

**Winter Quarter 2008**  
**Philosophy 20B: History of Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy**

**Instructor:** Vasilis Tsompanidis                      E-mail: [vtso@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:vtso@umail.ucsb.edu)  
Office: SH 5714    Hours: T 12:00-1:00; W 2:00-3:00 (and by appointment).

**Course Website:** <http://www.philosophy.ucsb.edu/websites/phil20B/>

**Textbook:** *Course Reader*, available from the UCSB bookstore

**TAs:**

Steven Huizenga: <a href="mailto:huizenga@umail.ucsb.edu">huizenga@umail.ucsb.edu</a>	Off: SH5717,
Thomas Curtin: <a href="mailto:thomasjcurtin@umail.ucsb.edu">thomasjcurtin@umail.ucsb.edu</a>	Off: SH5432-V,
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**Course Description:**

This course is bridging the gap between ancient philosophy (Plato, Aristotle – covered in 20A) and Later Modern Philosophy (Locke, Hume, Kant – covered in 20C). However, no previous experience with these philosophers or philosophy in general is needed for successful completion of Philosophy 20B.

The course will examine medieval and early modern philosophy. Even though the main concern of the medieval thinkers we will examine is the existence and exact nature of God, there are substantial discussions of important philosophical questions, such as the nature of time or freedom of the will. The first half of the course will treat these topics.

The second half of the course will concentrate on 17<sup>th</sup> century rationalism (Descartes, Spinoza), focusing on topics such as skepticism concerning the external world and the relationship between mind and body. The work of Thomas Hobbes, the paradigm of Early Modern Political Philosophy, will also be discussed, if time permits.

During the course we will also spend significant time in discussing the general historical background that shaped these thinkers' thought, as well as outlining non-Christian philosophy (Arabic, Jewish) that was very important for the intellectual activity of the period.

**Course Requirements:**

- 1: A 4-5 page paper on the Divine Foreknowledge problem, due in lecture on February 4 (hard deadline February 8). This paper will count as 30% of your final grade.
- 2: A 4-5 page paper on Descartes pt. 1, due in lecture on March 3. This paper will count as 30% of your final grade.
- 3: A Final Exam covering most of the course. Thursday March 20, 4.00-7.00pm. The exam will count as 30% of your final grade. A study guide will be made available prior to the final exam.
- 4: Section attendance and participation. This will count as 10% of your final grade.

**Disclaimer:**

E-mailed papers will not be accepted. Paper proposals will be posted on the course website. Students must complete every assignment to earn a passing grade. Plagiarism will result in an F for the course. See <http://hep.ucsb.edu/people/hnn/cond/disq.html> for UCSB policy on academic dishonesty. Lecture notes will be available on the website.

**Tentative Schedule:**

**Topic 1:** The Problem of Evil & Augustine's Free Will Theodicy

St. Augustine (selections from *Confessions*, "On Free Choice Of The Will"), *Action Philosophers* comic: St. Augustine of Hippo

**Topic 2:** The Divine Foreknowledge Problem & Theories of Time

Aristotle "On the Interpretation", Boethius (selections from *The Consolation of Philosophy*)

**Topic 3:** Anselm's Ontological Argument

St. Anselm/Gaunillo debate ("The Existence of Nature and God", *Liber pro Insipiente, Responsio*)

1st Paper Assigned: 1/25/08

**Lecture:** Islamic thought and influence

J. Jolivet "From the Beginnings to Avicenna", A. Ivry "Averroes"

**Topic 4:** Aquina's 5 ways

St. Thomas Aquinas (selections from *Summa Theologica*), Bonaventura (selections), *Action Philosophers* comic: St. Aquinas

1st Paper Due: 2/4/08 (hard deadline: 2/8/08)

**Lecture:** William of Ockham                      reading: *Summa Logicae* (selections)

**Lecture:** The Rise of Science                      reading: Bertrand Russell "The Rise Of Science"

**Topic 5:** Descartes pt. 1: Skepticism & the First Person

R. Descartes' *Meditations* 1-3, comic 3, *Objections and Replies* (selections)

**Topic 6:** Descartes pt. 2: God & The Mind/Body Distinction

R. Descartes' *Meditations* 4-6, *Correspondence with Princess Elizabeth*

2nd Paper Assigned: 2/22/08

**Topic 7:** Spinoza & the Mind/Body Distinction

Baruch de Spinoza's *Ethics* (selections), *Action Philosophers* comic: Spinoza

2d Paper Due: 3/3/08

**Topic 8:** Pascal

Blaise Pascal “The Wager”, selections from *Pensees*

**Topic 9:** Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes’ *Leviathan* (selections), *Action Philosophers* comic: Leviathan

Final Exam: 3/20/08, 4:00-7:00pm