



# ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

## St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo

Department of Philosophy

PHIL 284 Fall 2022

Great Works: Modern

ONLINE/REMOTE

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Jason Hault  
Office: Sweeney Hall (SH) 2114  
Phone: N/A  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:30am-11:30am (ONLINE)  
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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

A historical survey of modern philosophy in the Western tradition.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course seeks to introduce students to significant themes and ideas in early modern thought. The course therefore focuses on examining works ranging from the early 16<sup>th</sup> to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. What is so remarkable about the thinkers of this period is that, as chief representatives of scientific, philosophical, and political revolutions, they articulate the principles and critical distinctions that serve as the foundations of modern and contemporary thought. What is so fruitful, then, about analyzing this intellectual history is that it demands that we confront and re-articulate the principles and ideas that shape the ways in which we think today, i.e., the very principles for which we stand as modern readers. In other words, examining these texts challenges us to become responsible for the perspectives and assumptions that we bring to bear on the texts we are reading.

Because this course is offered asynchronously, students will have the latitude to complete the assigned reading and to view the recorded lectures on their own time throughout the week. Students will be expected to have completed the assigned reading prior to viewing the recorded talk, having already made a real attempt to think through some of the challenges it presents on their own. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in a discussion forum in which they can raise questions about the material and respond to ideas presented in the video recording.

Students who accept the task of thoughtfully engaging with the reading material and who successfully complete all of the course assignments can expect to emerge from the course with:

- an understanding of a number of concepts, questions, and themes central to the study of early modern philosophy;
- an understanding of the values that support and that are supported by early modern philosophers and authors;
- the capacity, on the basis of these values, to call into question uncritical assumptions and opinions about modern thought and existence;
- the ability to identify the concepts and critical distinctions that shape the arguments of a text;
- the capacity to engage with a text on the basis of its critical concepts by using them to put pressure on difficult passages and, thereby, to put pressure on any simple, literal reading of the text; and
- the ability to identify common commitments shared among different authors of this period and to use these commitments to develop an interpretive practice that addresses the relationship between different texts and philosophical subjects.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS (AND OTHER REQUIRED READINGS)**

All of the required texts listed below can be accessed online through the digital library provided by Internet Archive (visit [archive.org](http://archive.org)).

Please see the document titled “Internet Archive” under the Content tab on the LEARN course website for instructions on how to sign up for and use the library. The document also contains pictures of the specific translations/editions we will be using (listed here).

*Discourse on Method* by René Descartes, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, translated by Donald A. Cress, published by Hackett Publishing Co.

*Selections from the Essays* by Michel de Montaigne, translated and edited by Donald M. Frame, published by Harlan Davidson, Inc.

*The Basic Political Writings* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, translated by Donald A. Cress, published by Hackett Publishing Co.

*The Tragedy of Hamlet* by William Shakespeare, Newly Revised Edition, Signet Classics, published by the New American Library, Penguin Group

*Selections from the Thoughts* by Blaise Pascal, translated and edited by Arthur H. Beattie, published by Harlan Davidson, Inc.

*The Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli, translated by N.H. Thomson, published by Dover Publications, Inc.

For students who prefer hard copies, a number of these books have been made available for

purchase from the university bookstore. Used copies of all the books are also widely available anywhere books are sold online.

Other required reading material (access to these resources has been provided on the LEARN course website under the “Content” tab):

Genesis 1-3, Bible, Revised Standard Version

“Conjectural Beginning of Human History” by Immanuel Kant

“What Is Enlightenment?” by Immanuel Kant

Selection from the Appendix to *Toward Perpetual Peace* by Immanuel Kant

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Due date &amp; Percentage of Final Grade</b>
Participation	Please see section entitled “Participation & Engagement” below.	Due: Ongoing Percentage: 5%
Assignment 1	This short assignment will ask you to provide your understanding of some of the key concepts drawn from the reading material covered over the first few weeks of the term. You will also be asked to provide an analysis of a key passage discussed in class.	Due: <b>October 5<sup>th</sup></b> Percentage: 20%  *Please note that this assignment will be posted one week prior to the due date.
Assignment 2	For this assignment, you will be asked to select a passage (from a list) and to provide an analysis in which you examine the concepts, themes, distinctions, and arguments of the passage in light of your understanding of the text as a whole.	Due: <b>October 21<sup>st</sup></b> Percentage: 20%
Assignment 3	This assignment will ask you to watch a video and to respond to questions raised in it (see “Video	Due: <b>November 25<sup>th</sup></b> Percentage: 15%

	Assignment” under the Submit tab on the course website). You will be able to stop the video as well as delete and re-submit your responses as you proceed.	*Please note that this assignment will be posted one week prior to the due date.
Essay: Take-home exam	For your final assignment, you will be asked to select two passages (from an assigned list) and to write an essay of 1400-1750 words in which you analyze the key concepts, themes, distinctions and arguments found in the passages as well as in the texts from which they are taken.	Due: <b>December 12<sup>th</sup></b> Percentage: 40%

### **PARTICIPATION & ENGAGEMENT:**

Discussion forums for each week’s reading material will be made available on the course website. It is understood that each student participates differently and will contribute more or less to the discussion throughout the term. In order to demonstrate your participation in the course, you are asked to compose one question as the term proceeds and to post the question under the topic/forum to which it pertains. Your question will be required to reference the course material in some way (e.g., by citing a passage, noting an idea raised in a video recorded lecture, or referencing concepts raised by thinkers in the course).

Please note that you are not expected to respond to the questions raised by other students. But you are welcome to offer other passages from the reading material that helped you think about the question raised by your peer. In other words, the discussion forum is not intended to be used in order to debate a particular topic or idea but to assist one another in providing a more ample, critical, and comprehensive interpretation of the assigned reading.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

#### **Weeks**

#### **1 September 7 – 9: Introduction**

This week I shall go through the Course Outline in detail. I shall also outline what students can expect from the video recordings and some strategies for engaging with the reading material.

2 September 12 – 16: Descartes

Please read:

*Discourse on Method*, Parts 1-4

3 September 19 – 23: Montaigne

Please read:

“To the Reader”

“Of the Education of Children”

“Of Repentance”

4 September 26 – 30: Montaigne

“Apology for Raymond Sebond”

“Of Experience”

5 October 3 – 7: Rousseau

*Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*

Please read pgs. 33-41, 44 (new paragraph)-46 (top of the page), 51-55, 59 (second new paragraph)-71 (end of middle paragraph), 73 (final paragraph)-75 (first paragraph). Please also read pgs. 94-95 (the paragraph begins, “What then! Must we destroy societies...?” and ends on the top of pg. 95)

Friday, October 7: First assignment due. Please submit your assignment to the appropriate Dropbox by the end of the day.

6 October 8 – 16

READING WEEK. No classes will be held this week.

7 October 17 – 21: Rousseau

*On the Social Contract*

Book I (complete)

Book II, Chapters I-IV (cont’d on next page)

Book IV, Chapter I

Friday, October 21: Second assignment due by the end of the day.

8 October 23 – 27: Kant

Please read the following (provided on the LEARN course website):

Genesis 1-3

“Conjectural Beginning of Human History”

“What Is Enlightenment?”

Selection from the Appendix to *Toward Perpetual Peace*

9 October 31 – November 1: Shakespeare

*Hamlet*, Acts I-III

10 November 7 – 11: Shakespeare

*Hamlet*, Acts IV-V

11 November 14 – 18: Pascal

*Selections from the Thoughts*, Part I: Sections A-E, and G (omit Section F)

This week the video assignment will be posted to the LEARN course website.

12 November 21 – 25: Pascal

*Selections from the Thoughts*, Part II (complete) and Part III, Section A

Friday, November 25: Third assignment due by the end of day.

13 November 29 & December 1: Machiavelli

*The Prince*

Please read the following sections: 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 15, 17, 18, 21, 22-23, 26

## 14 December 5 – 7: Review

This week we will review the course material and discuss passages related to the final essay assignment.

Final essay assignment due by the end of the day Monday, December 12.

### **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

Friday, October 5 – First assignment due.

Friday, October 21 – Second assignment due.

Friday, November 25 – Third assignment due.

Monday, December 12 – Final day to submit your essay assignment.

### **ONLINE LEARNING:**

Using the Virtual Classroom available on the LEARN course website (under the “Connect” tab) the instructor will record a talk of approximately 1 to 1.5 hours on each of the topics noted above (see Course Schedule). The videos will be made available prior to the start of each week and will be accessible to students throughout the remainder of the term.

### **OFFICE HOURS**

On Tuesdays at 10:00am, I will be in the Virtual Classroom. If, however, there are no students present after 15 minutes, I will end the session. If you plant to attend after 10:15am or want to arrange a meeting at another time during the week, please email me and we will work out a time that works for both of us. These meetings will not be recorded.

### **POLICY ON LATE WORK**

Students who are unable to submit their assignment by the due date must contact their instructor prior to the deadline. Students will then arrange, in conversation with their instructor, for an alternative due date to be set. Assignments that are submitted after the initial due date for which students have not arranged an alternative will be penalized 2% for each day that the assignment is late (to a total of 20%).

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Students who are unable to complete the course requirements due to illness, medical emergencies, family concerns or other personal reasons are asked to email their instructor as soon as possible.

## CORRESPONDENCE

Please feel free and welcome to be in contact with me by email ([jason.hoult@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:jason.hoult@uwaterloo.ca)) at any time. I shall be responding to emails at various times throughout each day (before 4:00PM). If, however, your request, question, or idea entails a larger discussion, I may write to arrange a meeting during office hours or at another time that works for you. For any additional one-on-one support, you are welcome and encouraged to be in touch.

## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

All of us need a support system. The SJU faculty and staff encourage students to seek out mental health support if they are needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: [counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca) / 519-888-4567 x32655
- **MATES**: one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7:

- **Good2Talk**: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300 x6880
- **Here 24/7**: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- **OK2BME**: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 x213

## TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. St. Jerome's University is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read the St.



Jerome's University Policy on [Student Petitions and Grievances](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the St. Jerome's Advising Specialist, Student Affairs Office, who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on [Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to University of Waterloo [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check the [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the St. Jerome's University Policy on [Student Appeals](#).

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall (Room 1401) at the University of Waterloo, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.