

Leibniz (730:416), Spring 2013  
Course Description

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Office hours: W 4:30-5:30pm; Th afternoon by appointment

TEXTS: Assigned and recommended readings will be papers, letters, and published articles of Leibniz, as well as some secondary sources. Readings will be on electronic reserve although there will also be class handouts. Many of the readings are taken from a collection of writings of Leibniz which is available at the bookstore, G. W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, tr. Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber. Purchase is optional; all assigned readings will be available electronically.  
Additional information about Leibniz sources can be found on the course Sakai site.

REQUIREMENTS: You are expected to attend all meetings of the class and to do all reading assignments thoroughly and promptly. Assignments should be read at least once for the class meeting in which they are to be discussed. You are strongly encouraged to participate in class discussion. This helps you and everyone in the class to learn by exploring them yourself. There will be one short paper (roughly 5 pages) assigned during the semester and a long paper (roughly 12-15 pages) due at the end of course. There may be additional out-of-class written assignments, quizzes, or in-class exercises.

LEARNING GOALS: The course is intended to provide a good understanding of some of the central doctrines of Leibniz's metaphysics and theory of cognition, the reasoning by which we supports them, their strengths and weakness, historical context and significance. It is also meant to develop skill in analyzing and evaluating arguments, as well as developing, supporting, and expressing views of one's own.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

A. God, truth, necessity and contingency, the created world

Jan. 28-Feb. 6 (4 meetings)

Readings to include" 'Of an Organum or Ars Magna of Thinking', 'The Nature of Truth', 'On Contingency', 'Primary Truths', 'That a Most Perfect Being Exists', *Principles of Nature and Grace*; suggested secondary sources for interested students.

B. Leibniz's first theory of substance—substantial forms, or the complete concept account

Feb. 11-Mar. 4 (7 meetings):

Readings to include: *Discourse on Metaphysics*, selections from letters to Arnauld; 'On Freedom and Possibility', 'Meditations on the Principle of Individuation'; suggested secondary sources for those interested.

C. Leibniz's second theory of substance—monads, or primary forces

Mar. 6-Mar. 13

Mar. 16-23 Spring break

Mar. 25-Apr. 17 (11 meetings)

Readings to include: 'Specimen of Dynamics', 'On Body and Force against the Cartesians', 'On the Nature of Body and the Laws of Motion'; 'On Nature Itself', 'New System of the Nature of Substance, etc.', letters and notes on Bayle's *Dictionary*, selections from letters to De Volder and *New Essays*. Assigned secondary sources to be announced.

D. Leibniz's theory of intellect, conscious cognition, the indispensability of symbols

Apr. 22-May 1 (4 meetings)

Readings to include: "What is an Idea?". *Meditations on Knowledge, Truth, and Ideas*, 'On What is Independent of Sense and Matter', selections from *New Essays*

A full schedule of assignments with additional readings and references will be available on the course Sakai site.