**Spring 2019: PHIL 6940**

**Sentiment and Morality, Hume and Smith**

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Office hours: W 2-4, or by appointment

**Course Description**

For the philosophers of the 18th century Scottish Enlightenment, morality was a passionate affair: they claimed that our ethical concerns and concepts have a sentimental origin, and that moral precepts ultimately receive their authority from the heart, not the head. This course explores in detail the work of the two greatest sentimentalists, David Hume and Adam Smith. We will read Hume’s radical *A Treatise of Human Nature,*alongside some excerpts from his later *Enquiries,*and then Smith’s long-neglected but masterful *The Theory of Moral Sentiments.* Topics we will devote particular attention to include: the work of sympathy, the constitution of conscience, the nature of evaluative properties, and the possibility of moral corruption.

**Course Objectives**

Students will acquire a rich understanding of sentimentalism, an approach to moral theorizing that is still flourishing today, through careful reflection on the philosophical masterpieces that represent its most sophisticated historical form. We will focus on reconstructing Hume and Smith’s arguments and exploring of the coherence and plausibility of those arguments. Consequently, students will develop skill in the close textual analysis of historical work. Through work on Hume and Smith’s texts, students will also familiarize themselves with some of the most central and enduring questions in meta-ethics, moral psychology, and political philosophy. Students will also build upon their existing abilities in philosophical writing through regular short writing exercises, revisions, outlining, and ultimately the completion of a term paper.

**Program Outcomes.**

This course partially satisfies the major requirement of completion of at least two 6000-level courses.

**Required Student Resources**

You are required to purchase or borrow three books for this course. These are:

1. **David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature.***   
   The preferred edition for this course is the Selby-Bigge/Nidditch Edition   
   (ISBN:9780198245889). The Norton edition is also acceptable.
2. **David Hume,**[***Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals  (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.***](https://www.facultyenlight.com/book-details/2680954)

The preferred edition for this course is the Selby-Bigge/Nidditch Edition (ISBN: 9780198245360)

1. **Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments.***

The only acceptable edition for this course is the Macfie/Raphael Edition. Copies are available quite cheaply from the Liberty Press (ISBN:9780865970120).

*Secondary readings* will be posted on this course’s Canvas site. You must print these readings out and bring them to class (Exception: students using flat e-readers such as Nooks, Kindles, or iPads. See the Electronics Policy below).

**Electronics Policy**

*Neither phones nor laptops* will be permitted in class except as a matter of special accommodation (in accordance with the recommendations of the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility). You *must*bring the relevant texts with them to class. Flat reading devices such as Kindles or iPads will be allowed for in-class text access, but I highly recommend printing out any secondary readings instead, and hard copies of the books really are necessary for efficiently coordinating references.

Why the electronics policy? Research shows that while students prefer to read on screens, student laptop use is correlated with poorer retention of lecture content, poorer retention of information from readings, worse performance on conceptual questions, worse course performance generally, and weaker self-reported understanding of course material. These results are likely linked to the fact that students engage in substantial multitasking behavior with their laptops and have non course-related software open and active about 42% of the time, on average. I have uploaded a summary of these findings, with references to the relevant studies, to the Canvas site.

**Evaluation Procedures and Grading Criteria**

The assignments for this course are designed with three principle objectives in mind. First, they will give you the chance to clarify your understanding of Hume and Smith’s arguments, which are often complex, subtle, or even obscure. Second, they will provide the opportunity to work on key skills for philosophical writing. And third, they will help you to hone your oral presentation abilities.

The bulk of the writing you do for this course will take the form of two-page *(maximum* three-page) ***commentaries****.*You must write a minimum of seven commentaries over the course of the term, and only one commentary may be submitted per week. You are welcome to submit more than 7 commentaries; only the best 7 will be factored into your final overall commentary grade. These commentaries will pertain to the reading material for the coming class session, and are due at **5pm** **on Monday,**the day before the class meets). You may rewrite up to two of these commentaries in light of comments (in which case your grade will be updated; NB you cannot receive a worse grade on a re-write, though no grade improvement is guaranteed).At a minimum, one of these commentaries must take the form of a secondary literature analysis. Instructions for writing commentaries, including secondary literature analysis commentaries, are available on the Canvas site, under “Files > Guidelines.” (**consider cutting down on number of commentaries)**

Additionally, you will be responsible for writing and revising a ***term paper*** due 5/5/19 at 5pm. The schedule of assignments highlights the due dates for the outline and the final draft of the term paper. The paper should be in the 17–20 page range (so, between 4,000 and 6,000 words): longer papers may be submitted only with my advance permission. Further instructions will be available on the Canvas site, under “Files > Guidelines.”

Finally, each student will give one **presentation**to the class. These presentations will be around 10 minutes long for undergraduates, 20 minutes for graduate students, and will be accompanied by a **handout**, a draft of which must be submitted to me the day before the class meets, at **5pm** **on Monday (in canvas, under “class presentations”).**A guideline for presentations is available on the Canvas site, under “Files > Guidelines.”

It goes without saying that reading the texts and attending class is mandatory. **Philosophy is not a spectator sport**. You should come ready to raise questions, challenge assumptions, and contribute constructively to our evolving collective understanding of the material. A participation guideline is available on Canvas.

**Course Grade Breakdown**

*Commentaries – 30%      Term Paper – 35%*(outline 10%, final draft 25% percent) 

*Participation – 20%        Class Presentation (1) – 15%*

**Late policy:**You are allowed **three late days**, which you may use at your absolute discretion. You can use a late day, or multiple late days, *whenever you like*. Late work should be uploaded to the corresponding assignment on Canvas. You do not need to provide a reason, but you mustlet me know that this is what you intend to do before the due date, and you must notify me when your late work is uploaded. Once you’ve used up your three days, though, alllate commentaries or term paper first drafts not excused by a dean’s or doctor’s note will be penalized (1/3 of letter grade per day), no exceptions. The case of late *final*term papers is special. If you have used up your late days, I will not accept papers turned in after the final due date. In turning in your assignments, it is your responsibility to ensure that you upload the correct, uncorrupted files. Your assignments are to be uploaded to Canvas by **5pm** on the due date. They should be in docx format, 12pt font, double-spaced.

**Collaboration and Academic Integrity:**

Collaboration is an essential part of philosophy. I encourage you to discuss your ideas and your papers with your classmates, your roommates, your professors, your friends, your enemies… That said, it is important that you cite all your sources responsibly, and that the work in your papers be your own. This course has a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism. If you have questions about these matters, please do ask.

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**Attendance**

Because this course meets only once a week, it will be very difficult to make up for a missed session, and a single missed class will substantially impact your participation grade. You are expected to attend all meetings of the course. You will not be penalized for missing class if you are ill and have a medical excuse issued by the Student Health Center. If you need to miss class due to some other exceptional circumstance, please let me know.

**ADA/Accessibility Statement**

Any students with disabilities or other needs, who need special accommodations in this course, are invited to share these concerns or requests with the instructor and should contact Goldman Center for Student Accessibility: [http://accessibility.tulane.edu  (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](http://accessibility.tulane.edu/)or 504.862.8433.

**Code of Academic Conduct**

The Code of Academic Conduct applies to all undergraduate students, full-time and part-time, in Tulane University. Tulane University expects and requires behavior compatible with its high standards of scholarship. By accepting admission to the university, a student accepts its regulations (i.e., [Code of Academic Conduct (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](https://college.tulane.edu/academic-honesty) and [Code of Student Conduct (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](https://conduct.tulane.edu/resources/code-student-conduct)) and acknowledges the right of the university to take disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, for conduct judged unsatisfactory or disruptive.

**What you can expect from me**

I will be available at least 2 hours per week for office hours, and I will return all assignments (with the possible exception of the term paper) within five days. I will endeavor to offer short reading guides for each week, provided that you all find them useful. I will not be able to read whole drafts in advance of your turning them in, but I’m very happy to read outlines and discuss ideas with you.

**Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

**1/15/19 An Introduction to Sentimentalism and to Scottish Philosophy**

*Required:*

Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746): “The Origin of our Ideas of Virtue or Moral Good.” Available on Canvas.

[“Translated” by Jonathan Bennett; Bennett’s version modifies the original through the basic updating of language, the simplification of syntax, the numbering of points, and a few other changes which you can learn about here: [http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/faqs/how (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/faqs/how)). This “translation” is fine and good for our purposes since we only need to get up to speed with Hutcheson’s key arguments and ideas; otherwise, we will be sticking with the original early modern texts once we get to Hume and Smith. However, if you find yourself struggling with some bit of Hume or Smith’s language, you may find Bennett’s “translations” to be a helpful *secondary*resource. They are available here: [http://www.earlymoderntexts.com (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.](http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/).]

David Hume, “My Own Life.” Available on Canvas.

*Optional:*

James Boswell, “An Account of My Last Interview with David Hume.” Available on Canvas.

Adam Smith, “Letter to William Strahan” (on Hume’s last illness and death). Available on Canvas.

**1/22/19 The Theory of Ideas, the Problem of Causality, and the Idea of Power**

*Required:*

1E: “Of the different Species of Philosophy” pp. 5-16. I’ve made this available online in case you haven’t yet managed to pick up a copy of the *Enquiries.*

T: Introduction: pp. xiii-xix

T: Book I, Part I, “Of ideas…etc.”

I-V, pp. 1-15

T: Book I, Part III, “Of knowledge and probability,”

I-VIII, pp. 69-106

*(lower priority*) XIV, pp. 155-172

*Optional Secondary Literature:*

Owen, David. “Hume and the Mechanics of Mind.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Hume.*OUP: 2016.

**1/29/19** **Hume’s Theory of the Passions: Pride and Humility**

T: Book II, Part I, “Of pride and humility”

I-XI pp. 275-324

*Optional Secondary Literature:*

Buckle, Stephen (2012). Hume on the Passions. *Philosophy* 87 (2):189-213

**2/5/19 Theory of the Passions Part II: Love and Hatred**

T: Book II, Part II, pp. 329-379.

*Optional Secondary Literature:*

Vitz, Rico. “The Nature and Functions of Sympathy in Hume’s Philosophy.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Hume.*OUP: 2016.

**2/12/19 Freedom and the direct passions**

T: Book II, Part III, “Of the will and direct passions”:

I-III, pp. 399-418

IX, pp. 438-448

T: Book I, Part III, X, “Of the influence of belief,” pp. 118-123

*Optional Secondary Literature:*

Pitson, Tony. “Hume, free will, and moral responsibility.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Hume.*OUP: 2016.

**2/19/19 Reason versus the Moral Sense**

T: Book III, Part I, “Of virtue and vice in general,” pp. 455-476

2E: “Of the general Principles of Morals,” pp. 169-175

2E: Appendix I: “Concerning Moral Sentiment,” pp. 285-294

*Optional Secondary Literature:*

Ainslie, Donald. “Hume on Moral Motivation.” In *The Cambridge Companion to Hume’s*Treatise. CUP: 2105.

**2/26/19 The Natural Virtues**

T: Book III, Part III “Of the other virtues and vices,” pp. 574-617

2E: “Why Utility pleases,” pp. 212-232

Recommended Reading:

2E: “Of Benevolence” pp. 176-182

2E: Chapters VI-VII (“Of Qualities….” ), pp. 233-267

2E: Appendix IV: “Of Some Verbal Disputes,” pp. 312-323

“Of the Standard of Taste,” pp. 226-249

*Optional secondary literature:*

Baier, Annette C. “A Catalogue of Virtues.” From *A Progress of Sentiments.* HUP: 1991.

**3/5/19 NO CLASS: MARDI GRAS BREAK**

**3/12/19 The Artificial Virtues**

T: Book III, Part II, “Of justice and injustice”:

I-VI, pp. 477-534

Recommended Reading:

2E: “Some farther Considerations with regard to Justice” pp. 303-311

*Optional secondary literature:*

Cohon, Rachel. "Hume on Promises and the Peculiar Act of the Mind." *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 44.1 (2006): 25-45.

**3/19/19 Hume’s Political Philosophy**

T: Book III, Part II, “Of justice and injustice”:

VII-XII, pp. 534-574

2E: III, “Of Justice” pp. 183-204

“Of the Original Contract,” pp. 465-487

**3/26/19 Smith on a new model of sympathy**

TMS: Advertisement

            Table of Contents

Christopher Berry, “Adam Smith, an Outline of Life, Times, and Legacy.” Available in Canvas.

            Part I *up to* “Of the origin of ambition,” pp. 9-50.

            Hume, “Letter of 28 July 1759,” available on Canvas.

*Optional secondary literature:*

Sayre-McCord, Geoffrey. "Hume and Smith on sympathy, approbation, and moral judgment." *Social Philosophy and Policy* 30.1-2 (2013): 208-236.

**4/2/19 Smith on social division, corruption, merit and demerit**

TMS: Part I, Ch. II, “Of the origin of ambition,” pp. 50-61.

            Part I, Ch. III, “Of the corruption of our moral sentiments,” pp. 61-66

            Part II pp. 67-108.

*Optional Secondary Literature:*

Hankins, Keith. "Adam Smith’s intriguing solution to the problem of moral luck." *Ethics* 126.3 (2016): 711-746.

**4/9/19 Smith on self-judgment and duty**

TMS: Part III, pp. 109-178.

*Optional Secondary Literature:*Fricke, Christel (2013). Adam Smith: The sympathetic process and the origin and function of conscience. In Christopher J. Berry, Maria Pia Paganelli & Craig Smith (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Adam Smith*. Oxford University Press. pp. 177.

**4/16/19 Smith on utility and custom/paper workshop**

TMS: Part IV and V, pp. 179-211

**4/23/19 Smith on virtue**

TMS: Part VI, pp. 212-264

*Optional secondary literature:*

Griswold, Charles. “The Theory of Virtue.” From *Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment.*CUP: 1999. NB: This is an easy read, but rather long. If you choose this text for your analysis commentary, feel free to focus only on a section of it.

***4/24/19: Term paper outlines due at 5pm.***

**4/30/19 Smith on (the rest of) moral philosophy**

TMS: Part VII pp. 265-342.

***5/6/19: Term papers due at 5pm.***