

Unit IV: Modern(ish) Philosophy

Western philosophy really came into its own in the early modern period, starting in the Renaissance during the fifteenth century and continuing into the Enlightenment of the early eighteenth century. Philosophers had a lot of cards on the table and many fascinating ways of shuffling the deck. Religion remained a key influence, but it gradually lost its dominance over thinking. In its place, science rose to the forefront of human thought.

Even so, science left a lot of philosophical problems unsolved, and it created new ones for people to wrestle with. What's more, scientific thinking didn't take hold right away. It had to be worked out gradually and squared with other kinds of ideas - religious and moral ones.

In the process, philosophy emerged as a possible solution to conflicts between science and religion and between science and morality. Philosophy attained a newfound importance, not only for university and church types, but for people in general.

More people were becoming educated, and they needed philosophy to help them deal with the complicated circumstances that faced them. New possibilities for human existence were emerging, and philosophy provided new explanations for these possibilities.

-Taken from *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Philosophy*

Date	Topic	Learning Targets	Key Vocabulary
Mon 11/21	Renaissance Humanism	Explain how Renaissance philosophy squared new thinking with old ideas.	Humanism Learned Ignorance Microcosm (macrocosm)
Tue 11/22	Renaissance Humanism	Describe the revival of skepticism	Erasmus and peaceful doubting. Machiavelli and tyrannical doubting. Montaigne and personal doubting.
Mon 11/28	Skepticism and Empiricism	Explain Locke's views of human understanding. Discuss samples of the viewpoints of British Empiricists (Locke, Berkely, Hume)	Tabula Rasa Hume's Fork
Tue 11/29	Skepticism and Empiricism		
Wed 11/30	Skepticism and Empiricism	.	
Thu 12/1	Skepticism and Empiricism		

Fri 12/2	The Enlightened Philosophes	Explain what the Enlightenment was and who the Philosophes were. Discuss the philosophical contributions of thinkers like Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Rousseau	Relativism Deism
Mon 12/5	The Enlightened Philosophes		
Tue 12/6	The Enlightenment		
Wed 12/7	The Enlightenment		
Thu 12/8	German Idealism	Explain the transcendent unity of the German Idealists. Describe the ideas of Immanuel Kant, with particular attention to the relationship between experience and understanding. Explain Kant's "categorical imperative" and its impact on ethical philosophy. Describe Hegel's view of history. Discuss Schopenhauer's emphasis on "will."	<i>A priori</i> <i>A posteriori</i> Categorical imperative Dialectic (with thesis / antithesis / synthesis) Alienation Neumena/Phenomena
Fri 12/9	German Idealism		
Mon 12/12	German Idealism		
Tue 12/13	German Idealism		
Wed 12/14	German Idealism		
Thu 12/15	German Idealism		
Fri 12/16	Ideas of Freedom	Explain the differing ideas of determinism and freedom. Explain Utilitarianism and its relation to happiness. Explain Marxism and Young Hegelianism Describe the Philosophical beliefs of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.	Higher/ Lower pleasures Existentialism Transvaluation Nietzsche's Ubermensch (superman)
Mon 12/19	Ideas of Freedom		

Tue 12/20	Ideas of Freedom		
Wed 12/21	Ideas of Freedom		
Thu 12/22	Review		
Fri 12/23	Test		