



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Spinoza's Ethics - 15595

Last update 15-04-2024

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Philosophy

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof Noa Shein

Coordinator Email: noa.shein@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Mondays 11:00-12:00

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Noa Shein

Course/Module description:

Baruch Spinoza is one of the most fascinating philosophers of the early modern era. He has been labeled as both an atheist and a "God-intoxicated man". In this course, we will be looking closely at his magnum opus, The Ethics, and read it in its entirety. We will articulate the epistemic and metaphysical challenges, Spinoza's views are supposed to solve. Likewise, we will try to understand how it is that his views have given rise to opposite and contradictory interpretations. Most of our effort, however, will be focused on a close reading of the text, from which we will aim to excise his views regarding the different metaphysical and epistemological challenges he faces.

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- 1) In-depth comprehension of Spinoza's metaphysics.
- 2) Articulation of clarificatory and critical questions about the reading material.
- 3) Clear and critical writing about Spinoza's views.

Attendance requirements(%):

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: lecture, reading and discussion

Course/Module Content:

- 1) Introduction - the 17th century and the New Science
- 2) Definition: substance, attribute, mode
- 3) Monism?
- 4) Determinism
- 5) Mind-Body
- 6) Naturalism and the Human Mind
- 7) Conatus - Striving to persevere
- 8) Activity and Passivity
- 9) Moral Egoism
- 10) Psychological Taxonomy
- 11) What benefits us?
- 12) The Intellectual love of God and the Salvation of the Soul

Required Reading:

Spinoza, Baruch. The Ethics

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 60 %

Active Participation / Team Assignment 10 %

*Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports
/ Forum / Simulation / others 30 %*

Additional information: