



## Philosophy

### Junior/Senior Seminar on the Philosophy of David Hume

#### PHIL 398 – 01

**Instructor:** Dr. John Thrasher

**Class Meeting Day(s) & Time(s):** Wednesday 4:00pm-6:50pm

**Classroom:** Beckman 201

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Office Location:** *Beckett Building 130*

**Email Address:** ThrasherIV@Chapman.edu

**Phone (optional):** 714-516-4562

—Updated for Distance Learning—

#### Course Description

Prerequisites, junior standing, 6 credits in philosophy, or consent of instructor. In their junior or senior year, all philosophy majors must enroll at least once in this seminar on a significant topic in philosophy. Students will complete a substantial philosophical essay. May be repeated for credit when the topic changes. (Offered every semester.) **3 credits**

#### Seminar Description

David Hume (1711-1776) witnessed and participated in the emerging scientific and industrial revolution sweeping his native Scotland, England, and Europe. Hume influenced and was influenced by his best friend Adam Smith and woke Immanuel Kant from his “dogmatic slumbers.” He also influenced Charles Darwin and continues to influence and inspire contemporary social science, psychology, and philosophy. We will read his principal works, with a special emphasis on how his various ideas are related. Hume is, perhaps even more than Kant, the founder of modern philosophy and understanding his work is important to a proper education in philosophy.

#### Course Learning Outcomes

- Ability to state and support a thesis, apply knowledge of critical reasoning, accurately interpret philosophic sources, and clearly communicate a balanced account in writing.
- Ability to construct and analyze complex arguments and distinguish good reasoning from bad.
- Ability to reason logically, effectively, and respectfully about ethical matters



**Program Learning Outcomes**

- PLO1: Writing—Ability to state and support a thesis, apply knowledge of critical reasoning, accurately interpret philosophic sources, and clearly communicate a balanced account in writing.
- PLO2: Critical Reasoning—Ability to construct and analyze complex arguments and distinguish good reasoning from bad.
- PLO 3H: History of Philosophy—Ability to demonstrate a deep understanding of central figures, texts, and ideas from the Modern or Ancient and Medieval periods of the history of philosophy.
- PLO 4: Ethical Reasoning—Ability to reason logically, effectively, and respectfully about ethical matters.

**Overview**

This seminar will make significant demands on you in terms of the reading. You will likely find many of them difficult. Some of the readings will require some background knowledge—make note of anything that seems odd in the reading or that you don't immediately understand, and we will discuss some of those issues in the seminar.

I expect students to come to the seminar prepared to discuss the readings and to go beyond them. The readings are just a starting point for the discussion in the seminar, but it will be impossible to probe some of the deeper issues that they raise if you are not already familiar with the readings.

Doing philosophy well requires that you have a diverse range of ideas to draw on so that you can see problems in new ways and possibly find solutions or new ways of thinking that other may have missed. This requires a depth of knowledge that only comes from reading and understanding the great thinkers who have come before you.

While reading and writing are solitary pursuits, philosophy is also done collaboratively in the seminar room through discussion. I expect everyone to contribute to the discussion and to remain respectful throughout. You should not free ride on the contributions of others, but instead be prepared to contribute each seminar. Mere cleverness is no substitute for the insight that comes from deep reflection on serious problems. All of this will require a good amount of work, but I think you will find the rewards will be substantial.

**Communication**

The best way to contact the professor is via email. When emailing, identify yourself, use course name and meeting dates in subject heading.

**Attendance Policy**

Because of the interactive nature of the class, attendance is an essential component. Excessive tardiness constitutes an absence; six absences may result in failure. Please keep this in mind.

**Assessment**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Questions	20%	Throughout
Introduction	15%	Throughout
Short Papers	30%	Throughout
Essay Plan	Hurdle	Before Week 12



Final Essay	35%	May 20
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### Questions (20%)

Each student will submit 2 questions and one comment about the material under discussion that week on canvas. These questions will be used in the class and will be evaluated on a 3-point scale based on how well they reflect the student's engagement with the material. These should be submitted by 2pm on the day of class.

### Introduction (15%)

To aid the discussion, each student must give an introduction to a seminar session. These introductions should be short (5-10 minutes max) and should set up the main ideas, themes.

### Short Papers (30%)

There will be several short paper assignments throughout the semester based on the readings. Some of these will be done in class.

### Essay Plan

The main assessment exercise for this unit is a final essay. In order to improve the quality of those essays, each student is required to submit a brief essay plan that identifies the thesis of the proposed paper, any supporting sub-arguments, and the intended references. The essay plan should be delivered as a *hard copy* to me in person during a consultation in my office. There will be a link to schedule the consultation on Canvas. This consultation should be scheduled no later than Week 8 and may be scheduled any time before that. If you decide to change your topic substantially after our consultation, you should briefly talk to me again, but you will not need to submit another essay plan. If, however, I deem the essay plan to be inadequate, I may ask you for a revision.

### Final Essay (35%)

The final essay will be based on the topic from your essay plan of no more than 4,500 words. A more detailed rubric and tips on writing a good essay will be posted on Canvas.

### Required Text

All of our readings are available online at David Hume Texts Online (<https://davidhume.org/>). You should bring the texts to class and have easy access to them. If you want a print version, there are a number of excellent editions available.

### Chapman University's Academic Integrity Policy

Chapman University is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor/administrator and referral to the University Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion. Please see the full description of Chapman University's policy on Academic Integrity at [www.chapman.edu/academics/academic-integrity/index.aspx](http://www.chapman.edu/academics/academic-integrity/index.aspx)

### Chapman University's Students with Disabilities Policy

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper

notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized.

Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516–4520 or visit <https://www.chapman.edu/students/health-and-safety/disability-services> if you have questions regarding this procedure or for information or to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

### Chapman University’s Equity and Diversity Policy

Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman’s Harassment and Discrimination Policy.

Please see the full description of this policy at <http://www.chapman.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/eoo.aspx>. Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the dean of students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.”

### Weekly Schedule of Readings & Topics for the Term

	<b>Reading</b>
<b>Week 1</b> February 5	1. David Hume (1777) —“My Own Life” 2. Adam Smith (1776)—Letter from Adam Smith, LI.D. To William Strahan, Esq
<b>Week 2</b> February 12	1. David Hume (1739)— <i>Treatise of Human Nature</i> , “Introduction” 2. David Hume (1748)— <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> (First Enquiry), §1-3
<b>Week 3</b> February 19	David Hume (1748)— <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> (First Enquiry), §4-9
<b>Week 4</b> February 26	David Hume (1748)— <i>First Enquiry</i> , §10-11
<b>Week 5</b> March 4	1. David Hume (1748)— <i>First Enquiry</i> , §12 2. David Hume (1739)— <i>Treatise of Human Nature</i> , Book 1, Part 4, Section 7 “Conclusion of this Book”, “Appendix”
<b>Week 6</b> March 11	1. David Hume (1741)—“That Politics be Reduced to a Science” 2. David Hume (1752)—“Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth”
<b>Week 7</b> March 18	David Hume (1751)— <i>A Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</i> (Second Enquiry), §1, §2
<b>Spring Break</b>	
<b>Week 8</b> April 1	Adam Smith (1759)— <i>The Theory of Moral Sentiments</i> (TMS), Part I
<b>Week 9</b> April 8	David Hume- (1751)— <i>Second Enquiry</i> §3
<b>Week 10</b> April 15	David Hume (1739)— <i>Treatise of Human Nature</i> , Book 3, Part 2, “Of Justice and Injustice”
<b>Week 11</b> April 22	Adam Smith (1759)—TMS, Part II

<b>Week 12</b> April 29	David Hume (1751)— <i>Second Enquiry</i> §4 David Hume (1748)—“Of The Original Contract” David Hume (1748)—“Of Passive Obedience”
<b>Week 13</b> May 6	David Hume (1751)— <i>Second Enquiry</i> §5-§6
<b>Week 14</b> May 13	David Hume (1751)— <i>Second Enquiry</i> §7-§9