

20th Century Philosophy Syllabus

PHIL204.1, Fall 2007
367 Willard, MW, 11:15-12:05
273 Willard F, 11:15-12:05

Instructor Information

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Description

The 20th century gave rise to a number of important philosophical movements from analytic philosophy to post-modernism, from existentialism to critical theory. This course highlights two important philosophical orientations that came of age in the 20th century: existential phenomenology and philosophical naturalism. Although these two orientations grew up in very different atmospheres—phenomenology in Europe and naturalism in America—they share much in common and we have much to learn by bringing them into dialogue with one another.

This course focuses on the work of four authors, two from the continental tradition of phenomenology—Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, and two from the tradition of American naturalism—John Dewey and John Herman Randall, Jr. The course is divided into five sections: 1) Overview of Phenomenology and American Naturalism; 2) Experience; 3) Language; 4) History; 5) Art. Attending to the dialogue between these two traditions will allow us to hear something of the spirit of 20th century philosophy.

Goals

In this course, students will:

- Develop an ability to read, interpret, analyze and evaluate philosophical texts.
- Compare and contrast authors and styles.
- Participate in thoughtful and respectful dialogue in class and using electronic media.
- Formulate and express their own opinions on issues of historical, philosophical and personal importance.
- Use the library for research.
- Explicate the meaning of texts orally and in writing.
- Think critically about the world in which we live.

Academic Integrity

Definition and expectations: Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University's Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Academic integrity includes a commitment not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others.

Students are expected to be familiar with the academic honesty policies of the Pennsylvania State University and with the logic and mechanics of bibliographic documentation. Please visit http://www.la.psu.edu/CLA-Academic_Integrity/integrity.shtml to familiarize yourself with The College of Liberal Arts and University policies related to academic integrity.

If a student submits plagiarized material for this course, s/he will receive an automatic “F” for the assignment and all supporting documentation and evidence will be sent to the Academic Integrity Coordinator.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-2801, Tel (814) 865-4700/V, (814) 863-1150/TTY.

Requirements

10% **Attendance**

Students are expected to be in class *on time* and remain in the classroom *throughout* the entire period. Attendance will be taken. Students have 3 free absences for the semester. If a student is absent *for any reason* after the 3 free absences, s/he will receive a zero for the attendance grade. Two late appearances will constitute one absence.

5% **Quizzes**

Students are expected to come to class prepared to contribute to the discussion. This means students will have read the assignment and reflected on its meaning and significance. To facilitate this, there will be periodic, unannounced quizzes designed to determine whether the student has kept up with the reading.

5% **Participation**

The participation grade will be based on a qualitative impression of the student's in-class participation over the course of the semester.

45% **Weekly Blogging**

Students are required to write a minimum of one blog post each week related to the material covered in the readings that week. A qualitative assessment of these postings will be made three times during the semester based on the following assessment criteria. The posts must:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the readings
2. Be well organized from beginning to end
3. Be well written and edited
4. Articulate original ideas
5. Reflect thoughtfully and critically on the texts

20% **Blog Assignments**

Six blog writing assignments are posted on the course [web log](#). These assignments are due at 6:00pm on date assigned. 20% of the grade for the course is calculated by the average grade of these assignments

15% **Final Paper**

A final research paper, 7 pages in length, is due at the end of the semester. Students are permitted to develop their own thesis for the paper in conjunction with the professor. Paper theses are due on Dec. 7; the final paper is due on December 17th. Final papers must include at least two peer reviewed scholarly secondary sources. Consult the scoring rubric for information on how the paper will be graded.

Note on Paper Submissions: All papers must be written in either Word (*.doc) or Rich Text Format (*.rtf) format and submitted BOTH to the [ANGEL](#) page for this course and to <http://www.turnitin.psu.edu>. Be sure you are able to log on to the [ANGEL](#) site and please update your email address under System Settings/Forwarding Address as I will use [ANGEL](#) to communicate with the entire class when necessary. A handout describing how to submit papers to <http://www.turnitin.psu.edu> is available on [ANGEL](#).

Assignment Purposes

Writing Assignments

- To develop written analytical skills
- To write well under time constraints
- To strengthen the ability to write comparatively
- To use library resources in research
- To establish well-organized, coherent theses and to argue for them
- To critically reflect on complex ideas presented in readings
- To connect philosophical texts to the contemporary world
- To disseminate ideas more broadly by using technology
- To give voice to one's own position

Required Texts for Purchase

- Heidegger, Martin, *Basic Writings* (BWH).
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, *The Basic Writings of Merleau-Ponty*. (BWMP)
- Dewey, John. *Experience and Nature*. New York: Dover Publications, 1958. (EN)

Required Texts Provided Electronically

- Randall, John Herman. *How Philosophy Uses Its Past*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1963. (HPUP)
- Randall, John Herman. "Epilogue: The Nature of Naturalism." In *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*, edited by Yervant Hovhannes Krikorian, 354-382. New York: Columbia university press, 1944.
- Dewey, John. "Antinaturalism in Extremis." In *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*, edited by Yervant Hovhannes Krikorian, 1-16. New York: Columbia university press, 1944.
- Dewey, John. "A Short Catechism Concerning Truth." In *The Middle Works, 1899-1924*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston, 3-11. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976.

Schedule of Assignments

Session	Author	Reading	Assignment
Mon., Aug. 27	Introduction		
Section One	Overview		
Wed., Aug. 29	Heidegger	<i>Being & Time Intro</i> (BWH: 38-49)	
Fri., Aug. 31	Heidegger	<i>Being & Time Intro</i> (BWH: 49-57)	
Mon., Sept. 3	Labor Day		NO CLASS
Wed., Sept. 5	Heidegger	<i>Being & Time Intro</i> (BWH: 57-71)	
Fri., Sept. 7	Heidegger	<i>Being & Time Intro</i> (BWH: 71-86)	
Mon., Sept. 10	Randall	<i>The Nature of Naturalism</i>	Blog #1: Blog Start-up
Wed., Sept. 12	Dewey	<i>Antinaturalism in Extremis</i>	
Fri., Sept. 14	Dewey	<i>Philosophic Method</i> (EN: 1a-21)	
Mon., Sept. 17	Dewey	<i>Philosophic Method</i> (EN: 21-39)	
Section Two	Experience		
Wed., Sept. 19	Dewey	<i>Existence</i> (EN: 41-59)	
Fri., Sept. 21	Dewey	<i>Existence</i> (EN: 59-77)	
Mon., Sept. 24	Merleau-Ponty	<i>The Body</i> (BWMP: 79-100)	
Wed., Sept. 26	Merleau-Ponty	<i>The Body</i> (BWMP: 101-125)	
Fri., Sept. 28	Merleau-Ponty	<i>World as Perceived</i> (BWMP: 126-134)	
Mon., Oct. 1	Merleau-Ponty	<i>World as Perceived</i> (BWMP: 135-144)	
Wed., Oct. 3	Merleau-Ponty	<i>World as Perceived</i> (BWMP: 145-165)	Blog #2: Comparison Post
Section Three	Language		
Fri., Oct. 5	Merleau-Ponty	<i>The Algorithm...</i> (BWMP: 234-246)	
Mon., Oct. 8	Merleau-Ponty	<i>The Algorithm...</i> (BWMP: 234-246)	

Wed., Oct. 10	Dewey	<i>Nature, Communication ...</i> (EN: 166-181)	
Fri., Oct. 12	Dewey	<i>Nature, Communication ...</i> (EN: 181-197)	
Mon., Oct. 15	Dewey	<i>Nature, Communication ...</i> (EN: 197-207)	
Wed., Oct. 17	Double Bind	<i>Schürmann Handout</i>	
Fri., Oct. 19	Conference	Reiner Schürmann	
Mon., Oct. 22	Dewey	Short Catechism Concerning Truth	Blog #3: Blog Conference
Wed., Oct. 24	Heidegger	<i>The Way to Language</i> (BWH: 397-405)	
Fri., Oct. 26	Heidegger	<i>The Way to Language</i> (BWH: 406-412)	
Mon., Oct. 29	Heidegger	<i>The Way to Language</i> (BWH: 413-426)	
Section Four	History		
Wed., Oct. 31	Randall	HPUP (Chap. 2: 31-52)	
Fri., Nov. 2	Randall	HPUP (Chap. 2: 52-72)	
Mon., Nov. 5	Randall	HPUP (Chap. 3: 73-84)	
Wed., Nov. 7	Research Day	Meet with Dan Mack	
Fri., Nov. 9	Research Day	Meet with Dan Mack	Blog #4: 2ndary Source
Mon., Nov. 12	Randall	HPUP (Chap. 3: 84-101)	
Wed., Nov. 14	Merleau-Ponty	<i>History</i> (BWMP: 325-335)	
Fri., Nov. 16	Merleau-Ponty	<i>History</i> (BWMP: 335-345)	
Nov. 19-2	Thanksgiving		NO CLASS
Section Four	Art		
Mon., Nov. 26	Dewey	<i>Experience, Nature and Art</i> (EN: 354-367)	
Wed., Nov. 28	Dewey	<i>Experience, Nature and Art</i> (EN: 367-380)	
Fri., Nov. 29	Dewey	<i>Experience, Nature and Art</i> (EN: 380-393)	Blog #5: Research Prog.
Mon., Dec. 3	Merleau-Ponty	<i>Cézanne's Doubt</i> (BWMP: 272-280)	
Wed., Dec. 5	Merleau-Ponty	<i>Cézanne's Doubt</i> (BWMP: 281-289)	
Fri., Dec. 7	Merleau-Ponty	<i>Mind and Eye</i> (BWMP: 290-301)	Blog #6: Thesis Proposal
Mon., Dec. 10	Merleau-Ponty	<i>Mind and Eye</i> (BWMP: 301-309)	
Wed., Dec. 12	Merleau-Ponty	<i>Mind and Eye</i> (BWMP: 310-321)	
Fri., Dec. 14	Wrap-up	<i>Discussion</i>	
Mon., Dec. 17	Final Paper		Final Paper Due

Final Paper Scoring Rubric

Professor Christopher Long

Rating	Criteria
A = Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused, Succinct Thesis • Organized from beginning to end to Support Thesis • Effective, Germane Use of Textual Support • Originality of Ideas • Clear, Well Formulated Sentences • Varied Sentence Structure • Correct Mechanics and Paragraphing • Correct Citation Form • Effective Word Choice • Fluid Transitions
B = Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused, Succinct Thesis • Adequately Organized to Support Thesis • Some Originality of Ideas • Textual Support not always Effective, Germane • Mechanical Problems that do not Interfere with Readability • Clear, Well-formulated Sentences • Correct Mechanics and Paragraphing • Correct Citation Form
C = Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfocused, Weak Thesis • Partially Organized to Support Thesis • Paucity of Original Ideas • Ineffective Textual Support • Incomplete, Poorly Formulated Sentences • Informal, inappropriate Language • Careless Editing, Incorrect Citation Form • Mechanical Errors that do Interfere with Readability
D = Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Thesis • Lack of Organization • No Original Ideas • Little Textual Support, Irrelevant Appeal to Text • Mechanical Errors that Interfere with Readability • Lack of Editing, Incorrect/Missing Citation • Inadequate Length, Underdevelopment of Ideas
U = Unacceptable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plagiarism • Inappropriateness • Unintelligibility • No Thesis • No Organization/Structure • Failure to Submit