PHILOSOPHY 464: SPINOZA
Professor Steven Nadler
Spring 2012
Office: 5109 Helen White Hall
Office Hours: Wed 1:30-3:00; Fri 11-12
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Required texts:
Baruch Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*, translated by Samuel Shirley (Hackett)
Baruch Spinoza, *The Letters* (Hackett)

Recommended texts:
Steven Nadler, *Spinoza: A Life* (Cambridge)
Steven Nadler, *Spinoza’s Ethics: An Introduction* (Cambridge)

Requirements:
Attendance and Participation: You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the
day’s reading. This will involve both responding to questions and raising your own
questions. Each person is required to bring to each class meeting at least one question or
puzzle generated by the reading assignment. You need not have an answer to the
question, but you must have a question and be prepared to say what exactly the problem
is.

Written Work:
Two five page papers, discussing some aspect of Spinoza’s philosophy (e.g., addressing
in greater depth a particular topic or problem that was discussed in class). You have the
option of satisfying the “two paper” requirement by treating the first paper as a short (five
page) draft of what will eventually become a ten-page paper.

Reading Schedule:
Week 1
Jan 23: Introduction
Jan 27: Ip1-8

Week 2
Jan 30: Ip9-14; Letters 8, 9, 12
Feb 1: Ip15-25; Letter 64
Feb 3: Ip26-36

Week 3
Feb 6: I Appendix; Letters 55-56
Feb 8: II, Definitions, Axioms, p1-6.
Feb 10: IIp7-13 (up to A1’)


Week 4
Feb 13: Letters 63-66
Feb 15: II A1’-IIp15
Feb 17: IIp16-31

Week 5
Feb 20: IIp32-44; Letter 60
Feb 22: IIp44-47
Feb 24: IIp48-49 (end of Part II); Letters 57-58.

Week 6
Feb 27: III, Preface, Definitions, Postulates, p1-2
Feb 29: IIIp3-10
March 2: NO CLASS

Week 7
March 5: IIIp11-30
March 7: IIIp31-49
March 9: IIIp50-end of Part III.

Week 8
March 12: IV, Preface, Definitions, Axiom, p1-4
March 14: IVp5-17
March 16: NO CLASS: First paper due

Week 9
March 19: IVp18-28
March 21: IVp29-37 (up through Scholium 1)
March 23: IVp37Scholium 2-p58

Week 10
March 26: “Catch up day”: continue same reading from March 23
March 28: IVp59-66
March 30: IVp67-Appendix (i.e., finish Part IV).

SPRING BREAK

Week 11
April 9: V, Preface, Axioms, p1-9
April 11: Vp10-20
April 13: Vp21-34

Week 12
April 16: Vp35-42
April 18: Letters 29-30; 68; 71; 73; 74-75.
April 20: Theological-Political Treatise (TTP), Preface, 1-3
Week 13
April 23:  TTP, 4-5
April 25:  TTP, 6
April 27:  NO CLASS

Week 14
April 30:  TTP, 7
May 2:  TTP, 8-11
May 4:  TTP, 12-16

Week 15
May 7:  TTP, 16-17
May 9:  TTP, 18-20
May 11:  Second Paper due