

PHIL 204W: 19th and 20th Century Philosophy

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Office Library

Office Hours Tues./Thur. 1-4pm

Course Description

Kant famously wrote that upon reading the work of David Hume, he was awoken from a dogmatic slumber. The centuries following Kant's critical philosophical project consisted (in part) of many philosophers who took up their own approaches to critical philosophy and the critique of the sleeping dogmas in traditional philosophy and culture. In this class, we will read and discuss a group of texts that represent key critical interventions in philosophy during the 19th and 20th centuries. These works are known for their critical assessments of traditional ideas regarding reason, religion, politics, human identity, and the meaning of human life (among others). In addition to assessing the ideas of these authors we will discuss the meaning, value, and limitations of critique as a philosophical method.

Required Texts:

Karl Marx, *Later Political Writings* 0521367395

Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 9780802143006

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, 9780140445145

Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 9780226025988

Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, 9780143037576

Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*, 9780807014172

Goals:

1. To develop an understanding and appreciation of critical philosophy in the 19th and 20th centuries, and to understand how it relates to traditional philosophical enterprises. [Knowledge]
2. To discover and develop your knowledge and the knowledge of others through research and writing projects. [Research and Scholarship]
3. To develop your leadership abilities by being responsible for guiding and facilitating discussion. [Academic Leadership]
4. To develop your ability to construct and articulate your philosophical views, both on your own and by listening and being receptive to the critiques and suggestions of your peers. [Communication and Team Learning]

Requirements:

Attendance & Participation	5%	Research Papers	40%
Reading Quizzes	5%	Exams	40%
Discussion Facilitation	10%		

Grading Scale

94-100	A	77-79	C+
90-93	A-	74-76	C
87-89	B+	70-73	C-
84-86	B	67-69	D+
80-83	B-	60-66	D
		< 60	F

[Note: In order to receive W credit, you must receive an overall grade that is > a 73%]

Exams

You will have two exams, a midterm and a final. Your midterm will be a take-home essay and your final will be a comprehensive exam covering all of the books we are reading this semester. Your final will involve short answer and essay questions.

Midterm essays will be assigned Feb. 26th and are due March 1st (11:59pm)

Your final will be in our classroom on May 1st from 2:00pm-5:00pm.

Attendance & Participation:

In our course, everyone is expected to participate in the discussion every single class. However, you are also expected to participate in a respectful, relevant, and charitable manner. This means that you should not talk too much or be overly argumentative/aggressive; you should not bring up topics that are irrelevant or trivial; also, you should give the ideas of the author we are discussing (and the ideas of your peers) the most fair and generous interpretation instead of being brash or overly critical. There is a detailed participation rubric posted on Blackboard that you need to consult in order to know exactly how you will be graded.

You are **allowed 2 unexcused absences**. You will lose **one letter grade off of your Attendance & Participation grade** for each additional unexcused absence. **Excused absences are when you miss class and have a note from health services, when you are absent due to your participation in an official Oxford event (e.g. athletics), or when I receive an email from a dean excusing your absence.**

Discussion Facilitation:

You will form **groups of two** during the first week of class. **Your group will be responsible for facilitating our discussion three times. You will sign-up for these dates on a website called signup genius.** The dates are first come, first serve, but **you can't facilitate back-to-back classes**. There is a link to the signup website on our Blackboard homepage. There is also a document with instructions and a rubric for this assignment on Blackboard.

Briefly, your group will lead the class discussion by **coming up with questions** that you want us to discuss. The questions should focus on the most important philosophical ideas in the assigned reading, and they should primarily aim at getting the class to work through the best understanding and interpretation of the author. Questions that are of a critical nature should only be addressed once we have thoroughly discussed all of the important ideas in the reading. **In short, your main goal is to get others to wrestle with the complicated ideas in the text and to facilitate the discussion in order for us to come to the best/most generous reading of the author. You should not lecture, nor should you spend time summarizing the text, etc. (i.e., this is not a 'presentation').** Also, you are responsible for the dynamics and direction of the conversation. If the conversation gets too heated, or it gets off-topic, you are responsible for interrupting and changing the dynamics and/or topic.

Research Papers:

You will write two research papers. Your first paper will be on a book we are reading from the 19th century (Marx, Nietzsche, or Kierkegaard), and your second will be on a book from the 20th century (Fanon, Arendt, or Marcuse). Both of your papers will involve you developing your own argument about one of the philosopher's key concepts found in the book we are reading, and you will be required to research what other philosophers and scholars have said about this key concept. The papers will be 5-7 pages each. The first paper will involve drafts of your thesis and supporting arguments in addition to a final draft. There is a document on Blackboard that contains all of the information you need to know (due dates, instructions, rubric, etc.).

Reading Quizzes:

Many of our classes will begin with reading quizzes. These quizzes will test how closely you read the assigned reading. They will typically be short writing assignments that respond to a prompt that I provide. There are no makeup quizzes unless you have an excused absence. **For excused absences, you have one week to take a makeup quiz. YOU must contact me via email and setup a date/time that is within one week of your absence.** If you don't take the quiz within a week of your absence, you will receive a zero.

Additional Information & Classroom Policies

Classroom Equity

I never give one student special accommodations (disabilities aside). Hence, whenever you want to ask me for something, first ask 'Is this something that he would/could reasonably do for everyone in the class?' If the answer is 'no,' then my answer will be no.

Turning in Assignments

All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class the day they are due. If you are not in class, you cannot turn in the assignment and receive credit, unless you have a doctor's note or you are on an official Emory trip (e.g., athletics). Along these lines, **I will not accept assignments that are e-mailed to me (unless you are asked to e-mail them)**. Any assignment that is not turned in by you (in person) at the beginning of class is late and will be penalized. For daily assignments, late work is not accepted.

Electronics

You are not allowed to have laptops or cell phones out during class. Although laptops are useful in many classrooms, they will not be needed for our purposes. The class will be heavily discussion-based and note taking can easily be done with paper and pen. On days when the reading comes from a pdf, **you are responsible for printing the document and having it with you in class.**

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating/plagiarism is not tolerated. Any form of cheating or plagiarism (no matter the assignment) will forfeit any possible credit for that assignment, and following school policy you will be reported to the Honor Council (Please consult the Academic Honor Code in the Student Handbook). If you have ANY questions concerning what constitutes plagiarism, don't hesitate to contact me, or visit someone in the writing center!

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Required Reading
1 January	Marx	13 th – Syllabus 15 th Marx, pgs. 31-45
2 January	Marx	20 th Marx, pgs. 128-140 22 nd Marx, pgs. 140-157
3 January	Nietzsche	27 th Nietzsche, pgs. 31-51 29 th Nietzsche, pgs. 52-77
4 February	Nietzsche	3 rd Nietzsche, pgs. 78-100 5 th Nietzsche, pgs. 100-122
5 February	Kierkegaard	10 th Kierkegaard, pgs. 3-24 12 th Kierkegaard, pgs. 27-61
6 February	Kierkegaard	17 th Kierkegaard, pgs. 62-97 19 th Kierkegaard, pgs. 98-128
7 February	Kierkegaard and Fanon Midterm Essays Assigned	24 th Kierkegaard, pgs. 128-end 26 th Fanon, Chapter One
8 March	Fanon	3 rd Fanon, Chapter Four 5 th Fanon, Chapter Five
9 March	Fanon and Arendt	17 th Fanon, Chapter Seven and Eight 19 th Arendt, pgs. 175-199
10 March	Arendt	24 th Arendt, pgs. 199-220 26 th Arendt, pgs. 220-247
11 March/April	Arendt	31 st Arendt, pgs. 248-273 2 nd Arendt, pgs. 273-294
12 April	Arendt and Marcuse	7 th Arendt, pgs. 294-end 9 th Marcuse, Chapter One
13 April	Marcuse	14 th Marcuse, Chapter Three 16 th Marcuse, Chapter Five
14 April	Marcuse	21 st Marcuse, Chapter Six 23 rd Marcuse, Chapter Eight