PHI 201A: LOCKE
SYLLABUS
Spring 2017

Professor: Sam Rickless
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Course Description

In this course, we will investigate and evaluate the central features of Locke’s philosophical output. The topics to be covered include: Locke’s theory of ideas (including his anti-nativism), the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, his account of substance and essence, his account of the will (including his theory of freedom of action), his account of identity (including personal identity), his theory of knowledge (including his proof of the existence of God and the status of his commitment to the existence of a mind-independent world), his ethics and moral epistemology, and the foundations of his political philosophy (including his theory of property and his theory of political legitimacy).

Course Texts

Required


Optional (recommended, but not required)


All four texts should be available through the UCSD bookstore. They should also be available online through Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other booksellers. Please be sure to acquire the particular Nidditch and Laslett editions of the Locke texts. It will sometimes be necessary for us to refer directly to these texts in seminar, and it will be important for us to have exactly the same text on hand when we are perusing it together. This will become critical when we look, for example, at changes that Locke made to the text of the Essay as it went through various editions in his own lifetime. Other editions of the Essay that do not capture these changes will be useless.
**Course Units**

*NOTE: Material in “Additional Reading” will not be discussed in seminar. It is there to help you get a running start on extra reading in case the topic of that week serves as the springboard for your final paper.*

**WEEK 1: Anti-Nativism**

**Reading**
*ESSAY*, Book I, Chapters 1-4, 43-103; Book II, Chapter 10, 149-155
*Rickless, Samuel C. “Locke’s Polemic Against Nativism,” CCLE, 33-66*

**Additional Reading**
*Rickless, Samuel C. RICK, 23-38

**WEEK 2: The Theory of Ideas**

**Reading**
*ESSAY*, Book II, Chapters 1-7, 104-132; Chapters 9-12, 143-166; Chapter 15, Section 9 (including footnote), 201-203

**Additional Reading**
WEEK 3: The Primary/Secondary Quality Distinction

Reading:
* ESSAY, Book II, Chapter 8, 132-143; Chapter 21, Sections 1-4, 233-236; Chapter 23, Sections 1-11, 295-302; Chapter 31, Sections 1-2, 375-376.
* Jacovides, Michael. “Locke’s Distinctions between Primary and Secondary Qualities”, CCLE, 101-129.

Additional Reading
* Alexander, Peter. Ideas, Qualities, and Corpuscles: Locke and Boyle on the External World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), Chaps. 5-8
WEEK 4: Action and Freedom

Reading
* **ESSAY**, Book II, Chapter 21, 233-287 (paying close attention to the changes made in the second and subsequent editions)

Additional Reading:

WEEK 5: Substances, the Idea of Substance, and Real Essence

Reading
* **ESSAY**, Book II, Chapter 13, Sections 17-20, 174-175; Chapter 23, 295-317; Chapters 30-31, 372-384; Book III, Chapters 1-3 (esp. sections 15-18 of Chapter 3), 402-420; Chapter 6, 438-471.
Additional Reading

WEEK 6: Personal Identity

Reading
* ESSAY, Book II, Chapter 27, 328-348.

Additional Reading


**WEEK 7: Epistemology and the Problem of Sensitive Knowledge**

**Reading**

* **ESSAY**, Book IV, Chapters 1-5, 525-579; Chapter 11, 630-639; Chapters 14-16, 652-668.


**Additional Reading**


* Newman, Lex. “Locke on Knowledge”, CCLE, 313-351.


WEEK 8: God and Morality

Reading
* ESSAY, Book II, Chapter 28, 348-362; Book III, Chapter 5, 428-438; Book III, Chapter 11, Sections 15-18, 516-518; Book IV, Chapter 3, Sections 18-20, 548-552; Chapters 9-10, 618-630; Chapter 12, Section 11, 646; Chapter 13, Section 3, 651; Chapter 17, Section 4, 670-678.

Additional Reading
WEEK 9: *Natural Rights: Punishment and Property*

**Reading**

**Additional Reading**

WEEK 10: *Political Society and Consent*

**Reading**

**Additional Reading**
Course Requirements and Grading Policy

* 1 presentation : 10%
* 5 short (800-1000 word) papers : 15%
* 1 (2-3 page) prospectus for the final paper
* 1 final paper (4500-6000 words) : 75%

* Each short paper (in PDF format) is to be posted on the TritonEd Discussion Board by 5pm on the Tuesday immediately before the relevant Wednesday seminar.
* Each paper should focus on an aspect of the reading for the relevant week.
* No short paper should be on a topic covered by one of your presentations.
* All short papers should have been completed by the time the prospectus is handed in.

* A prospectus for the final paper is to be e-mailed to me sometime before 5pm on Friday, May 26. It should include a brief description of the project for the final paper and a bibliography.

* The final paper should be posted emailed to me as a PDF by 5pm on Wednesday, June 14. Late papers will not be accepted without a valid excuse communicated to me in a timely manner.

* Improvement counts in your favor if the relevant numerical calculations place you between grades at the end of the quarter.

Notes

* If accommodations are needed for any reason (disability, religious obligation, family obligation, and so on), please notify me as soon as possible.
* The Academic Honor Code must be observed in this course.
* The course units, requirements, and policies stated above are subject to change.