

## Humanities 11600: Philosophical Perspectives

Meets: T, Th, 3:00-4:20, Cobb 430

Instructor: David Finkelstein

In this course, we'll read and discuss texts that played significant roles in the shaping of modern (as opposed to medieval) worldviews in Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, texts by Shakespeare, Bacon, Descartes, Locke, and Hume, among others.

There are three required books available at the Seminary Coop: Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*, and Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. Other readings will be available online or at the copy center on the first floor of Classics.

Your grade will be based on two short papers and a final examination. In addition, participation (or lack thereof) in class can raise or lower your final grade by half a grade i.e., from a B up to an B+ or down to a B-.

### Reading Schedule:

Thursday, 1/8) Bacon, *Novum Organum*, Preface and Aphorisms Concerning the Interpretation of Nature and the Kingdom of Man. These texts can be found at <http://fly.hiwaay.net/%7Epaul/bacon/organum/preface.html> and at <http://fly.hiwaay.net/%7Epaul/bacon/organum/aphorisms1.html>.

Tuesday 1/13) Galileo, excerpt from "The Assayer." Descartes, Meditation 1. The Galileo text is available at <http://www.philosophy.leeds.ac.uk/GMR/hmp/texts/modern/galileo/assayer.html>.

Tuesday, 1/20) Descartes, Meditation 2. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Acts 1-2.

Tuesday, 1/27) Meditations 3 & 4. *Hamlet*, Acts 3-4.

Tuesday, 2/3) Meditations 5 & 6.

Tuesday, 2/10) Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Chapters 1-3, 8-9. Hume, "On Miracles." Hume's essay is included in the assigned edition of *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. The Locke material is available at [http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/publications/locke\\_understanding.html](http://www.ilt.columbia.edu/publications/locke_understanding.html).

Tuesday, 2/17) Pascal, excerpt from *Pensées*. Bayle, excerpt from his *Dictionary*. *Hamlet*, Act 5. The Pascal and Bayle readings will be available at the copy center in Classics.

Tuesday, 2/24) Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Parts I-VI.

Tuesday, 3/2) Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Parts VII-XII.

Tuesday, 3/9) TBA