

PHL 311: The Empiricists

University of Toronto, Spring 2020, lightly revised

Instructor: Dr. Owen Pikkert, owen.pikkert@mail.utoronto.ca

Lecture hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00 to 10:30 in RW 142

Office hours: Tuesdays 1:00 to 3:00 in JHB 433

Course description

This course is primarily an examination of the philosophies of Locke and Hume. Among other texts, we will read sizeable portions of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, and of Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, and *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. The goal throughout will be mastery of some of the main ideas and arguments as presented in these texts. Topics to be discussed include the origin of ideas, causation, skepticism, the existence of God, and other topics as well.

Logistics

Evaluation: A midterm at 25% (13 Feb), two papers at 25% each (due 27 Feb and 31 Mar), and a final exam at 25% (date determined by the Registrar's Office for Apr).

Textbook: The textbook for this course is *Readings in Modern Philosophy, Volume II: Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Associated Texts*, edited by Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 2000). It has been ordered for this course through the U of T bookstore.

Papers: The first paper will be on Locke, whereas the second paper will be on Hume. For both papers you will have a choice from three topics. Topics and instructions will be posted to Quercus well before the due dates, and papers must be submitted online via Quercus.

Late submissions, extensions, and missed midterms: Late papers will be penalized at 5% for each calendar day, and papers more than one week late will not be accepted. To request an extension for a paper or an alternative date to write a missed midterm, you must submit one of the following types of documentation deemed official by the University: a [Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form](#), a Student Health or Disability Related Certificate, a College Registrar's Letter, or an Accessibility Services Letter.

Email: Only use email for short logistical questions that are not already answered on the syllabus. Philosophical and textual questions are best saved for office hours.

Turnitin.com: Normally, students will be required to submit their papers to Turnitin.com (now incorporated into Quercus) for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible

plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their papers to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com website.

Academic integrity

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, please reach out to me. Note that you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from me or from other [institutional resources](#).

Lecture schedule

			<i>(Q = Quercus)</i>
Jan 7	Introduction		
Jan 9	Locke on innatism	<i>Essay</i> I.1-2, I.3	11-17, Q
Jan 14	Locke on the origin of ideas	<i>Essay</i> II.1-8	17-31
Jan 16	Locke on space	<i>Essay</i> II.9-14	31-42
Jan 21	Locke on freedom	<i>Essay</i> II.21	42-50
Jan 23	Locke on personal identity	<i>Essay</i> II.27	61-70
Jan 28	Locke on real vs. nominal essence	<i>Essay</i> II.22-23, III.3, 6	50-61, 70-79
Jan 30	Locke on knowledge	<i>Essay</i> IV.1-4	79-98
4 Feb	Locke on the existence of God	<i>Essay</i> IV.10	98-104
6 Feb	Locke on the external world	<i>Essay</i> IV.11	104-108
11 Feb	Leibniz on Locke	Preface to <i>New Essays</i>	115-126
13 Feb	Midterm		
18 Feb	Reading week		
20 Feb	Reading week		
25 Feb	Hume on impressions and ideas	<i>Treatise</i> Intro, I.I.1-7, I.II.6	237-251
27 Feb	Hume on causation (1), Paper 1 due	<i>Treatise</i> I.III.1-6	251-263
3 Mar	Hume on causation (2)	Malebranche, <i>Tr.</i> I.III.14-15	Q, 279-289
5 Mar	Hume on the external world	<i>Treatise</i> I.IV.2	292-306
10 Mar	Hume on skepticism	<i>Treatise</i> I.IV.5-6, App	312-327
12 Mar	Hume on free will	<i>Enquiry</i> VIII	359-369
17 Mar	Hume on miracles	<i>Enquiry</i> X	371-380
19 Mar	Hume on the teleological argument	<i>Dialogues</i> I-V	395-414
24 Mar	Hume on the cosmo. arg. and evil	<i>Dialogues</i> IX-XI	414-427
26 Mar	Pascal on the human condition	<i>Pensées</i> , selections	Q
31 Mar	Pascal on faith, Paper 2 due	<i>Pensées</i> , selections	Q
2 Apr	Envoi		
Apr	Final exam		