

**PHILOSOPHY 190  
SENIOR SEMINAR  
UCSC WINTER 2021**

# EARLY MODERN WOMEN ON EDUCATION, LIBERTY, VIRTUE, AND HAPPINESS

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. E. Hande Tuna  
**EMAIL:** ehtuna@ucsc.edu

**CLASS MEETINGS:** W 2:40 am - 5:40 pm  
**LOCATION:** Zoom  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Th 12:00 pm



Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith and her Maidservant*, 1625

## Course description and objectives

This course offers a survey of the writings of 17th and 18th century women philosophers on education, liberty, virtue, and happiness. We will be reading various pieces from this time period that problematized the philosophical status quo by exposing the partiality prevalent in standard treatments of the fundamental questions of ethics and social and political philosophy as well as metaphysics. Aside from analyzing these works within their own contexts, we will also be asking whether we can label these texts as feminist without being anachronistic and to what extent we might be able to do so and what this would imply about how we conceptualize feminism(s). In addition, we will reflect on questions of how to do history of philosophy, how the canon is constructed and how it may be reconstructed, and also, more generally, how and why it is relevant to study the past.

**All the readings will be available on Canvas.**

## Useful resources

The [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) has entries on the philosophers we will be covering this course. Some recent research projects on early modern women philosophers have produced useful web sources you can consult: [Project Vox](#), [Extending New Narratives in the History of Philosophy](#). The

[Early Modern Philosophy Calendar](#) maintained by Stephen H. Daniel is an excellent resource for keeping up with talks, events, and conferences on early modern philosophy.

## Grade distribution

Reading notes	20%
Blogposts	20%
Participation	15%
Leading class discussion	15%
Essay (+Revisions)	20%+5%
2-stage peer-review	2%+3%

## Expectations and evaluation

See the folder "Evaluation" in Files on Canvas for grading rubrics and advise on philosophical writing.

**Reading Notes (20%), Blogposts (20%):** In this course you will have an opportunity to hone your philosophical reading skills. It is always good practice to focus on the parts of a reading that attracts your attention most while keeping in focus what the philosopher is aiming to accomplish in the piece in general. To facilitate this type of engagement with texts, you will take notes on each reading and write blogposts.

Everyone usually has their own preferred method of note-taking and perhaps you might even like to experiment with

different methods throughout the quarter. That's why I will not privilege one method over another. You can write your notes on the text, write a short summary or an annotation, create an outline, or you can take Cornell style notes. Whatever method you choose, you will submit your notes on **each** reading before **each** class on Canvas. For each reading that you do not submit notes on, **0.75 point** will be subtracted from your overall grade. For a useful source on note-taking see <https://learningcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/taking-notes-while-reading/>.

On the blogposts, you will have the chance to explain the aspects of the reading(s) that attracted your attention most and articulate your reflections. You will have eight opportunities to submit a blogpost (300-750 words, typed). You need to submit total of **four** blogposts. Please make sure you upload them to Canvas by 5 pm on the dates marked in the schedule below. You can choose either to write a new blogpost responding to the readings assigned for that week or to submit a revised version of a previous post with substantial revisions based on the new readings assigned for that week. You also have the option of collaborating with your classmates and co-authoring blogposts. For each blogpost you do not submit or did not substantially revise, **4 points** will be subtracted from your overall grade. Here are some blogpost examples, [one on Mary Astell and mind and prejudice](#), [one on absolute space, Catherine Cockburn, and early modern women metaphysicians](#), [one of Mary Astell and Foucault](#), [one on inscription rebellion](#). Another option is to use this space for writing a correspondence: For instance, you can write in place of a philosopher we will be reading that week to correspond with another philosopher of your choice.

Taking notes and writing blogposts will not only help you to understand and retain the material better but will also prepare you for contributing to classroom discussions. These goals are only attainable if you do the reading and the writing before class. There is no point in doing them after class. Hence, **no late submissions** of notes or blogposts are accepted.

**Participation (15%):** Participation involves attendance, engaging in class discussion, commenting on your classmates' blogposts on the class website, and coming to office hours. Indicators of successful participation include the ability to think theoretically and express theoretical ideas in an accessible way but also openness to diverse perspectives and engaging in thoughtful conversation and sometimes respectful criticism, and quite possibly self-criticism. I try hard to make sure the classroom is a positive environment for students of all genders / sexualities and cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and this effort cannot be successful without the good faith, compassion, and generosity of all participants.

Good, B-range participation requires that you

- ▶ Show up to every class
- ▶ Take part in class discussions, without dominating
- ▶ Offer contributions that relate to what is being talked about, and connect with course themes

- ▶ Show awareness of the week's readings in your contributions, and refer to them from time to time

The A-range denotes excellence. Excellent participation indicates that you

- ▶ Have a strong understanding of course readings and themes: You are not showing off about what you know, but are bringing in nuances from the week's and the quarter's readings where these help to focus and advance conversation.
- ▶ Develop a critical complex stance: You are connecting with nuances of core issues in the course and advancing your own views with an awareness of strong arguments on different sides.
- ▶ Are attuned to what others are saying and draw connections between them and course themes: your contributions show that you've listened well, and you help to clarify, focus, and move the conversation forward.

You probably merit less than B-range if you have missed classes without making prior arrangements, dominated discussions in ways that prevented others from having a say, repeatedly dragged things off topic, failed to engage with course content and themes, and so on.

**Leading Class Discussion (15%):** You will be asked to lead one class discussion. You will start with a 5-10 minute summary of the reading(s) assigned for the class. Everyone in the classroom is expected to do the readings for each week so your summary should just aim to remind people of what they have already read instead of detailing the article(s) to an audience that is unfamiliar with the piece. You will also prepare a set of questions to direct the discussion. These questions can bring out...

- ▶ main aspects of the reading(s)
- ▶ problematic aspects of the reading(s)
- ▶ points of comparison with the other readings; their relative strengths or weaknesses
- ▶ strengths of a successful argument
- ▶ nuances of the answers they provide to the core questions discussed in the course
- ▶ feminist interpretations of the readings and so on.

Exception: If you are experiencing problems with accessibility and you are foreseeing that the task of leading class discussion might create unnecessary burden for you due to these problems, please let me know at your earliest convenience and we will work out on alternatives to leading discussion.

**Essay (+Revisions) (20% (5%)) and 2-Stage Peer-Review (2% +3%):** You will write approximately 2500-3000 words on a topic of your own choosing. You are required to consult with me at least one week prior to the the deadline for the first draft submission.

The first essay draft (**ED 1**), which will consist of an introductory paragraph and outline, is due on February 22 at 5 pm. A second full draft (**ED 2**) is due on March 5 at 5 pm.

No late submissions of ED 1 and ED 2 will be accepted since otherwise your classmates will not have enough time to work on their peer-review of your essay draft.

To encourage collaboration, you are asked to peer-review the first and second draft of your classmates' essay. **PR 1** is due on February 26 at 5 pm and **PR 2** is due on March 12 at 5 pm. I will provide a checklist to use to do the peer-review. Since most writers—whether they are neophytes or professionals—struggle with the same sorts of problems, you will find the peer review pertinent to your own work. Indeed, responding to your peers' work will help you become a sharper critic of your own writing.

The final draft of your essay (**ED Final**) is due on March 18 at 5 pm. The final draft will be partially evaluated on the basis of how well you responded to your classmate's comments on your drafts and the improvements you made on them.

Final drafts that are handed in late will be docked 5% per day. Essays will not be accepted more than 5 days after the deadline. So please make sure to hand them in on time.

## Grading scale

Percentage	Letter grade	Grade point value	Description
97-100	A+	4.00	
94-96	A	4.00	Excellent
90-93	A-	3.70	
87-89	B+	3.30	
84-86	B	3.00	Good
80-83	B-	2.70	
77-79	C+	2.30	
74-76	C	2.00	Fair
70-73	C-	1.70	
67-69	D+	1.30	
64-66	D	1.00	Needs work
61-63	D-	0.70	
0-60	F	0.00	Fail

## Policies & Resources

**Zoom:** The synchronous meetings will be held over Zoom. If you have the means, please make sure to keep your video on during meetings.

**Emails:** I do my best to respond to emails within 48 hours of receiving them. Only after that, please feel free to send me a reminder email.

**Note on Accessibility:** I aim to create a learning environment that supports its diverse student body. This means that I am committed to providing accessible materials and opportunities for different kinds of engagement. If you experience a barrier

to your participation, please bring it to my attention and I will gladly work with you to ensure accessibility. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me by email, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact the DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at [drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu).

**Note on Academic Honesty:** To use others' ideas either directly or by paraphrasing them without giving proper references constitutes plagiarism. To copy text or ideas from your own previously or concurrently submitted coursework, without providing references also constitutes a case of plagiarism. I have a very strict plagiarism policy. I report each instance without any exceptions to the Academic Tribunal in order to maintain fairness to each student. If you are under stress and not sure what to write or how to write it, come to me directly or consult other resources within the university, such as the writing center or other centers that can provide the help you need to deal with the issues that are preventing you from performing your best. The best way to avoid last minute panic is not to leave things to the last minute but be prepared. If you explain to me what you are going through, I will do my best to help you. Personal problems, the difficulty of the material or the course in general are never excuses for plagiarism. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please feel free to talk to me.

For additional information on plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and how to avoid it, here are some additional resources:

- ▶ The **UCSC policy** on Academic Dishonesty
- ▶ The UCSC library resources on **source citation, tutorials** on how to avoid plagiarism, **checklists** for ensuring that you have properly cited your sources

**Title IX and CARE:** UC Santa Cruz is committed to providing a safe learning environment that is free of all forms of gender discrimination and sexual harassment, which are explicitly prohibited under Title IX. The Title IX Office, the Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education (CARE) office, and Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) are all resources that you can rely on for support. You can contact **CARE** at (831) 502-2273 or [care@ucsc.edu](mailto:care@ucsc.edu).

### **Student Success and Engagement Hub**

#### **Tutoring and Learning Support**

#### **Slug Support Program**

To get started with SLUG Support, please contact the **Dean of Students** Office at 831-459-4446 or you may send us an email at [deanofstudents@ucsc.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@ucsc.edu).

#### **Slug Help/Technology**

## Schedule

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	WHAT TO READ	WHAT'S DUE
1	W 1/6	Introduction		
2	W 1/13	Feminism and Philosophy	Rae Langton, "Feminism in Philosophy" (2007)	<b>BPD 1 (1/14, 5 pm)</b>
3	W 1/20	Feminism and the Canon	Eileen O'Neill, "Disappearing Ink" (1998)  Mary-ellen Waithe, "From Canon-Fodder to Canon Formation: How Do We Get There from Here?" (2015)  Cynthia Freeland, "Feminism and Ideology" (2000)	<b>BPD 2 (1/21, 5 pm)</b>
4	W 1/27	Cartesian Reason & Gendered Reason	Susan Bordo, "The Cartesian Masculinization of Thought" (1986)  Genevieve Lloyd, <i>The Man of Reason: "Male" &amp; "Female" in Western Philosophy</i> (selections) (1984)  René Descartes, <i>Discourse on Method</i> (selections) (1637), <i>Rules for the Direction of the Mind</i> (selections) (1628), <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> (selections) (1641)	<b>BPD 3 (1/28, 5 pm)</b>
5	W 2/3	Cartesian Dualism Criticized	René Descartes, Sixth Meditation  Princess Elisabeth Of Bohemia and René Descartes, Correspondence (selections) (1643-1645)  Tad M. Schmaltz, "Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia on the Cartesian Mind: Interaction, Happiness, Freedom" (2019)	<b>BPD 4 (2/4, 5 pm)</b>
6	W 2/10	Monistic Vitalism Defended	Anne Conway, <i>The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy</i> (1670s?) (posthumously published in 1690)  Jessica Gordon-Roth, "What Kind of Monist is Anne Finch Conway?" (2018)  John Grey, "Anne Conway's Monism Reconsidered"	<b>BPD 5 (2/11, 5 pm)</b>
7	W 2/17		Anne Conway, <i>The Principles of the Most Ancient and Modern Philosophy</i> (1670s?) (posthumously published in 1690), cont.  John Grey, "Species and the Good in Anne Conway's Metaethics" (2020)	<b>BPD 6 (2/18, 5 pm)</b>
8	W 2/24		Margaret Cavendish, <i>Observations upon Experimental Philosophy</i> (1666) (selections), <i>Philosophical Letters</i> (1664) (selections)  Karen Detlefsen, "Atomism, Monism, and Causation in the Natural Philosophy of Margaret Cavendish" (2016)  Jonathan L. Shaheen, "Part of Nature and Division in Margaret Cavendish's Materialism" (2019)	<b>BPD 7 (2/25, 5 pm)</b> <b>ED 1 (2/22, 5 pm)</b> <b>PR 1 (2/26, 5 pm)</b>
9	W 3/3	Freedom and Education	Mary Astell, <i>A Serious Proposal to the Ladies</i> (selections) (1694 & 1697)  François Poullain de la Barre, <i>Three Cartesian Feminist Treatises</i> (selections): "On the Education of Ladies for Training the Mind in the Sciences and Moral Judgment" (1674), "On the Equality of the Two Sexes" (1673)	<b>BPD 8 (3/4, 5 pm)</b> <b>ED 2 (3/5, 5 pm)</b>
10	W 3/10	Virtue and Happiness	Sara Ahmed, "Killing Joy: Feminism and the History of Happiness" (2010)  Mary Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Women</i> (selections) (1792)  Damaris Cudworth Masham, <i>Occasional Thoughts in Reference to a Vertuous or Christian Life</i> (selections) (1705)  Émilie du Châtelet, "Discourse on Happiness" (1748?)	<b>BPD 9 (3/11, 5 pm)</b> <b>PR 2 (3/12, 5 pm)</b>
	<b>TH 3/18</b>	<b>ED Final</b>		
	<b>5 pm</b>			

DISCLAIMER: Information in this syllabus is subject to change and any changes will be announced on Canvas.