Exam

Grading Policy

6 Quizzes (10 points each, total 60)	60%
Theory in Application (20 points total)	20%
Final examination (20 points)	20%
Total	**100%**

Grading Scale

The instructor will use the grading system as applied by JNU:

Definition	Letter Grade	Score
Excellent	A	90~100
Good	B	80~89
Satisfactory	C	70~79
Poor	D	60~69
Failed	E	Below 60

Academic Integrity

As members of the Jinan University academic community, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic coursework and activities. Academic dishonesty, includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, i.e., misrepresenting as one's own work any work done by another; submitting the same paper, or a substantially similar paper, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of the instructors concerned; or sabotaging other students' work within these general definitions. Instructors, however, determine what constitutes academic misconduct in the courses they teach. Students found guilty of academic misconduct in any portion of the academic work face penalties that range from the lowering of their course grade to awarding a grade of E for the entire course.