





Philosophy (PHIL) 342

Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Philosophy (Revision 5)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode:

Individualized study online 

Credits:

3

Areas of study:

Arts or Humanities

Prerequisites:

1 junior level philosophy course.

Precluded:

None

Challenge:

PHIL 342 is not available for challenge.

Faculty:

[Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) 

Overview

Philosophy 342: Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Philosophy, a senior-level, three-credit course that provides an in-depth and comprehensive overview of the major figures in the Western tradition of early modern thought, focusing primarily on questions about reality and knowledge. This overview is developed from an historical perspective—as a sort of ongoing conversation among thinkers, some of whom are separated in time by more than a century. The thoughts, arguments and counter-arguments in the work of each create the cumulative impression of a “symposium”—literally, an after-dinner conversation—in the realm of the intellect. As the dialogue advances, there are more participants, more voices, more answers to the deceptively simple questions troubling all of them. What is existence? What is the difference between reality and illusion? What is everything we experience based on? What is God? These are questions of *metaphysics*.

Outline

The course consists of the following:


- Unit 1: Introduction to Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Philosophy: Metaphysics and Epistemology in the Modern Era
- Unit 2: René Descartes and Thomas Hobbes: The Geometrical Method
- Unit 3: John Locke and Baruch Spinoza on 'The Mind'
- Unit 4: George Berkeley and Gottfried Leibniz: Idealists
- Unit 5: David Hume and the Skeptical Challenge to Metaphysics
- Unit 6: Immanuel Kant and the Rescue of Metaphysics


Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for PHIL 342, you must complete all assignments, write a final examination, and obtain a composite course grade of at least **D (50 percent)** [↗](#). The weighting of the composite grade is as follows:

| Activity | Weight |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Tutor-marked Assignment: Summaries | 20% |

| Activity | Weight |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Tutor-marked Assignment: Short Essay | 40% |
| Final Exam | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

The **final examination** for this course must be requested in advance and written under the supervision of an AU-approved exam invigilator. Invigilators include either ProctorU or an approved in-person invigilation centre that can accommodate online exams. Students are responsible for payment of any invigilation fees. Information on exam request deadlines, invigilators, and other exam-related questions, can be found at the [Exams and grades](#)  section of the Calendar.

To learn more about assignments and examinations, please refer to Athabasca University's [online Calendar](#) .

Materials





Philosophical Classics Volume III: Modern Philosophy, 6th ed., Forrest E.

Baird, ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011.  (Print)

Other Materials

All other course materials are available online.

Important links

- > [Academic advising](#) 
- > [Program planning](#) 
- > [Request assistance](#) 
- > [Support services](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 5, September 9, 2013

Updated May 22, 2024

View **previous revision** [↗](#)
