



Philosophy 421: Topics in European Philosophy

Hermeneutics of Life/ The Early Heidegger

Spring Semester 2008,
Michigan State University

Dr. Christian Lotz

Tentative Schedule (last **UPDATE**: November 03, 2009)

Number	Date	Topic	Reading	Information	Oral Present.	General Assignments
1	Jan 7	Introduction		see below		
The Background of Heidegger's Early Philosophy						
2	Jan 9	Introduction	Dilthey, Drafts for A Critique of Historical Reason, selections, copy, focus on pp. 213-223	Dilthey		
3	Jan 14	Dilthey	Dilthey, Drafts for A Critique of Historical Reason, selections, copy, focus on pp. 248-264			
4	Jan 16	Augustine	Augustine, Confessions, selections, copy (first part of book I and book X)	Augustine		Safranski Response 1 due in my box (Jan 18): chapter 1-3
5	Jan 21	no class	no class	no class	no class	
6	Jan 23	Augustine	Augustine, Confessions, selections, copy (first part of book I and book X)			
Phenomenological Interpretations in Connection with Aristotle: Initiation to Phenomenology (1921/22)						
7	Jan 28	Philosophy	Initiation to Phenomenological Research, pp.3-4, 11-18			
8	Jan 30	Philosophy	Initiation to Phenomenological Research, pp.15-18			Safranski Response 2 due in my box (Feb 1): chapter 4-6
9	Feb 4	Categories of Life	Initiation to Phenomenological Research, pp.15-18; pp.62-82			
10	Feb 6	Categories of Life	Initiation to Phenomenological Research, pp.62-82			
Hermeneutics of Facticity (1922/23)						
11	Feb 11	Hermeneutics of Facticity	Ontology: Hermeneutics of Facticity, §§1-6, focus on §§1, 2, 3, 6	Hermeneutics		
12	Feb 13	Hermeneutics of Facticity	Ontology: Hermeneutics of Facticity, §§7-13, focus on §§7, 10, 11, 13			Safranski Response 3 due in my box (Feb 15): chapter 7-8

13	Feb 18	World	Ontology: Hermeneutics of Facticity, §§18-26, pp.65-81
14	Feb 20	Significance (<i>Bedeutsamkeit</i>)	Ontology: Hermeneutics of Facticity, §§18-26, pp.65-81

Midterm Exam / Break

15	Feb 25	1st in-class exam	1st in-class exam	1st in-class exam	1st in-class exam
16	Feb 27	no class	no class	no class	no class
17	Mar 3	Spring break	Spring break	Spring break	Spring break
18	Mar 5	Spring break	Spring break	Spring break	Spring break

Being and Time as a Lecture Course: History of the Concept of Time (1925)

19	Mar 10	Intentionality	History of the Concept of Time, §5	
20	Mar 12	Intentionality	History of the Concept of Time, §5	Safranski Response 4 due in my box (Mar 14): chapter 9-11
21	Mar 17	Being	History of the Concept of Time, §§8-9; History of the Concept of Time, §§14-17	
22	Mar 19	Being	History of the Concept of Time, §§14-17	
23	Mar 24	Being-in-the-World	History of the Concept of Time, §§18-20	Aaron, Phil
24	Mar 26	Critique of Descartes	History of the Concept of Time, §§21-22	
25	Mar 31	Critique of Descartes	History of the Concept of Time, §§21-22	Drew, Nick
26	Apr 2	World	History of the Concept of Time, §23	Jonathan, Ryan
27	Apr 7	World	History of the Concept of Time, §23	Chris, Thomas
28	Apr 9	Being with others	History of the Concept of Time, §26	David, Patrick
29	Apr 14	Falling	History of the Concept of Time, §28	
30	Apr 16	Fear	History of the Concept of Time, §§29-30	Nathan, Michael

Wrap Up

31	Apr 21	Review of Class	Review of Class	Review of Class	Review of Class
32	Apr 23	2nd in-class exam	2nd in-class exam	2nd in-class exam	2nd in-class exam
	Apr 28				Class Essay due in my box (Apr 28)

Class Meetings:

Days: MW

Time: 3:00pm-4:20pm

Place: Natural Science 145

Office:

Phone: 517.353.9721 (if you are unable to reach me, please leave a message at 517.355.4490 [dept.])

Place: 507 S. Kedzie Hall

Hours: MW (1:00-2:00pm), by appointment and by phone

Exceptions: Feb 25 - Feb 29**Other Contact:**

E-mail: lotz@msu.edu

Home Phone: 734.975.0803

Webpage

URL: <http://www.msu.edu/~lotz/classes>

(Please check the webpage *regularly* for the current schedule)

Box

You will find my box in the front office of the philosophy department (503 South Kedzie); you can also slip your assignments under my door if I am not in my office (507 South Kedzie)

Course Description:

Heidegger is beside Wittgenstein probably the most important philosopher of the 20th Century. In this course we will focus on the early Heidegger and prepare a close study of Heidegger's masterpiece *Being and Time* (and the concepts that it introduces, such as world, life, Dasein, death, and time). Instead of reading *Being and Time* though, we will study a lecture class that Heidegger delivered in Marburg in 1925 and which contains *Being and Time* in a nutshell. Given that Heidegger's language is extremely difficult and requires a close reading and studying of the primary text, a close examination of Heideggerian texts will be the primary focus of the class. In more detail, we will begin the course by reflecting on the main ideas of Heidegger's early philosophy as it emerged before *Being and Time* (1927) by reflecting on Heidegger's approach to factual life and his opposition to mentalism, which he presented in a lecture course delivered in Freiburg entitled *Hermeneutics of Facticity*. This lecture course made Heidegger famous in Germany around that time (though this lecture course was never published during H's life time). Heidegger became over night the new "king of philosophy" (Arendt) in Germany, especially since he worked out a new concept of philosophy.

Course Goals:

This class should introduce students to selected aspects of Heidegger's philosophy as Heidegger develops it on the way to *Being and Time*. In particular it is hoped for that at the end of the class participants will be able to read Heideggerian prose, to understand the existential aspect of Heidegger's idea of philosophy (the other aspect is related to metaphysics), and in addition, are able to understand central Heideggerian concepts, such as hermeneutics of life, existence, fallenness, world, phenomenon, and significance.

Note:

Students who did not take philosophy classes before (but signed up for this class) should be aware of the fact that this course is supposed to be an upper level seminar. Heidegger's style of philosophy and reflection differs significantly from contemporary styles of philosophy and philosophical writing. Accordingly, this class requires a self-responsible *intense* confrontation with the primary text.

Introductory Information Online

- Brief article: Heidegger, the "hidden king:"
- Stanford Encyclopedia entry on Phenomenology
- *Ereignis*: information about Heidegger's Collected Works and his writings
- Dreyfus's lectures on *Being and Time*: mp3-files for your mp3-player
- Listen to Heidegger's lecture "Der Satz der Identität" [The Principle of Identity] (1957) online here (m4a format) - if you can understand German...
- There is a very nice interview with Andrew Mitchell (Emory University) on Stanford I-Tunes (you need iTunes)

Required Texts

- Martin Heidegger: *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle: Initiation into Phenomenological Research*, ISBN: 0253339936; Publisher: Indiana University Press
- Martin Heidegger: *History of the Concept of Time*, ISBN: 0253207177; Publisher: Indiana University Press
- Martin Heidegger: *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity* (Studies in Continental Thought), ISBN: 0253335078; Publisher: Indiana University Press
- Rüdiger Safranski: *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*. translated by Ewald Osers, ISBN: 0674387104; Publisher: Harvard

Course Packet

There will be a course packet with brief selections of other texts (Dilthey, Augustine).

Secondary Literature

Beside the mandatory texts selected for class I recommend the following texts:

- Moran, Dermot, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, London; New York: Routledge, 2000 (brief chapters on phenomenology and main phenomenological thinkers)
- Kisiel, Theodore J., *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993 (standard text that gives an overview of Heidegger's development before Being and Time)

Course Organization

The course will be organized such that, ideally, each class period will include [i] "interactive" lecture, [ii] oral presentations or [iii] either discussion time (active learning part II) [iv] or *group* assignments (active learning part III). Students will be asked to [a] read a certain text or part of a text for the next class period and [b] give oral presentations (*group* presentations).

Course Requirements

- 5 class response sheets
- 1 oral presentation
- 2 in-class essay exams
- 4 response papers
- 2 task cards
- 1 class essay

Class Attendance

I hope and strongly encourage that students attend all classes. However, I will not require attendance, as I think that college students should manage their own class attendance decisions. Nevertheless, please be aware that you should not make *me* responsible for a failure that results out of *your* decision.

Class Response Sheets

Every student is asked to submit up to 5 class response sheets during the semester.

[Click here to download the class response sheet](#) (Word document, I will only accept answers that are given on this form)

The response sheets have to be submitted at the end of a class session. I do not accept late turn ins. Submission is voluntary.

Participation

Students who do not actively participate in class will *not* lose points. I would like to foster an open class atmosphere, in which every participants can express his/her thoughts freely, that is to say, without judgmental pressure. Students, however, who actively participate in class, can earn up to 3 extra credit points.

Task Cards

I will from time to time assign so called "task cards." Students who receive task cards, must write a 1-page paper (no more than 300 words) about a concept or about background information. Task cards will be assigned without prior notice in class and have to be prepared for the next class section. For example, in one of our discussions it turns out that no one has ever heard about the philosopher Augustine or about the problem of movement in Zeno. I will ask a student to do research and to prepare brief biographical information of Augustine or an overview of the concept of movement in Zeno. Students will read their brief elaborations at the beginning of the next class sections and turn their papers in. This task is challenging because in your writing you should be as precise as possible. Grading: excellent (4 points) - average (2 points) - below average (1 point) - careless (0 points). Note: you are *not* allowed to work with common internet resources, such as Wikipedia. Instead, work with the following online resources (or other resources in the library): Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy - Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy - Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy - Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy (e-book) - The Oxford Companion to Philosophy

In Class Essay Exams

There will be two in-class essay exams (see schedule), in which I will raise two questions about the readings, and which focus on your comprehension. The first question asks for an explanation of a quote, the second question deals with a broader issue that we discussed in class.

Make-Up Exam

Students who need to miss the exams for *excusable* reasons must inform me ahead of time, and will be permitted to make up the exam. I will only accept official doctor notes (no faxes, no emails) and letters from other professors/athletic directors.

Class Essay

I expect a brief paper at the end of the class (5 pages, around 1500 words), the topic of which must be chosen from a list that I will pass out after the midterm exam.

Oral Presentations

a) Handout

The oral presentations must in principle be about the readings for class. Every team, which gives a short presentation, must submit (to the class) a detailed handout one class before the presentation is given, otherwise the team loses points. The handout must contain [i] a two page paper with detailed explanations of selected points of your presentation/text plus [ii] one page with an outline of your presentation/text. A mere outline is not sufficient. The handout must be 3 pages and it should help us to prepare our class sessions. I will mark down every handout that does not include a two page paper (no more than 600 words).

b) Presentation

The oral presentation assignment is twofold: first give a presentation and then lead into a discussion on the topics of your presentation. The purpose of the assignment is (i) to give you practice in public speaking, (ii) to give you a chance to pick the topics that deserve class time, (iii) to share your research with the whole class and not just me, and (iv) to raise consciousness about the dynamics and difficulties of a good discussion. If past evaluations are any guide, even students who don't enjoy speaking in front of others, or who do so poorly —perhaps especially such students— are glad of the opportunity to practice. The presentation should offer a reading of the text for that day. To offer a reading is to take a stand on what the author is saying, and how the author argues it, not merely to point out the presence of certain themes, to ask certain questions, or to give your own views on the same topics. Your presentation should take up to 15-20 minutes. During this time, you should do all the talking. Wait until you're finished to ask the class questions and lead discussion. Note: do not try to present everything. Choose your issues carefully, and try to explain these in depth. In addition, I am interested in evaluating how you work as a team/group. Oral presentations are group work!

Response Papers

In order to learn more about Heidegger and the philosophical background in Germany at the beginning of the last century, you will read at home the first part of Rüdiger Safranski's accessible biography and analysis of Heidegger's philosophy. Every student will turn in every second week (check schedule for due dates) a brief paper, in which you summarize the readings (3 pages, double spaced, no more than 900 words).

General Remark on Assignments

The handouts of the presentations as well as the response sheets will in and outside of the classroom force us to have *an ongoing reflection* on our texts that we read in class. In addition, the assignments will help to prepare the exam. Reading and studying the primary texts is the absolute focus of this class. If you carefully read the texts, then you will easily master the assignments.

Course Evaluation

You will be evaluated on the basis of:

5 response sheets (turn in at the end of class session)		10 points
4 response papers (Safranski)	900 words	12 points
1 oral presentation	600 words	10 points
1 class essay	1500 words	10 points
2 in-class essay exams		25/25 points
2 task cards	300 words	8 points

		100 points

participation in class

extra credit

up to 3 extra points

Grading:

4.0	100 - 93
3.5	92 - 87
3	86 - 82
2.5	81 - 77
2	76 - 72
1.5	71 - 65
1.0	64 - 60
0.0	< 60

GENERIC SYLLABUS (might not be applicable to each class)**Class Attendance**

I do not employ in my classes a class attendance policy. Having said this, you should be aware that class attendance is very important. When engaging in a philosophical and humanistic dialogue it is necessary to be an active and present participant in the ongoing discussion. If you miss class please do not email me asking if you missed anything important. Every class is important. You should get a study buddy for the class; a student in class who will inform you of what you missed. If you miss a class you can come to my office hours or make an appointment to discuss the material, providing you have read the material and you simply want to see if your understanding of the material is on target. Time in office hours will not be used to repeat the class lectures.

Grading Criteria

[Click here to see my grading criteria for oral presentations \(not required in this class\)](#)

[Click here to see my grading criteria for papers \(tentative\)](#)

[Click here to see an EXAMPLE of my grading criteria for essay exams \(taken from an older class\)](#)

Helpful information about oral presentations, paper writing and plagiarism

[Click here to find help on your presentations and your writing](#)

Online Research Sources

Unfortunately, some people think that the internet as such is a reliable source of information. If you decide to use online sources for additional information or your paper then do not just use one of the common internet search engines, such as Google; rather, use **reliable academic** sources, such as *Britannica Online*, or the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Here are other resources: Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy - Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy - Encyclopedia of Continental Philosophy (e-book) - The Oxford Companion to Philosophy. The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy isn't very good, but still acceptable. Check out MSU's library resources! And, as with other sources, you must cite any online sources to which you refer in your essay.

Writing Center Information

MSU's writing center offers excellent help on all matters regarding writing and learning. Check the website at <http://writing.msu.edu> for an overview and hours. For more information, please call 517.432.3610 or send an e-mail to writing@msu.edu.

Plagiarism

In any essay or exam answer submitted for assessment, all passages taken from other people's work must be placed within quotation marks, with specific reference to author, title and page. *no excuse* can be accepted for any failure to do so, nor will inclusion of the source in a bibliography be considered inadequate acknowledgement. If the marker decides that plagiarism has occurred, the student may be judged to have failed the class.

Academic Honesty

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to

the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu) Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in (insert course number here). Students who violate MSU rules may receive a penalty grade, including but not limited to a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html>)

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY)

Drops and Adds

The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with a 100 percent refund and no grade reported is (see Academic Calendar). The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade reported is (see Academic Calendar). You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

Note on Attendance

Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course

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