MODERN PHILOSOPHY
PHIL 4322.001  Spring 2017
Time: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-12:15 Location: CI-127

Instructor: Prof. Glenn Tiller
Office: Faculty Center 263
Email: glenn.tiller@tamucc.edu
Phone: 825-6008
Office hours: 12:40-2:40 Tuesday and Thursday; 10:00-11:00 Wednesday; and by appointment.

Course Description
This course is an introduction to the leading figures of the Modern philosophy era (1600-1800). The central focus is on the epistemological and metaphysical issues discussed in the writings of Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, and Hume. Our goal is to uncover the presuppositions and analyse the arguments found in both rationalist and empiricist accounts of knowledge, the nature of the universe, and our place within it.

Student Learning Outcomes
Successful completion of the course provides you with a foundational understanding of Modern Philosophy. In particular, you will be familiar with basic logical, epistemological and metaphysical issues that were debated during 17th and 18th centuries in Western Europe. By the end of the course, you will be conversant in key concepts of the modern era (e.g. rationalism, empiricism). You will also be able to compose philosophical essays on topics such as Descartes philosophical methodology, Spinoza’s metaphysics, Locke’s psychology and Hume’s scepticism. Ideally, you will develop a richer, more coherent understanding of the history of Western philosophy. Since much of our time is spent on close textual analysis, you will also improve your reading comprehension skills and strengthen your abilities to construct logical arguments. These outcomes will be measured through in-class quizzes and tests, and take-home essay assignments.

Required Text
All course readings will be posted on the course Blackboard website. There is no textbook for this class.

Attendance
Regular attendance will be taken. Any student who misses more than three classes without a reasonable excuse (e.g. medical) can expect to be penalized (up to a letter grade) on their final grade. All materials discussed in lectures and covered in the readings are the potential basis for quiz and test questions. Students are therefore expected to attend all lectures and keep up with assigned readings. If you don’t attend class, don’t expect to pass.
### Requirements

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<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Mark</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Ten reading quizzes</td>
<td>Worth 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description: Short quizzes held at the start of class on assigned readings.</td>
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<td>2. Class Participation</td>
<td>Worth 5%</td>
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<td>Description: Students will be assigned a day to begin class discussion. Instructions to follow.</td>
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<td>3. In class test, March 2</td>
<td>Worth 25%</td>
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<td>Description: General test that will cover all materials up to and including February 28 and will take the entire period to write.</td>
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<td>4. Essay, March 23</td>
<td>Worth 25%</td>
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<td>Description: Essay topic and specific instructions to be distributed in class.</td>
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<td>5. Final Exam</td>
<td>Worth 25%</td>
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<td>Description: General test with the same structure as the first test. Will cover all materials up to and including April 29.</td>
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### Grading Scale

All grades will be assigned on the standard scale: 90%-100%=A, 80%-89%=B, 70%-79%=C, 60%-69%=D, 59% and below=F.

### Missed Test Policy

Students unable to write a test for a medical reason must provide a doctor’s note. If a student is unable to write a test for a similarly serious reason, documentation may be required. Make-up tests will be written at an arranged time under my supervision.

### Freedom of Speech and Classroom Etiquette

You are free to ask any question you please about the material. In many cases if you did not understand something, this is because it was not explained clearly to you, so you will be doing your colleagues and yourself a service if you request clarification. You are also free to argue for any philosophical position you find compelling, as long as you provide reasons for your point of view. It is inevitable that during discussions individual points of view will differ. When they do, our reaction will always be to patiently listen to the reasons offered for a particular conclusion and cooperatively evaluate those reasons.

### E-etiquette

Turn off all cell phones before entering the classroom. If your cell phone rings during class, I will stop the lecture. Any student who disrupts a lecture by using a personal electronic device will be asked to leave.
Academic Advising

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466 or log onto http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac.

Disability Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Grade Appeals

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

The Fine Print

January 18 Classes begin
January 25 Last day to late register or add a class
March 13-17 Spring Break
April 7 Last day to drop a class
May 1 Last day of classes
May 3 Reading Day
May 4-5, May 8-10 Final examinations

For all other matters concerning course withdrawal, appeal of grades, academic misconduct, etc, students are strongly advised to consult the rules outlined in the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Student Handbook and on the web at: http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/.
TOPICS & READINGS
* Readings and topics subject to change. Readings will be posted on a weekly basis on the course Blackboard website.

Week 1 (Jan. 19): Descartes: Methodology & The Cogito

Week 2 (Jan. 24, 26): Descartes: Physics & Metaphysics

Week 3 (Jan. 31, Feb. 2): Descartes: Mind & Body

Week 4 (Feb. 7, 9): Spinoza: Substance & God

Week 5 (Feb. 14, 16): Spinoza: Substance & God

Week 6 (Feb. 21, 23): Spinoza: Mind

Week 7 (Feb. 28, Mar. 2): Spinoza: Freedom & General Review

Week 8 (Mar. 7, 9): Locke: The Origin of Ideas

Week 9 (Mar. 21, 23): Locke: Perception

Week 10 (Mar. 28, 30): Hume: On Philosophy

Week 11 (Apr. 4, 6): Hume: Ideas & Scepticism
Week 12 (Apr. 11, 13): Hume: Sceptical Solution & Causation

Week 13 (Apr. 18, 20): Hume: Causation and Free Will

Week 14 (Apr. 25, 27) Kant: Critique of Pure Reason

Week 15 (May 2): General Review

*Final Exam to be held during the exam period. Date and time TBA.