I. Course Materials

Ariew and Watkins, *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources* (MP)
Kierkegaard, *Repetition and Philosophical Crumbs* (PF)
Marx, *German Ideology* (GI)
Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* (TI)
*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (SEP)
Lawhead, *Voyage of Discovery: The Modern Voyage* (MV)

II. Course Description

This course is a historical survey of some of the most prominent movements and figures in the modern Western philosophical tradition, including continental rationalism (Descartes, Leibniz), British empiricism (Locke, Hume), the “Copernican revolution in philosophy” (Kant), absolute idealism (Hegel), and 19th century “hermeneutics of suspicion” (Kierkegaard, Marx, Nietzsche). The majority of the readings for this course are drawn from primary sources, and the main emphases of most of these readings tend to be epistemology (ideas, skepticism, belief, science) and metaphysics (the nature of God, substances, the world, personal identity). Secondary texts (including *The Voyage of Discovery* and various selections from *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*) will serve to fill in the gaps between the figures selected for intensive study, to give indications of the important developments in moral and political philosophy that aren’t covered in our primary source selections, and to provide contextual and biographical detail.

III. Course Objectives and Procedures

This course is designed to help you meet the following four objectives.

*Objective One:* To achieve a charitable understanding of course material through disciplined reading, rigorous outlining assignments, and expository writing.

One of the best ways to cultivate a clear understanding of difficult texts is to engage in good old fashioned expository work: no ambitious argumentative aims, no grandiose critical agenda, just following the text and rehearsing the key moments of its development clearly and concisely in your own words. Over the course of the semester, there will be ample opportunities to develop this important skill by way of three different types of assignments: reading notes, expository outlines, and short expository papers on assigned topics. For each of the 8 major figures whose primary source work we engage, you will turn in a packet of reading notes. There will also be a paper topic and an outline plan for each major primary source; you will write 2 short expository papers (the first due on or before
March 9, the second due on or before May 6) and 2 outlines (one on a text covered before the midterm, and one on a text covered after it). You may choose which readings you wish to write papers on and which you wish to outline, though you’ll want to strategize a bit about how to distribute the coverage; since exams will tend to focus on material from the paper and outlining assignments, it is in your best interest to make sure that you’ve rigorously engaged all the relevant material.

**Objective Two:** To cultivate the virtues of *patience* and *perseverance* through reading and re-reading the assigned texts.

Success in the course will depend largely on the maintenance of a strict daily regimen of patient and careful reading. Many of the texts on this syllabus are notoriously difficult and you will likely need to commit to multiple readings. To help you stay on task, I am asking you to turn in a packet of reading notes for each major figure, and I recommend the discipline of taking rigorous type-written notes directly into a word processor as you read so that you can flag important definitions and concepts and record any questions, concerns, or critical remarks that may occur to you as you move through the text. These notes can prove invaluable for contributing to in-class discussions, studying for exams, and working on outlines and expository papers.

**Objective Three:** To engage (and enjoy!) your community of colleagues in discussion, both inside and outside the classroom.

Vigorous discussion is indispensable to the process of understanding, appreciating, and applying course material, especially when the material is as challenging as some of the texts we’ll be working through together. In my experience, people tend to come to class better prepared and contribute more vigorously when they have a sense of affinity for and responsibility toward their instructor and fellow students. With regard to fostering participation and interaction, my goals are to convey a contagious excitement (and a good sense of humor) about what I take to be fascinating and highly relevant material, to model respect for and interest in the contributions of all participants, and to facilitate discussion that is well-directed enough to illuminate the issues at stake, but open-ended enough to inspire a sense of wonder and enjoyment in as many of you as possible. I strongly encourage you to discuss course material with one another outside of class and to engage me in conversation as often as you find it helpful.

**Objective Four:** To discern the possibilities and the challenges that the modern philosophical trajectory presents for thinking and living in contemporary Christian community.

As you’ve surely gathered by now, Calvin is a place where we take our identity as a community of Christian scholars and servants very seriously. Naturally, the question of how our course material can aid us in the pursuit of faithful Christian thinking and living will be a central theme of our inquiries.

**IV. Requirements and Grade Assessment**

To be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course, each of you must fulfill the following requirements.

**A. Participation and Attendance—25%**

Your participation grade will be determined by reference to four inputs: (1) attendance, (2) participation in class, (3) daily reading notes, and (4) outlining assignments; your notes and outlines...
will be graded on a “check minus/check/check plus” scale on the basis of effort, and these written assignments will constitute the vast majority of your participation grade. Unless otherwise noted in class or on a handout, I will collect your reading notes in a neatly stapled packet on the last day that we discuss each figure. However, my expectation is that you will keep your reading notes up to date from class to class, and I reserve the right to spot-check reading notes at any time if I get the sense that people are unprepared. If all goes well, I shouldn’t have to spot-check very often.

Regarding verbal participation: Since some of us are naturally inclined to verbal participation and others of us are not, frequency of verbal input isn’t always the most reliable indicator of who is involved; it is possible, in other words, to participate vigorously without speaking up a whole lot in class. My aim is to foster a classroom environment in which different people with different learning styles may flourish equally, and that means I never put people on the spot and I strive to include as many people in the discussion as can be persuaded to get involved. The more tightly-knit our classroom community, the more progress we are likely to make together (both academically and personally), so please be attentive to your colleagues’ different learning styles and comfort levels.

Regarding attendance: Your daily attendance is absolutely critical. This material is difficult and to make good sense of it, you will need regular input from me and from your colleagues. To provide you with incentive, I will take attendance every day. If there is some pressing reason or extenuating circumstance that requires you to miss class, please communicate this to me in advance of the absence. Students with more than 3 unexcused absences may incur a participation penalty of up to half a letter off their final grade. Students with more than 5 unexcused absences may incur an additional penalty of up to a full letter off the final grade. In cases of excessive absence, students risk becoming ineligible to pass the course.

If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate and to follow up with me for copies of any handouts or assignments circulated in your absence.

B. Short Expository Papers—35%
You will write two short expository papers (~4-5 pages) on assigned topics; each paper is worth 17.5% of the final grade. For the first expository paper, you may choose to write on the topic assigned for Descartes, Leibniz, or Hume (due on or before Wednesday, March 7). For the second expository paper, you may choose to write on the topic assigned for Kant, Kierkegaard, Marx, or Nietzsche (due on or before Friday, May 4).

C. Midterm Exam—20%
The midterm exam will cover Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, and Hume. It will have three sections: terms and definitions, short answers, and an essay. The midterm is scheduled for Wednesday, March 14.

D. Final Exam—20%
The final exam is comprehensive, but I will communicate to you in advance the material that is most likely to be covered by way of a detailed exam review sheet. The format will be the same as the midterm. The final exam is scheduled for Tuesday, May 15, at 1:30 pm.

V. Accommodations
Calvin College will make reasonable accommodations for a student with a documented disability. You should notify a disability coordinator in the Office of Academic Services (located in 446 Hiemenga Hall) in order to arrange your accommodations. Once you have made those arrangements, please talk with me sometime during the first two weeks of class so that we can get your accommodations up and running.

VI. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a very serious form of academic dishonesty that is covered in detail in the Calvin College Student Handbook and Student Conduct Code available at http://www.calvin.edu/student-life/safety-student-conduct. As a student of Calvin College, you are responsible for having read and understood this information, and I will conduct class with the expectation that you are aware of and responsible to the college’s definitions, policies, and sanctions concerning plagiarism. I am not trying to scare anyone here, but it is my duty to make you aware that Calvin College takes academic honesty very seriously.

In order promote thorough understanding of what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, I am providing you here with some helpful information on plagiarism from the Calvin College English Department. My expectation is that you will read this information carefully and ask any questions you may have about it before turning in your first written daily assignment for this class.

A grade of “0” will be entered automatically for any instance of cheating or plagiarism on any test or written assignment. Moreover, I am obligated to report the incident to Jane Hendriksma, Dean for Judicial Affairs.

From the Calvin College English Department Statement on Plagiarism (this document is available online at http://www.calvin.edu/academic/engl/writing/plagiar.htm):

“Definition of Plagiarism

Students plagiarize when they do not credit the sources of their writing—the words, information, ideas, or opinions of others. Plagiarism takes several forms; plagiarism in all its forms deserves a response from the student’s instructor and from Calvin College

Context for the policy

Calvin College divides its core curriculum into three parts: knowledge, skills, and virtues. Studying in core courses like [Philosophy 153], students expand their knowledge of God’s world, develop their ability to act effectively in that world, and deepen their commitment to living for God and for others. When students plagiarize, they reject the opportunity to learn something new, to understand alternative perspectives, and to develop their own opinions; they fail to develop the skills of research and writing that enhance their ability to understand, inform, and persuade; and they act contrary to the virtues that ought to guide their lives, virtues such as diligence, honesty, courage, stewardship, and justice. Acts of plagiarism affect not only the plagiarizer but also the entire academic community. First, plagiarism taints the trust between instructor and student, creating a climate of suspicion. For example, instructors who have encountered plagiarism might be more inclined to question students’ integrity. Moreover, hoping to deter students from plagiarizing, instructors might be more likely to craft exceedingly narrow assignments, limiting students’ freedom to pursue academic research as their interests lead them. Acts of plagiarism also taint relationships among students and compromise the fairness of grades. Finally, acts of plagiarism challenge the academic reputation of Calvin College and all its graduates.

Extended Definition
A first step toward avoiding plagiarism is understanding plagiarism in all its forms. The English 101 Committee, therefore, provides the following extended definition of plagiarism.

1. Students plagiarize if they submit as their own work any of the following:

   a. An entire essay written by someone else. This form of plagiarism includes, for example, essays purchased from web sites that specialize in academic essays, essays published on the web or in other sources, and unpublished essays written by others.

   b. The exact words of someone else without quotation marks around those words. This form of plagiarism can include copying exact wording without quotation marks even if a student provides documentation in the “Works Cited” section.

   c. A paraphrase of someone else’s words without documentation. This form of plagiarism includes reordering or replacing someone else’s words while keeping the main idea or the central information.

   d. A summary of someone else’s words or ideas without documentation. This form of plagiarism includes using some, few, or even none of the original words to reproduce a shorter version of some or all of someone else’s ideas or text.

   e. Undocumented use of information from someone else. In this kind of plagiarism, a student takes information that she found in a particular source and presents it as her own knowledge or as common knowledge. A student must document information that appears in one or only a few specialized sources, is the work or idea of a particular person, or represents a controversial stance on a topic. A student need not document information that is common knowledge.

   f. Undocumented use of information that someone else has collected. A student must document research aids such as web-based “research” services and annotated bibliographies.

   g. The sequence of ideas, arrangement of material, pattern of thought, or visual representation of information (images, tables, charts, or graphs) from someone else. This form of plagiarism includes any of these textual features even if students present the ideas or information in their own words.

2. Students are accomplices to plagiarism if they do any of the following: (a) They allow a fellow student to submit their work as the student’s own, or they write an essay for another student and allow that student to submit it as his or her own; (b) They do not report a fellow student who plagiarizes; (c) They contribute an essay to a collection of essays (among friends or at a web site) that they know provides opportunity for other students to plagiarize.”

### VII. Course Calendar

Though there are likely to be changes along the way, we’ll attempt to stick as closely as possible to the following schedule. Abbreviations for book titles are listed in the above Course Materials section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Modern Philosophy—Motivations, Methods, and Goals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. Jan. 30</td>
<td>Introductions and Course Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. Feb. 1</td>
<td>Modern Philosophy: Motivations, Methods, and Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Required Reading: Francis Bacon, “New Organon, Book I (1620)” (MP, 16-20); Rene Descartes, “Discourse on Method (1637)” (MP, 25-32); Immanuel Kant, “What Is Enlightenment?” (1784) (online)</td>
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F. Feb. 3  Motivations, Methods, and Goals, continued.

**Week 2**  Continental Rationalism—Rene Descartes (1596-1650)
M. Feb. 6 Descartes, *Meditations* (1640)—Hypothetical Doubt and The Cogito
Required Reading: Dedication, Preface, Synopsis, Meditations I, II (MP, 35-47); MV, 226-232.
Recommended Reading: SEP, “Rene Descartes”,
http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/descartes

W. Feb. 8 Descartes, *Meditations*—The Causal Argument for God’s Existence
Required Reading: Meditation III (MP, 47-54); MV, 232-234

F. Feb. 10 Descartes, *Meditations*—The Ontological Argument for God’s Existence
Required Reading: Meditations IV, V (MP, 54-61); MV, 234-236.

**Week 3**  Rationalism—Descartes + Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716)
M. Feb. 13 Descartes, *Meditations*—Minds and Bodies; The External World Regained
Required Reading: Meditation VI (MP, 61-68); MV, 236-240.

W. Feb. 15 Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics* (1686)—God’s Nature
Required Reading: Discourse, § 1-7 (MP, 224-228); MV, 257-264.
Recommended Reading: SEP, “Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz”,
http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/leibniz

F. Feb. 17 Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics* (1686)—The Nature of Created Substances
Required Reading: Discourse, § 8-16 (MP, 228-233)

**Week 4**  Rationalism—Leibniz, continued
M. Feb. 20 Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*—Knowledge, Freedom, Mind, etc.
Required Reading: Discourse, § 23-37 (MP, 238-247)

W. Feb. 22 Leibniz, *Monadology* (1714)—Guiding Principles of Leibniz’ Philosophy
Required Reading: Monadology (MP, 275-283); MV, 265-269.

F. Feb. 24 Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690)—Against Innate Ideas
Required Reading: Essay, Book I, Chapters I and II (MP, 316-322); MV, 272-281.
Recommended Reading: SEP, “John Locke”,
http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke

**Week 5**  British Empiricism—John Locke (1632-1704)
M. Feb. 27
Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*—Ideas, Qualities, and Powers
Required Reading: Essay, Book II,
  Chapters I and II (MP, 322-329)
  Chapters VIII and IX (MP, 332-339)
  Chapter XII (MP, 340-342)
  Chapter XXI, Sections 1-5, 72-73 (MP, 348-349; 355-357)
  MV, 281-284

W. Feb. 29
Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*—Knowledge
Required Reading: Essay, Book IV,
  Chapter I (MP, 386-389)
  Chapter IV (MP, 403-405)
  MV, 284-293
Recommended Reading:
  Chapter X (MP, 405-411)
  Chapter XI (MP, 411-415)

F. Mar. 2
Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748)—Ideas
Required Reading: Enquiry, Sections I-III (MP, 533-542);
  MV, 310-324.
Recommended Reading: SEP, “David Hume”

**Week 6**

**Empiricism—David Hume (1711-1776)**

M. Mar. 5
Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*—Skeptical Doubts
Required Reading: Enquiry, Sections IV-VI (MP, 542-556)

W. Mar. 7
Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*—Necessary Connection
Required Reading: Enquiry, Section VII (MP, 356-364)

*First expository paper due no later than today in class.*

F. Mar. 9
Hume—*Enquiry...Human Understanding*—Miracles, Varieties of Skepticism
Required Reading: Enquiry, Sections X-XII (MP, 577-600)
Recommended Reading: SEP, “Miracles”

**Week 7**

M. Mar. 12
Catch-up Day

W. Mar. 14
Midterm Examination

F. Mar. 16
Introduction to Kant

**Week 8**

SPRING BREAK (Mar. 19-23)—NO CLASS MEETINGS

**Week 9**

The Copernican Revolution in Philosophy—Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

M. Mar. 26
Kant, *Prolegomena...Metaphysics* (1783)—Is Metaphysics Possible?
Required Reading: Prolegomena, Preface, §1-5 (MP, 661-672); MV, 325-330.
Recommended Reading: SEP, “Kant” [http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant)
W. Mar. 28  Kant, *Prolegomena...Metaphysics*—The Transcendental Problem  
Required Reading: Prolegomena, §6-39 (MP, 673-695); MV, 330-334.

F. Mar. 30  Kant, *Prolegomena...Metaphysics*—The Limits of Reason: Mind, World, God  
Required Reading: Prolegomena, (MP, 695-716); MV, 334-345.

**Week 9**  
**M. Apr. 2**  
**Absolute Idealism—Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831)**  
Singer, *Hegel*—History as Progress of the Consciousness of Freedom  
Required Reading: H, 1-31; MV, 347-358.  
Recommended Reading: SEP, “Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel”  

**W. Apr. 4**  
Singer, *Hegel*—Freedom and Community  
Required Reading: H, 32-59; MV, 360-369.

**F. Apr. 6**  
**GOOD FRIDAY—NO CLASS MEETING**

**Week 10**  
**M. Apr. 9**  
**19th Century Critics of Modernity—Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855)**  
Hegel, *Hegel: A Very Short Introduction*—*Geist* and Dialectical Method  
Required Reading: H, 60-108; MV, 369-377.

**W. Apr. 11**  
Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* (1844)  
Required Reading: PF, Preface and I (85-99); MV, 399-403.  
Recommended Reading: SEP, “Søren Kierkegaard”  
[http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kierkegaard](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kierkegaard)

**F. Apr. 13**  
Catch-up Day

**Week 11**  
**M. Apr. 16**  
**19th Century Critics of Modernity—Kierkegaard + Karl Marx (1818-1883)**  
Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* (1844)  
Required Reading: PF, II and III (99-125); MV, 403-411.

**W. Apr. 18**  
Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments*  
Required Reading: PF, IV, Interlude, and V (125-173); MV, 411-414.

**F. Apr. 20**  
Marx, *The German Ideology*  
Required Reading: GI, 37-48; MV, 379-386.  
Recommended Reading: SEP, “Karl Marx”  
[http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/marx](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/marx)

**Week 12**  
**M. Apr. 23**  
**19th Century Critics of Modernity—Marx, continued**  
Marx, *The German Ideology*  
Required Reading: GI, 48-60; MV, 386-392; Alienated Labor (handout)
W. Apr. 25  ACADEMIC ADVISING RECESS—NO CLASS MEETING

F. Apr. 27  Marx, *The German Ideology*
Required Reading: GI, 60-95; MV, 392-397.

**Week 13**

M. Apr. 30  **19th Century Critics of Modernity—Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)**
Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*
Required Reading: TI, Introduction (skim, esp. xxi-xxxvi), 3-42
Recommended Reading: MV, 416-420; SEP, “Friedrich Nietzsche”
  [http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/nietzsche](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/nietzsche)

W. May 2  Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*
Required Reading: TI, 43-82
Recommended Reading: MV, 420-424

F. May 4  Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*
Required Reading: TI, review previous readings
Recommended Reading: MV, 424-430

Second expository paper due no later than today in class.

**Week 14**  

M. May 7  **Course Retrospective: Looking Back so that We May Move Forward**
Legacies of Modernity
Required Reading: Michel Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” (online)*

W. May 9  Legacies of Modernity, continued.

**Week 15**  

T. May 15  **EXAM WEEK**
Final Exam, 1:30 pm, HH 335

*Foucault’s “What Is Enlightenment” is available online here: