SYLLABUS

Required Texts


Recommended reading shall be assigned in class. The recommended reading shall include An Abstract of … A Treatise of Human Nature, and selections from secondary sources (see separate short list of secondary sources most relevant to this course).

Work for the course: a short mid-term paper (around 5-6 pages) or a class presentation, and a final paper (approximately 15 pages),

Schedule

Enquiry, Sections 1-3.

Week II: Hume’s theory of space, time and mathematics.
Treatise, Book I, Part 2, Sections 1-4 and 6.
Enquiry, Section 12, Part 2.

Week III: The idea of existence. The distinction between two kinds of “philosophical relations”: “relations of ideas” and “matters of fact.”
Treatise, Book I, Part 2, Section 6; Book I, Part 3, Sections 1-2.
Enquiry, Section 4, Part 1.
[Optional topic for presentation or paper: Memory and Imagination. Hume’s theory of belief.
Enquiry, Section 5, Part 2.]

Treatise, Book I, Part 3, Sections 2, 3, 4, and 6.
Enquiry, Section 4, Parts 1-2; Section 5, Part 1.

[Optional topic for presentation or paper: The idea of necessary connection.
Treatise, Book I, Part 3, Section 14; Book II, Part 3, Section 1.
Enquiry, Sections 7 and 8.]

Treatise, Book I, Part 3, Sections 11-13, 15 and 16.
Enquiry, Section 6.

Week IX: Miracles.
Enquiry, Section 10 (supplemented, if time permitting, by Section 11 and selections from Dialogues concerning Natural Religion).

[Optional topic for presentation or paper: Skepticism concerning the existence of bodies, and personal identity.
Treatise, Book I, Part 4, Sections 2 & 6.]

Week X: Skepticism concerning demonstrative reasoning and skepticism concerning probable reasoning revisited. Skepticism and naturalism.
Treatise, Book I, Part 4, Sections 1 and 7.
Enquiry, Section 12.
Selected Secondary Literature


