



Course Description

Leibniz and Conway on Theodicy

The problem of evil can be put rather succinctly: If the world was created by an all good, all powerful and all knowing God, then why does evil exist? Of course, evil presents itself in various ways – natural evil (e.g., famines, floods, and disease), moral evil (e.g., sin, murder), the suffering and pain of sentient creatures, the hiddenness of God, and injustice (i.e., the suffering of the good and the prospering of the evil). This course will examine two works in the early modern period that attempt solutions to the problems of evil in the world. We will read and evaluate G. W. Leibniz's *Theodicy* (1710), which is celebrating its 300 year anniversary, and Anne Conway's *Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy* (1692).

Leibniz coined the term "theodicy" (the term is formed from two Greek words: *théos* and *dike*), and the term has come to be known as an attempt to vindicate God's justice. Leibniz's *theodicy*, as the subtitle tells us, concerns "the goodness of God, the freedom of man, and the origin of evil." Conway's *Principles* was written before Leibniz's text, but like Leibniz, Conway wants to show that the world exhibits goodness and justice and is consistent with the existence of an all-good creator. Both Conway and Leibniz have unique metaphysical views concerning the nature of the world and the beings that inhabit it. In this course, we will undertake a close reading of these texts and attempt to understand these philosophers' solutions to the various problems of evil. In doing so, we will discuss metempsychosis, idealism, freedom of the will, the nature of justice, the nature of suffering, original sin, eternal damnation, pre-established harmony and occasionalism, and possible worlds.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will learn to read early modern texts for philosophical content. Students will develop research skills, analytic writing skills, critical thinking skills, and learn to apply philosophical methods to their own writing.

Course/ Instructor Information

Meeting times and place: Mondays and Wednesdays 3:30 - 4:45 PM in LA1 304

Professor: Marcy P. Lascano

Office Location: MHB 901

Office hours: Mondays 11:00 - 12:00 and Wednesdays 9:30 - 1:30

E-Mail: mlascano@csulb.edu

Course Texts

G.W. Leibniz's *Theodicy*, Edited by E.M. Huggard (Chicago, IL: Open Court), 1990.

Anne Conway's *The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, Edited by Allison P. Coudert and Taylor Corse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1996.

Additional readings on Leibniz and secondary literature on Leibniz and Conway will be supplied by the instructor.

Course Requirements

Papers

Response Papers (40% of course grade; each paper is worth 20 points and there are 6 papers): For each assigned reading there will be an opportunity for students to turn in a 1-2 page response paper. These papers will be responses to reading questions in the study guides and will be due at the beginning of class before we discuss the reading. There are 12 possible days to turn in response papers. 6 papers are required. **If a student does not turn in 6 response papers, they will receive a 0 for their response paper grade.**

Midterm Paper (25% The Midterm Paper is worth 75 points): Undergraduates: a midterm paper of no more than 5 pages will be required. Topics will be given in advance. Graduate students: a 5-7 page midterm paper, on a topic that you choose and I approve.

Final Paper (35% The Final Paper is worth 105 points): Undergraduates: a 7-9 page paper on one of the topics that I give in advance. Graduate students: a 8 -12 page paper on a topic of your choosing that I approve.

General Policies

Attendance Policy: Attendance in this course is mandatory. **If a student misses a deadline for a quiz, project, or examination, they must provide documentation of an University excused absence in order to make up the work.**

University policy on EXCUSED ABSENCES:

1. Illness or injury to the student.
2. Death, injury, or serious illness of an immediate family member or the like.
3. Religious reasons (California Education Code section 89320).
4. Jury duty or government obligation.
5. University sanctioned or approved activities (examples include: artistic performances, forensics presentations, participation in research conferences, intercollegiate athletic activities, student government, required class field trips).

In this course, documentation is required for each excused absence.

Special Accommodations:

If any student requires special accommodations for testing or lectures, please let me know within the first 2 weeks of the semester. It is the student's responsibility to contact Disabled Student Services and make special arrangements.

In Class Conduct:

- Cell phones, beepers, video games, and MP3 players will be turned off during class.
- Computers may be used in class for the sole purpose of taking notes. No instant messaging, no game playing, web surfing, or completing of other assignments during class. If you wish to do these things take it somewhere else. These activities are disrespectful and disrupt both the instructor and your fellow classmates.
- Students will not speak out of turn in class, or be disrespectful towards other students or the instructor.
- Failure to abide by any of these rules of conduct will result in dismissal from the course.

Communications

If you need to reach me, send me an email (mlascano@csulb.edu). I'm online often, and can usually respond within 24 hours (often much sooner). You may also come by my office or call my office for brief questions. For longer discussions regarding course readings or examinations, please come to my office hours or contact me to make an appointment.

Academic Honesty

Violations of CSULB policies concerning academic honesty will not be tolerated in this course. I will do my best to see to it that students caught cheating in this course are subjected to the most severe penalties consistent with these policies. **Any instance of cheating in the course will result in an "F" for the course. You will also be reported to the Provost for Student Affairs, and will be unable to repeat/delete the "F" you earn in this course.**

The most common form of cheating is plagiarism. Plagiarism is the representation of someone else's ideas as one's own. In short, plagiarism is a form of dishonesty. Don't be dishonest!

Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the act of using the ideas or work of another person or persons as if they were one's own, without giving credit to the source. Such an act is not plagiarism if it is ascertained that the ideas were arrived at through independent reasoning or logic or where the thought or idea is common knowledge.

Acknowledgment of an original author or source must be made through appropriate references, i.e., quotation marks, footnotes, or commentary. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following: the submission of a work, either in part or in whole, completed by another; failure to give credit for ideas, statements, facts or conclusions which rightfully belong to another; in written work, failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, a sentence, or even a part thereof; or close and lengthy paraphrasing of another's writing or programming. A student who is in doubt about the extent of acceptable paraphrasing should consult the instructor.

Students are cautioned that, in conducting their research, they should prepare their notes by (a) either quoting material exactly (using quotation marks) at the time they take notes from a source; or (b) departing completely from the language used in the source, putting the material into their own words. In this way, when the material is used in the paper or project, the student can avoid plagiarism resulting from verbatim use of notes. Both quoted and paraphrased materials must be given proper citations.

Definition of Cheating

Cheating is defined as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain or aiding another to obtain academic credit for work by the use of any dishonest, deceptive or fraudulent means.

Examples of cheating during an examination include, but are not limited to the following: copying, either in part or in whole, from another's test or examination; discussion of answers or ideas relating to the answers on an examination or test unless such discussion is specifically authorized by the instructor; giving or receiving copies of an examination without the permission of the instructor; using or displaying notes, "cheat sheets," or other information or devices inappropriate to the prescribed test conditions, as when the test of competence includes a test of unassisted recall of information, skill, or procedure; or allowing someone other than the officially enrolled student to represent the same. Also included is plagiarism as defined and altering or interfering with the grading procedures.

It is often appropriate for students to study together or to work in teams on projects. However, such students should be careful to avoid the use of unauthorized assistance, and to avoid any implication of cheating, by such means as sitting apart from one another in examinations, presenting the work in a manner which clearly indicates the effort of each individual, or such other method as is appropriate to the particular course.

University Policy on Withdrawals

Rules for Course Withdrawals

1. **Withdrawals During the 1st and 2nd Weeks of a Semester** Students may withdraw during this period and the course will not appear on their permanent transcripts. To do this a student must file a Complete Withdrawal Application to drop all classes, or, alternatively, a Change of Program Form to drop a specific class or classes. Fees are not refundable after the second week of classes.

2. Withdrawal Between the 3rd and 12th Weeks of a Semester Withdrawals during this period semester are permissible only for "serious and compelling reasons."

*The definition of "serious and compelling reasons" as applied by faculty and administrators becomes more narrow as the semester progresses.

* Please be advised that doing poorly in a class does not constitute a serious or compelling reason. The "W" is not intended to be used as a mechanism to escape being awarded the grade that a student has been earning.

*The procedure for withdrawal during this period are the same as in item 1, except that you will need both the signature of the course instructor whose course you are seeking to drop and the signature of the Department Chairperson.

*Your request to withdraw must state the serious and compelling reasons for the withdrawal on the withdrawal form.

3. Withdrawal During the Final 3 Weeks of a Semester Withdrawals after the 12th week of instruction are not granted absent the most serious and compelling of reasons, such as the documented death of an immediate (not extended) family member; a documented, serious medical condition that requires withdrawal from all courses; a call from reserve to active military service; etc. The procedures for withdrawal during this period are the same as in item 2, but also require the approval and signature of the Dean or Associate Dean of the College of Health and Human Services. Moreover, the Office of the Provost will review all such requests before they are formally approved.

Limitations on the Number of Withdrawals

Starting in the Fall 2009 semester, pursuant Executive Order # 1037 from the CSU Chancellor's Office, undergraduates may withdraw from a career-maximum of 18 units. Medical withdrawals ("WE") do not count towards this 18 unit limit.

Course Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Mon 1/24	Introduction to the course, syllabus, why theodicy?	
Wed 1/26	<i>Theodicy</i> , Preface (49-72)	
Mon 1/31	<i>Theodicy</i> , Preliminary Dissertation §§1-87 (73-122)	
Wed 2/2		
Mon 2/7	<i>Theodicy</i> , Part I §§1-31 (123-142)	
Wed 2/9		
Mon 2/14	NO CLASS - INSTRUCTOR AT CONFERENCE	
Wed 2/16	<i>Theodicy</i> , Part I §§32-106 (142-181)	
Mon 2/21		
Wed 2/23		
Mon 2/28	<i>Theodicy</i> , Part II §§107-134 (182-207)	
Wed 3/2		
Mon 3/7	<u>NO CLASS - WORK ON MIDTERM</u>	
Wed 3/9	<i>Theodicy</i> , Part II §§135-196 (207-249)	<u>MIDTERM DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS</u>
Mon 3/14		
Wed 3/16		
Mon 3/21	<i>Theodicy</i> , Part II, §§197-240 (249-275)	
Wed 3/23		
Mon 3/28	NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK	
Wed 3/30	NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK	
Mon 4/4	<i>Theodicy</i> ; Part III §§241-334 (276-326)	

Wed 4/6
Mon 4/11
Wed 4/13 *Theodicy*, §§335-417 (326-373)
Mon 4/18 NO CLASS
Wed 4/20
Mon 4/25 *Principles*, Ch. 1-5
Wed 4/27
Mon 5/2 *Principles*, Ch. 5-7
Wed 5/4
Mon 5/9 *Principles*, Ch. 8 - 9
Mon 5/11

FINAL PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF OUR FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD - WEDNESDAY, MAY 18TH AT 2:45PM.