Instructor: Dr. Daniela Vallega-Neu  
Email: dneu@uoregon.edu  
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00-3:00 in PLC 328.

Class meets MWF 4:00-5:50 pm in PETR 107

LEIBNIZ

Course Description:
This course introduces Leibniz’s philosophy in a historical context and with a focus on his metaphysical writings (Discourse on Metaphysics and Monadology). Leibniz scientific and philosophical work attempted to find a compromise in the famous “Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns.” He combines an Aristotelian notion of substantial forms (metaphysical “substances”) with a Cartesian mechanistic view such that he conceives material things as phenomena that are grounded in metaphysical substances he calls “monads”. We will take a close look at his philosophical system that postulates a pre-established harmony of monads, each completely individual and yet mirroring the whole material word.

Class time will consist in lectures, close reading of the primary texts, and discussions.

Required Texts:

Requirements PHIL 433:

1. Comprehensive mid-term paper 30%
The paper needs to be about 5 pages long (no less than 4, no more than 6, following the formal requirements below). You will be given a number of questions you need to address in the paper.

2. Final paper 60%
The final paper needs to be 6-9 pages long. It should be based on the work we did in class and demonstrate your capacity to work closely with the primary texts. You can choose your own topic or else ask me for possible topics. In any case, you need to submit a final paper proposal two weeks prior to the last class. The final paper proposal should consist in an introductory paragraph that exposes the problem, question, or concept you wish to address, and include a rough outline as well as an indication of the main text passages you wish to discuss. You may write an argumentative paper or an explanatory paper that focuses on a central concept in Leibniz’ philosophy. You may relate Leibniz to other main figures in Modern Philosophy or show how a specific concept in Leibniz’ philosophy has influenced more recent philosophical positions.

3. Participation, short writing assignments 10%
You will receive participation points for valuable contributions to class discussion, for completion of short writing assignments and for fulfilling requirements in a timely fashion, such
as submitting a final paper proposal. Participation points will be converted into grades at the end of the term.

**Requirements PHIL 533:**

1. **Class presentation on Leibniz and one of his contemporaries 30%**
   
   You will be asked to prepare a 30-minute presentation based on writings drawn from *Philosophical Essays* (the book we use in class). The presentation should include reading of primary text passages with the class and should provide opportunities for discussion. You need to prepare a handout for the class that summarizes the main points or text passages you will discuss in class. I will email you regarding possible topics.

2. **Final paper 60%**
   
   The final paper should be 9-14 pages long and should follow the formal requirements below. The paper should include some close text analysis and demonstrate independent thought. It may be comparative, argumentative, exploratory, or historically oriented. You need to include at least two secondary sources. Please discuss the final paper topic with me latest during week eight. You need to present your paper draft in class during week ten and are welcome, in that occasion, to raise questions for discussion and criticism. The final paper version is due a week later.

3. **Participation, short writing assignments 10%**
   
   You are expected to be present in class and active in class discussions.

**Formal Requirements for all papers:**

All papers need to be typed, double-spaced, standard margins, font Times New Roman 12.

**Further policies:**

1. If you need a special learning assistance, (for example, use of electronic devices, extended time in exams) please contact the Accessible Education Center (http://aec.uoregon.edu/ Email: uoaecc@uoregon.edu Phone: 541-346-1155) and provide your instructors with a written notification regarding the kind of assistance you require.

2. **Handing in homework late** will lower your grade. Homework that is more than a week late will not be accepted, unless this was for demonstrable reasons beyond your control.

3. In order to avoid disruptions in class you are asked to avoid exiting and entering the classroom while lectures and discussions are going on and do not pack your things until the class is officially over.

4. **If you miss a class** it is your responsibility to keep up with the course material.

5. The uses of electronic devices like laptops, cell phones, iPods, iPads, Blackberries, etc. during class is not allowed unless a student has a documented need for using a specific device (note from the Accessible Education Center). If the latter is the case, please notify your instructors right away.
6. Please retain the original copy of all work returned to you during the term until the final course grade has been posted. In the event of any question concerning whether grades have been accurately recorded, it is your responsibility to provide these original copies as documentation.

6. You are expected to follow the rules of academic honesty. Failure to do so will result in failure of the whole course (“F”).

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, or data as one’s own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. By placing one’s name on work submitted for credit, one certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. Verbatim statements by others must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from the regular text as indented extracts.

In order to find out how to avoid plagiarism, see http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/

Fabrication: Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when he or she states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive.

Cheating: Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic exercise.

Grading Rubric
A = excellent. No mistakes, well written, and distinctive in some way or other.
B = good. No significant mistakes, well written, but not distinctive in any way.
C = OK. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.
D = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.
F = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: This course schedule is tentative at may vary according to class discussions. Major changes in the reading schedule will be announced on Blackboard.

Week One
Jan. 11: Continuation of the essay by Klein.

Week Two
Jan. 16: NO CLASS (Martin Luther King Day)
Jan. 18: Leibniz, Discourse on Metaphysics. Sections 1-7

Week Three
Jan. 23: Discourse, sections 8-12
Jan. 25: Discourse, sections 13-16
See also “From Letters to Arnauld,” pp.69-76.
Week Four
Jan. 30: Discourse, sections 17-22.

Week Five
Feb. 6 Discourse, sections 28-34.
(PHIL 433: Assignment of comprehensive midterm take-home exam.)
Feb. 8: Discourse, sections 35-37.

Week Six
Feb. 13: Class presentations by graduate students. Topic and texts TBA.
Feb. 15: Class presentations by graduate students. Topic and texts TBA.
(PHIL 433: Mid-term take-home exams due.)

Week Seven
Feb. 20: Leibniz, Monadology, sections 1-15

Week Eight
Feb. 27: Monadology, sections 31-45.
(PHIL 533: Discuss final paper topics with me latest during this week.)
Feb. 29: Monadology, sections 46-60.

Week Nine
March 5: Monadology, sections 61-74.
March 7: Monadology, sections 75-90.
(PHIL 433: Final paper proposals due.)

Week Ten
March 12: Final paper draft presentations by graduate students.
March 14: Continuation of last class and discussion of undergraduate paper proposals.

Final essays due Wednesday, March 21 at 4:00 pm in the Philosophy Department.
(Please include a cover page with course information and title of the paper.)