

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**Undergraduate Course Outline 2019-20**

**Philosophy 3027G: Berkeley**

<b>Winter Term 2020</b> <b>Monday, 1:30-3:30; Wednesday, 1:30-3:30</b> <b>SH 3307</b>	<b>Instructor: Prof. Robert DiSalle</b> <b>Office Hours: Monday-Wednesday, 12:30-1:30</b> <b>(and by appointment) Stevenson Hall 4141</b> <b>email: <a href="mailto:rdisalle@uwo.ca">rdisalle@uwo.ca</a></b>
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George Berkeley is one of the most-quoted Western philosophers, on ideas that may seem to be the least plausible. At first glance, basic principles of Berkeley's idealism— for example, that material objects have no existence outside our minds— may sound as absurd to us as they sounded to many of his contemporaries. Berkeley himself argued, however, that these principles offered the best defense of common sense and empirical science against the absurd ideas of the more orthodox thinkers. It is hard to understand the history of modern philosophy, especially the history of empiricism, without understanding how Berkeley arrived at this conclusion, and the impact that it had on epistemology, metaphysics, and even psychology.

In this course we will consider the philosophical ideas of Berkeley from various perspectives: in their internal logic, their historical context, and their relevance to our own philosophical problems. We will read his major works in conjunction with those of other philosophers against whom he was reacting, and those who were reacting against him. In this way we will try to appreciate what made his philosophical ideas such an important part of the development of Western philosophy.

Prerequisite: Philosophy 2202F/G.

### **TEXTS**

Text: George Berkeley, *Philosophical Writings*. D. Clarke, ed. (Cambridge University Press).  
(Available at UWO Bookstore; supplementary readings will be posted on OWL.)

### **REQUIREMENTS**

2 short essays (each 25% of final mark)  
Final exam (40% of final mark)  
Regular participation in class discussion (10% of final mark)

### **AUDIT**

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/proceduresappeals.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus

ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.