

PHL 413: SEMINAR IN EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY
TOPIC: PHILOSOPHY OF DAVID HUME

Fall 2022
Mondays & Wednesdays 3:00-4:50
Olds Hall 208

Prof. Frederick Rauscher
Office Hours Mon & Wed 1-2
513 South Kedzie
rauscher@msu.edu

David Hume is one of the giants of modern philosophy. Our focus will be on the *Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume's first book, which covers the gamut of philosophical topics. We will fill in that reading with selections from his two *Enquiries*, written about a decade after the *Treatise*. Near the end of the semester we'll add some of his essays on religious and especially political matters. The approach in the class is to use close textual reading to comprehend and assess his arguments. Most class time will be devoted to discussion, very little to lecture. Students must be prepared for active participation each class period.

Prerequisites:

The material in this course is not for beginners in philosophy and presupposes sufficient philosophical background. The recommended background is [either PHL 211 (Modern Philosophy) or TWO other PHL courses]. If you have taken similar courses elsewhere, e.g. in Madison, they might count; please talk to the professor. Philosophy majors and minors are fine.

Texts:

All three of the following works by Hume are required:

A Treatise of Human Nature, Ed. Norton and Norton (Oxford)

An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, ed. Steinberg (Hackett)

An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, ed. Schneewind (Hackett)

In addition, we will read some shorter essays on religious and political matters. These are contained in David Hume: *Essays Moral Political and Literary* (Liberty Fund) but are also available online at Hume Texts Online (<https://davidhume.org/>) as fully online versions and at Liberty Fund (<http://oll.libertyfund.org/people/david-hume>) as PDFs, which are also posted on our D2L page.

Work:

1. Three 1,500-2,000 word papers, due mid October, mid November, and exam week (25% each)
2. Daily preparation and participation (25%). This course will consist largely of textual analysis and discussion rather than lecture. I expect you to have read the material before coming to class and to come to class prepared to offer an explanation and analysis of the main point(s). **YOU WILL NEED TO POST A 30-50 WORD COMMENT ON SOMETHING IN THE READINGS EVERY DAY TO A D2L THREAD BY 2:00 PM ON CLASS DAYS.** You may choose to raise an objection, make a comparison, frame a good question, or similar. It should be something that you think is worthy of class attention. Everyone should read everyone else's comments before class. The grade for preparation and participation will be based partly on these comments and partly on the preparation revealed through the depth and breadth of your participation in the class discussions.

Policy On Special Needs:

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for People with Disabilities to develop reasonable accommodations (353-9642 or 355-1293(TTY)). Please notify the instructor regarding any special requirements you have ASAP.

Attendance Policy:

Unauthorized late papers will be penalized unless you have written proof of a legitimate reason for absence, which includes serious illness, family emergency, approved university activities, serious religious observance, and the like. For normal class meetings, attendance is expected and chronic unexcused absence will be reflected in the “participation and participation” grade. If you miss class for a legitimate reason you will not be penalized for missing that daily comment and do NOT need to write a comment for that day.

Course Schedule And Readings:

The expected reading assignments are listed on the table below. It is important that you read the assignment in its entirety before class, and then reread after we have discussed the most important passages. As the pace of the class develops we may have to add or delete readings and shift the schedule. The final week is open because it is likely that we will get behind this schedule!

Note on *Treatise* pagination: Rather than referring to specific pages, the standard citation practice in Hume scholarship is to refer to specific passages and sections with a four number sequence: Book, Part, Section, and Paragraph. So 1.4.2.48 is Book 1, Part 4, Section 2, Paragraph 48 (on page 141 of our edition). If only two or three numbers are given, they refer only to the Book and Part, or Book Part and Section. For your convenience I have added page numbers to the edition we are using, but please get used to using the standard citation system.

Readings from the *Enquiries* are generally given in parenthesis, meaning that they are secondary but still required.

Days with **papers due** or **no class** are highlighted

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY
	AUG 31 – First Class Day No readings, no comments
SEPT 5 NO CLASS Labor day	7 - Hume’s Project and Claims about Thinking READ: <i>Treatise</i> Advertisement, Introduction, and 1.1.1 (pp 2-10), (and <i>Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> sect 1)
12 – Perceptions READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.1.2-1.1.5 (pp 11-16) and 1.3.5.2-1.3.5.7, (pp. 59-61), (and <i>Enquiry</i> sections II and III)	14 – Perceptions READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.1.6-1.1.7 (pp 16-22)
19 – Space, Time, Existence READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.1.2-1.1.3 (pp 23-31) and 1.2.6 (pp. 48-49)	21 – Knowledge, Probability, Causation READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.3.1-1.3.2 (pp 50-55) (and <i>Enquiry</i> just pp 15-16)

26 – Causation: The Problem READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.3.3 (pp 56-58) (and <i>Enquiry</i> section IV)	28 – Causation: The Solution READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.3.5-1.3.8 (pp 59-74) (and <i>Enquiry</i> section V)
OCT 3 – Causation: The Result READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.3.10.1-1.3.10.4 (pp 81-83) and 1.3.10.14 (pp 104-116) and Appendix 1-9 (pp 396-398) (and <i>Enquiry</i> section VII)	5 – Reasoning and Animals READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.3.11-1.3.12.12 (pp 86-93) and 1.3.16 (and <i>Enquiry</i> section IX)
10 NO CLASS RAUSCHER AT CONFERENCE	12 NO CLASS RAUSCHER AT CONFERENCE
17 – PAPER DUE NO CLASS RAUSCHER AT CONFERENCE	19 – External Objects READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.4.2.1-1.4.2.24 (pp 125-133) and 1.4.2.43-1.4.2.57 (pp. 139-144)
24 NO CLASS FALL BREAK	26 – Human Self READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.4.5-1.4.6 (pp 152-171) and Appendix 10-21 (pp. 398-400)
31 – God and Religion READ: <i>Enquiry</i> section X-XI and essays on Suicide and Immortality of the Soul (D2L)	NOV 2 – Conclusion on Belief and Proof READ: <i>Treatise</i> 1.4.7 (pp 171-178) (and <i>Enquiry</i> section XII)
7 – Freedom of the Will READ: <i>Treatise</i> 2.3.1-2.3.2 (pp 257-265) (and <i>Enquiry</i> section VIII)	9 – Morality – not from reason READ: <i>Treatise</i> 2.3.3 (pp 265-268) and 3.1.1 (pp. 293-302) (and <i>Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> section I)
14 PAPER DUE Morality – from a moral sense READ: <i>Treatise</i> 3.1.2 (pp. 302-306) (and <i>Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> Appendixes I-II)	16 – Moral Virtues READ: <i>Treatise</i> 3.2.1.1-3.2.1.9 (pp. 307-309) and 3.3.1 (pp 367-378) and 3.1 (pp. 293-302) (and <i>Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> section II)
21 – Justice as an artificial virtue READ: <i>Treatise</i> 3.2.1-3.2.2 (pp. 307-322) and Essay on D2L: The Origin of Government	23 NO CLASS THANKSGIVING BREAK
28 – The Content of Justice READ: <i>Treatise</i> 3.2.3 – 3.2.5 (pp. 322-337) and Essays on D2L: That Politics May be Reduced to a Science, Of Civil Liberty, Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth	30 - Political Obligation and Social Contract READ: <i>Treatise</i> 3.2.7 – 3.2.10 (pp. 342-362) and Essays on D2L: Of the First Principles of Government, Of the Original Contract
DEC 5 – Catch up	7 – Summary and Catch-up
FINAL EXAM WEEK – PAPER DUE	