

Course Syllabus

Course Information

<i>Course Number/Section</i>	Political Science 4352.HN1 CV Honors
<i>Course Title</i>	Modern Individualism
<i>Term</i>	Spring 2013
<i>Days & Times</i>	MW 9:00-10:15AM
<i>Location</i>	GC 1.208b

Professor Contact Information

<i>Professor</i>	Edward J. Harpham
<i>Office Phone</i>	972-883-6729
<i>Email Address</i>	harpham@utdallas.edu
<i>Office Location</i>	GC 2.204
<i>Office Hours</i>	W 10:15-11:20AM and by appointment

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

none

Course Description

This course will be a seminar organized to investigate the development and criticism of the modern conception of the individual in political philosophy. Among the issues to be considered are the relationship between the mind and the body in the individual, the nature of reason, passions, and instincts, the origins of morality and justice, the nature of political obligation, and the relationship between the individual and society. The course will begin with a study of Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy* and *Passions of the Soul*. This will be followed by an investigation of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*. Each of these works will be read in the context of contemporary political science, psychology and neuroscience as found in Steven Pinker's *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature* and Giulio Tononi's *Phi*.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

On completing this course, students will be able to

1. explain the key features of the theory of the modern individual found in Descartes theory of mind/body dualism
2. describe the ways in which this theory is developed in the work of Locke and Hume
3. explain how this theory of the modern individual underlies modern liberal theories of government and politics
4. assess the criticism of this theory of the modern individual found in contemporary political science and neuroscience.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Required Texts

Rene Descartes: *Meditations on a First Philosophy* (Hackett)

Rene Descartes: *Passions of the Soul* (Hackett)

John Locke: *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford. Nidditch editor)

David Hume: *Treatise on Human Nature* (Oxford. Norton and Norton editors)

Steven Pinker: *The Blank Slate* (Viking Penguin)

Giulio Tononi: *Phi: A Voyage from the Brain to the Soul* (Pantheon)

Required Materials

none

Suggested Course Materials

Suggested Readings/Texts

none

Suggested Materials

none

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Topics, Reading Assignments, Due Dates, Exam Dates

Weekly Readings:

(I) January 14: Introduction to Modern Individualism

(II) January 16: Aristotle and Scholasticism

Readings:

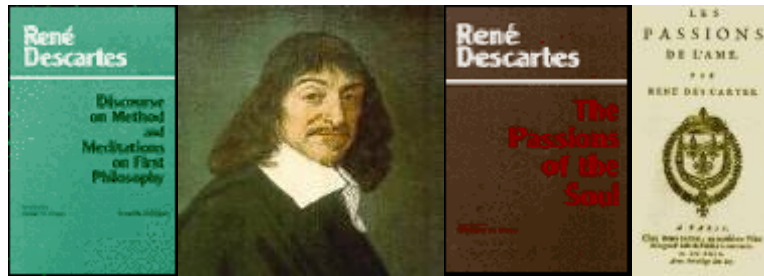
Russell Shorto *Descartes Bones*. Chapter 1 (handout)

Websites:

Aristotle's *On the Soul* (De Anima) at <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/soul.html>.
 Ancient Theories of the Soul at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul/>.
 Aristotle entry in *Philosophy Pages* at www.philosophypages.com/ph/lock.htm.

January 21: No class. Martin Luther King Day

(III) January 23-February 6: Rene Descartes and the Discovery of the Modern Individual



Websites:

Descartes' Meditations on line at www.classicallibrary.org/descartes/index.htm.
 Descartes entry in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/descartes-works/>.
 On *Dualism* in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at www.constitution.org/jl/2ndtreat.htm.

Short Paper # 1 due February 6 In 2-3 pages, briefly summarize Descartes position on mind/body dualism. What does he mean by an "embodied mind?" What does Descartes gain or lose conceptually by thinking about the individual in this way?

Topics and Readings:

January 23: Meditation 1 and 2

January 28: Meditation 3 and 4:

January 30: Meditation 5 and 6

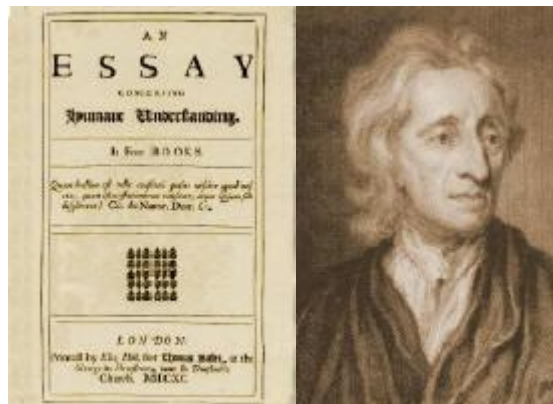
February 4: *Passions of the Soul* Part 1

February 6: *Passions of the Soul* Parts 2 and 3

February 11: Roundtable #1. Biology, Science and Rethinking the Modern Individual

Readings: Pinker *Blank Slate* Chapter 1-5

(IV) February 13 - 27: John Locke's Individual and the Limits of Reason



Websites:

Locke entry in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke/>.

Locke entry in Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy at

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/l/locke.htm>.

Locke's *Second Treatise* at www.constitution.org/jl/2ndtreat.htm.

February 13 and 18:

Readings:

Locke's *Essay*

Book I. Chapters I, II (pp 43-65).
 Book II Chapters I,II,(pp. 104-21)
 Book II Chapters VIII-XII (pp. 128-66)
 Book II Chapters , XVIII-XXXIII (pp. 328-401)

Short Paper #2 due February 20. Answer the following questions in a 2-3 page essay. What does Locke mean by the term "idea"? What is the difference between a simple idea and a complex idea? Discuss two problems with Locke's theory of ideas.

February 20 and February 25

Readings:

Locke's Essay

Book III Chapters I,II,V,VI. (pp. 402-408 and 428-71)
 Book IV Chapters I-III (pp. 538-602)
 Book IV Chapters IX-XII (pp. 618-650)
 Book IV Chapter XX (pp.906-19)

February 27:

Readings: Locke's *Second Treatise* Chapters 2 and 5

March 4: Roundtable #2. Lockean Politics, Neurobiology and the Modern Individual

Readings: Pinker Chapters 10,11,12,13 and 15

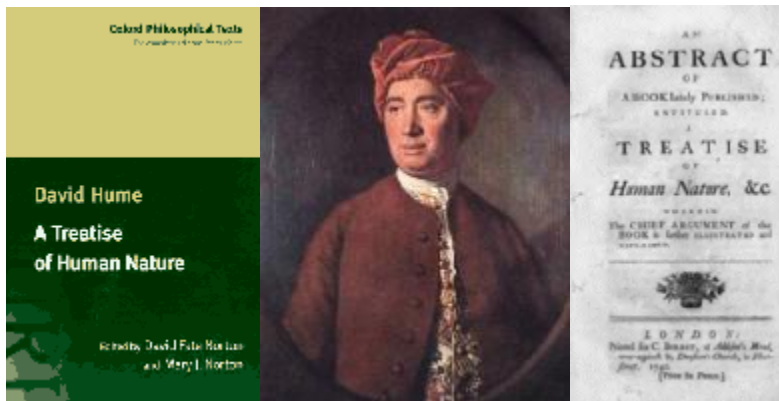
March 6: Exam 1 (in-class).

Spring Break March 10-16.

March 18: Roundtable # 3. Phi and the Problem of Consciousness

Readings: Tononi Part 1

(V) March 20 – May 1: David Hume and the Problem of the Self



Websites:

Hume entry in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hume/>.

Hume entries at *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at

www.iep.utm.edu/h/humelife.htm, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/h/humeepis.htm>, and <http://www.iep.utm.edu/h/humemora.htm>.

Topics and Readings:

March 25 and 27, April 1, 3 and 8:

Readings: Hume *Treatise*.

Abstract pp. 405-17.

Book I “Of the Understanding”

Part 1 Sections 1-7 (pp. 3-22)

Part 3 Sections 1, 4-10, 16 (pp. 50-2, 58-85, 118-20)

Part 4 Sections 1, 6, 7 (pp. 121-25, 164-78)

Book III “Of Morals”

Part 1 Sections 1-2 (pp. 293-06)

Part 2 Sections 1-5, 7-11 (pp. 307-37, 342-66)

Part 3 Sections 1, 6 (pp. 367-78, 393-5)

Short Paper # 3 due April 8. In a 2-3 page essay, critically examine the following quote from David Hume: “The identity, which we ascribe to the mind of man, is only a fictitious one, and of a like kind with that which we ascribe to vegetables and animal bodies.” (P. 169). How does Hume’s understanding of personal identity differ from or resemble that of John Locke?

April 10, 15, and 17:

Readings: Hume *Treatise*.

Book II “Of the Passions”

Part 1 Sections 1-12 (pp. 181-213).

Part 2 Sections 1, 3-12 (pp. 312-16, 225-56)

Part 3 Sections 1-10 (pp. 257-90)

April: 22 and 24.

Readings: Hume *Treatise*.

Book III “Of Morals”

Part 1 Sections 1-2 (pp. 293-06)

Part 2 Sections 1-5, 7-11 (pp. 307-37, 342-66)

Part 3 Sections 1, 6 (pp. 367-78, 393-5)

April 29: Roundtable #4. Politics and Society after the Modern Individual

Readings: Pinker Chapters 16, 17, 19.

May 1: Roundtable #5: Consciousness and the Modern Individual.

Readings: Tononi Part II and III.

May 7: Take Home Exam due at 10:00 in Dr Harpham's office.

Grading Policy

- There will be two exams, each worth 30% of the final grade. The first exam will be in-class. Exam questions (worth 60% of the exam grade) will be handed out 5-7 days before the exam date. IDs and short answer question provided on the exam day will comprise the remaining 40% of the exam grade. The second exam will be a take-home exam. This second exam is not a research paper, but a thought paper. Students are expected to draw upon the readings and classroom discussion in preparing their answers. Students may not share their work with one another for the take-home assignment. Students are not expected to consult additional secondary readings when writing these essays. Plagiarism will result in an F for the assignment and the undying enmity of Dr. Harpham.
- Three short papers (3-4 pages) will comprise 30% of the final grade (10% each).
- Quizzes will comprise 5% of the grade.
- The remaining 5% of the grade will be comprised of a participation grade. This will include student contributions to the roundtables and to normal class discussion. This is a seminar where discussion will move the class forward from one topic to another. Your participation will be based upon your attendance, the quality of your contribution to this discussion. To receive an A in participation, excellence must be demonstrated.

Course Policies

Make-up exams

none

Extra Credit

none

Late Work

None

Special Assignments

Selected readings assigned in class

Class Attendance

Mandatory

Classroom Citizenship

Active participation is 10% of grade. Students must demonstrate excellence to receive an A in class participation and must attend all roundtable sessions

Field Trip Policies / Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities

none

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

