PHIL 414-Topics in the History of Modern Philosophy
The Philosophy of Thomas Reid

Term: 2012-2013, Winter Term 2
Instructor: Dr. Giovanni B. Grandi
Office: ART 230
Phone: 250-807-8605
Email: giovanni.grandi@ubc.ca
Lectures: Monday and Thursday, 3:30-5:00 pm, ART 112
Office Hours: Monday and Thursday, 5:00-6:00 pm, or by appointment

Course Description:

A study of the philosophy of Thomas Reid (1710-1796), the foremost representative of the Scottish ‘common sense’ school of philosophy. Although special emphasis will be placed on An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense (1764), readings will also include extracts from the Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man (1785) and from the Essays on the Active Powers of Man (1788). The course will include discussion of some of the critical literature on Reid.

Reid has been widely regarded as David Hume’s most sophisticated contemporary critic. Reid saw Hume as bringing to their logical conclusions mistakes made by previous philosophers. Thus, a study of Reid’s philosophy is the ideal means to review the main problems in both ancient and early modern philosophy. Among various topics of study, we will consider: (1) the “theory of ideas” that Reid thought lay behind both Hume’s skepticism and Berkeley’s immaterialism; (2) sensation and perception, (3) memory and personal identity; (4) conception and abstraction; (4) judgment, common sense, and the first principles of knowledge; (5) the mind-body relation and Reid’s critique of materialism; (6) natural religion; (7) causality and Reid’s defense of “moral liberty” against determinism; (8) the foundations of morals; (9) the difference between Kant’s and Reid’s reply to Hume.

Texts and Bibliographic Recommendations:

- Thomas Reid, Selected Philosophical Writings, ed. Giovanni B. Grandi (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2012). Copies are available free of charge from the instructor.
The Edinburgh Edition of Thomas Reid (General Editor: Knud Hakonssen) is the definitive critical edition of Reid’s works. Volumes in this edition are published by Edinburgh University Press in the United Kingdom and by Pennsylvania State University Press in the United States. With the exception of the Inquiry, these volumes are hardcover and therefore very expensive. I would recommend majors or students who would like to pursue further studies in philosophy to purchase a paperback copy of the Inquiry edited by Derek R. Brookes. It has been carefully edited and contains priceless manuscript material:


Many old editions of Reid’s works are available on-line. In particular, students should consult the following editions:


  For a long time, before the appearance of the Edinburgh edition, this was the edition of Reid used by most scholars. It first appeared in 1846, and was completed by the H. L. Mansel, a student of Hamilton. You will find many copies available on the Web. The editions before the 6th edition are incomplete. The 6th edition (1863), the 7th edition (1872), and the 8th edition (1880) are identical in content. Make sure you have one of these three editions. Here are the links to volumes 1 and 2 of the 8th edition:

  http://archive.org/details/worksnowfullycol01reiduoft
  http://archive.org/details/worksnowfullyco02reiduoft


  This is a readable and complete version of the Inquiry, based on the Hamilton edition. It is available at http://archive.org/details/philosophyreida00sneagoog

You may also consider reading the original editions of Reid's works. These can be found in the database Eighteenth Century Collections Online available through the UBC library website.

For further bibliographic information, consult the bibliography, on pp. 340-347 of the anthology adopted for the course.
Course Work:

- On-campus Midterm Exam (30%)
- On-campus Final Exam (35%)
- Term Essay Prospectus (-5% if submitted late)
- Term Essay of 7-10 pages (35%)
- In order to pass the course, students must write the midterm exam, the final exam, and the term essay.
- If you miss a deadline due to illness, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

CLASS ETIQUETTE AND STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Given the seminar format of the course, attendance and participation are expected. Marks will be deducted for unexcused absences (4 points per class). This policy will be applied after the end of the withdrawal period (February 8). Informal and unwritten excuses will be accepted.

The use of cellular telephones and any other hand-held devices (ipods, etc.) is forbidden. Laptop and tablets may be used for taking notes and for reading the texts for the course. If you have to read books for other courses, play videogames, check the web, read and write text messages on your phone, or listen to music during class time, do not enroll in this course.

Students are supposed have an interest in the subject matter of the course and to be willing to work hard to succeed. If you don’t enjoy reading about early modern philosophy, David Hume, and Thomas Reid, do not enroll in this course. Beware: you may have to read up to 100 pages a week.

If you don’t enjoy the Italian accent of the instructor, do not enroll in this course.

If you don’t like the requirements, do not enroll in this course.
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President’s Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the policies and procedures, may be found at http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/okanagan/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959.

If you have any questions about how academic integrity applies to this course, please consult with your professor.

DISABILITY SERVICES

If you require disability-related accommodations to meet the course objectives, please contact the Coordinator of Disability Resources located in the Student Development and Advising area of the student services building. For more information about Disability Resources or academic accommodations, please visit the website at: http://web.ubc.ca/okanagan/students/disres/welcome.html

THIS OUTLINE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE, GIVEN SUFFICIENT PRIOR NOTICE
PHIL 414-The Philosophy of Reid

Tentative List of Readings

Week 2 (January 7-10)
- The “theory of ideas”: skepticism and the history of philosophy.
  Readings: Introduction (Grandi), and Inquiry, Chapter I (Introduction).

Week 3 (January 14-17)
- The mechanism of sensory perception: the case of smelling.
- Basic Reidian views: sensation, conception, belief, memory, direct and relative notions, and the perception of secondary qualities.
  Readings: Inquiry, Chapter II (Of Smelling).

Week 4 (January 21-24)
- The sense of hearing, sounds, and Reid’s theory natural language.
  Readings: Inquiry, Chapter IV (Of Hearing).

Week 5 (January 28-31)
- The sense of touch: the perception of heat and cold, of hardness and softness.
- The theory of natural signs. The distinction between primary and secondary qualities.
- The perception of extension. The blind man thought experiment and the experimentum crucis.
- Historical reconstruction of skepticism about the external world.
  Readings: Inquiry, Chapter V (Of Touch).

On January 31, visit by Ryan Nichols (CFU-Fullerton): subject TBA.

Week 6 (February 4-7)
- Topics for discussion continued from Week 5.
  Readings: Inquiry, Chapter V (Of Touch).

February 11: Family Day

Week 7 (February 14)
- Vision: colour.
  Readings: Inquiry, Chapter VI (Of Seeing), Sections I-VI.

Spring Break (February 18-22)
Week 8 (February 25-28)
• Vision: visible extension.
Readings:  *Inquiry*, Chapter VI (Of Seeing), Sections VII-IX.

Week 9 (March 4-7)
• Vision: erect vision, single vision.
Readings:  *Inquiry*, Chapter VI (Of Seeing), Sections X-XIX.

Week 10 (March 11-14)
• Vision: the process of perception in general, original and acquired perception, the perception of distance and size.
• Final strictures on the theory of ideas.
Readings:  *Inquiry*, Chapter VI (Of Seeing), Sections XX-XXIV.  
  *Inquiry*, Chapter VII (Conclusion).  

Week 11 (March 18-21)
• Reprise: on memory, conception, and abstraction.
• Personal identity.

Week 12 (March 25-28)
• Reprise: on judgment, belief, common sense, and the first principles of knowledge.
• The design argument for God.

Week 13 (April 1-5)
• Freedom and determinism.
• Moral judgment.
Readings:  Selections from the *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*. 