

BASIC PROGRAM of LIBERAL EDUCATION for ADULTS

Summer Quarter 2024

Spinoza's Ethics

INSTRUCTOR	DATES AND TIMES	LOCATION
Michail Vlasopoulos	COURSE LENGTH: 8 Weeks DATES: June 18 - July 30	In Person Gleacher Center
EMAIL: vlasopoulos@uchicago.edu Instructor can be contacted through Canvas message	DAY OF THE WEEK: Tuesday TIMES: 9:30am-12:45pm	COURSE CODE and SECTION: BASC70254 24U1 PREREQUISITES: None

Remote courses require you to login to Canvas to access the Zoom Classroom. **You will receive an invitation to join Canvas about a week before your course begins.** Please visit <https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/online/learning-resources/liberal-arts> to find Canvas login instructions, Zoom instructions, and student training sessions.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A deep dive into seventeenth century's most controversial philosopher, Baruch Spinoza, variously portrayed throughout history as: "the accursed Jew of Amsterdam" and "the Atheistic Euclid" by some; a "God-intoxicated man," or "the Christ of all philosophers" by others. Follow me in an intensive close reading of his monumental work, the *Ethics* (1677), and immerse yourselves in the meditative journey Spinoza laid out for us: from the idea of God, to the nature of the Mind and the origins of Passions; from human servitude, to human liberty. Great care will be taken to deepen our grasp of various metaphysical notions we will encounter in our first read-through by harkening back to their historical development: substance and attribute, soul and body, science and faith, freedom and necessity, activity and passion, life and death; all the while keeping in mind this is a book we certainly can (and most likely will) keep on reading for the rest of your lives.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Benedictus de Spinoza, *A Spinoza Reader: The Ethics and Other Works*. Translated by Edwin Curley. NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994. ISBN:9780691000671.

Students can purchase books at the Gleacher Center Bookstore online at <https://chicagobooth.bncollege.com/shop/chicagobooth/page/find-textbooks> using the Textbook order form, or by using the ISBN number to order the correct edition elsewhere.

WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE

DAY	AUTHOR	READING ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 1 [6/11]	Descartes and Spinoza	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> I-III, pp. 3-36 (as attached on website) Spinoza, "Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect," §§1-6; 18-29; 91-101, <i>Spinoza Reader</i> , pp. 3-6; 48-55.
WEEK 2 [6/18]	Spinoza	<i>Ethics</i> , Book I, [Of God], Definitions - Proposition 15. <i>Spinoza Reader</i> , 85-94.
WEEK 3 [6/25]	Spinoza	<i>Ethics</i> , Book I, [Of God], Proposition 16 - end. <i>Spinoza Reader</i> , 94-115.
WEEK 4 [7/2]	Spinoza	<i>Ethics</i> , Book II, [Of the Mind], Definitions - P31. <i>Spinoza Reader</i> , pp. 115-136.
WEEK 5 [7/9]	Spinoza	<i>Ethics</i> , Book II, [Of the Mind], P32 - end. <i>Spinoza Reader</i> , pp. 137-152.
WEEK 6 [7/16]	Spinoza	<i>Ethics</i> , Book III, [Of the Affects], Preface - end. <i>Spinoza Reader</i> , pp. 152-197.
WEEK 7 [7/23]	Spinoza	<i>Ethics</i> , Book IV, [Of Human Bondage], Preface - end. <i>Spinoza Reader</i> , pp. 197-244.
WEEK 8 [7/30]	Spinoza	<i>Ethics</i> , Book V, [Of Human Freedom], Preface - end. <i>Spinoza Reader</i> , pp. 244-265.

Students will receive an invitation to join the Graham School Student Community Canvas Site, a place to read announcements, have discussions, ask questions, and find resources.

DISABILITY INFORMATION

Student Disability Services (SDS) works to provide resources, support and accommodations for all students with disabilities and works to remove physical and attitudinal barriers, which may prevent their full participation in the University community. Students that would like to request accommodations should contact SDS in advance of the first class meeting at 773.702.6000 or disabilities@uchicago.edu.