## Tentative Schedule (last UPDATE: April 19, 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>INFO</th>
<th>SUMMARY</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 12</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>Hermeneutics</td>
<td>Gadamer in Conversation, pp.1-60</td>
<td>Gadamer</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 19</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Gadamer in Conversation; pp. 61-102</td>
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<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Gadamer in Conversation; pp. 61-102</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Jan 26</td>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>Gadamer Reader, pp.3-40</td>
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<td>Jan 28</td>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>Gadamer Reader, pp.3-40</td>
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<td>Feb 2</td>
<td>Hermeneutics</td>
<td>Philosophical Hermeneutics, pp 3-17</td>
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<td>Feb 4</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Philosophical Hermeneutics, pp 18-43</td>
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<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Philosophical Hermeneutics, pp 44-58</td>
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<td>Caitlin</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Feb 11</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Gadamer Reader, pp.192-226</td>
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<td>Paul</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Feb 16</td>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Gadamer Reader, pp.192-226</td>
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<td>Take-home assignments passed out in class</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Truth and Method, Introduction and Foreword</td>
<td>Nicholas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Pages</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
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<td>13 Feb 23</td>
<td>Schleiermacher</td>
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<td>14 Feb 25</td>
<td>Dilthey</td>
<td>Dilthey, excerpts (copy per pdf)</td>
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<td>15 Mar 2</td>
<td>Dilthey</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 218-241</td>
<td>Chris</td>
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<td>16 Mar 4</td>
<td>Phenomenology</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 242-264</td>
<td>Matthew</td>
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<td>17 Mar 9</td>
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<td>19 Mar 16</td>
<td>Heidegger</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 265-276</td>
<td>Jeffery</td>
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<td>20 Mar 18</td>
<td>no class</td>
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<td>Allison</td>
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<td>21 Mar 23</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 276-306; 267-305</td>
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<td>22 Mar 25</td>
<td>Hermeneutics</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 307-341; 305-335</td>
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<td>23 Mar 30</td>
<td>Hermeneutic Experience</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 341-361; 335-362</td>
<td>Take-home assignments passed out in class</td>
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<td>24 Apr 1</td>
<td>Hermeneutic Experience</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 341-361; 335-362</td>
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<td>25 Apr 6</td>
<td>Logic of Questions</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 361-380; 362-383</td>
<td>Mark</td>
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<td>26 Apr 8</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 381-404; 383-405</td>
<td>Brian M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 Apr 13</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 404-436; 405-435</td>
<td>Guest speaker: Prof. David Vessey (GVSU)</td>
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<td>1 Apr 15</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 404-436; 405-435</td>
<td>Final essay assignment passed out</td>
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<td>29 Apr 20</td>
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<td>31 Apr 27</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Truth and Method, pp. 436-492; 435-493</td>
<td>Brian R.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32 Apr 29</td>
<td>Wrap up</td>
<td>Wrap up</td>
<td>Draft of first page due</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 May 3 (day of final exam)</td>
<td>Wrap up</td>
<td>Wrap up</td>
<td>Final essay due</td>
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Class Meetings:
Days: TTH
Time: 10:20 AM - 11:40 AM
Place: 111 Morrill Hall

Office:
Phone: 517.355.4490 [dept.]
Place: 501 S. Kedzie Hall (part of room 503, front office)
Hours: see homepage

Other Contact:
E-mail: lotz@msu.edu
Home Phone: please ask
Webpage: http://christianlotz.wordpress.com

Box
You will find my box in the front office of the philosophy department (and in front of my office)
Teaching Assistant: no teaching assistants

Course Description

This class will introduce students to Hermeneutics and its main proponent, Hans-Georg Gadamer. The main task of Hermeneutics is to develop a philosophical theory of what it means to understand - in two regards: [1] understanding in general and the role of history, [2] understanding as the main concept for the humanities in contrast to positivism and the social sciences. We will review exemplary texts of all stages of Gadamer's thought by studying his views on art, interpretation, understanding, language, and poetics. We will pay special attention to Gadamer's main work Truth and Method (1960). Please read the following entry for a first orientation of our class topic: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/gadamer. If the topics outlined in this entry do not interest you, drop this class.

Course Goals

This lecture class should students introduce to

- the idea of philosophical Hermeneutics
- the hermeneutical critique of aesthetics
- the hermeneutical idea of understanding and dialogue
- the hermeneutical idea of interpretation
- the hermeneutical concept of art
- the hermeneutical idea of language

Note

Students should be aware of the fact that this course is based on extremely difficult (and awkward) texts. Accordingly, this class requires self-responsible learners and an intense confrontation with the primary text. Accordingly, if you are not excited about the prospect of a daily confrontation with abstract and historical reflections, then you should not take this class. This class is not based on a set of fixed knowledge; rather, we will try to learn together.

Required Texts (Bookstore)

- Gadamer, Truth and Method
- Gadamer, Philosophical Hermeneutics
- Gadamer in Conversation
- The Gadamer Reader: A Bouquet of the Later Writings

Reading assignments and preparation

The reading assignment per session is limited; however, this means that I expect you to come to class having prepared the texts carefully and thoroughly and that you are able to talk meaningfully about the text, raise questions of your own and provide answers when called upon. I will take the liberty to call on students randomly. An approximate preparation time for each class is a minimum of three hours. The reading for the next session, if not clear from the course schedule (below), will be announced at the end of the previous class. “Preparing for class” implies underlining and making excerpts from the text assigned; looking up unfamiliar vocabulary and writing them into a note book (I encourage you to keep a vocabulary booklet for all of your classes). Just reading the text won’t be sufficient. You have to study the material. Some vocabulary might not be sufficiently explained in a regular dictionary (this goes especially for philosophical terms), so it is necessary to consult additional sources (e.g., the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy — online (see remark below) — is an excellent source of information, and the MSU Library Website is a great resource for nearly all questions in this regard).

Organization

The course will be organized such that, ideally, each class period will include [i] "interactive" lecture, [ii] discussion time or [iii] response time. Students will be asked to intensively prepare a certain text or part of a text for the next class period. Certain class sections will be devoted to listening to Wagner's music and will be accompanied by brief assignments.

Course Requirements

- Daily reading and studying (around 5-10 pages)
- 2 take-home exams
- 1 class essay
- 1 task card
- 1 summary paper

**Note**

The class and my lectures are solely based on the texts selected for class and require a thorough study and preparation of the material. I will primarily lecture on the readings, which will help you to more fully understand the texts. Therefore it is not sufficient for students to come to class without having prepared the texts. And indeed, in the exams you have to demonstrate whether you have appropriately prepared the readings selected for each lecture.

**Make-Up Assignments**

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

**Attendance**

To get a good grade in this class, regular attendance is required. I will not call roll. Hence, it is up to you to come to class or not. However, if you do not come to class on a regular basis and participate in the class discussion, it is impossible for you to achieve a good grade in this class; so coming to class is your responsibility and your call. If you choose to attend class, please come on time, turn off cell phones and other electronic devices that interfere with your (and others') concentration, have the reading prepared and be ready to participate. If you are not prepared, do not bother showing up. It is a sign of disrespect to your peers and the instructor to attend class unprepared. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain class notes from a fellow student and to catch up on reading. Nevertheless, please be aware that you should not make me responsible for a failure that results out of your decision. You should be aware that chances to master this class are minimal, if you do not show up for class or if you do not prepare the readings (=studying).

**Task Cards**

I will from time to time assign so called "task cards." Students who receive task cards, must write a 1-2 page paper (no more than 600 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. Students have to make copies for every participants and pass their assignment out at the beginning of 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. Selected students will read their brief elaborations at the beginning of the next class section. This task is challenging because in your writing you should be as precise as possible. Note: you are not allowed to cite 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

**Summary Papers**

Each student has to write a 2-page (no more than 600 words) summary paper of one of the readings. Students have to make copies for every participants and pass their assignment out at the beginning of class. Each student will read his/her paper at the beginning of 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 during this class.

**Take-Home Exams**

In order to intensify and improve your understanding of the material, you will turn in on selected days (check schedule for due dates) brief papers/exams, in which you analyze the readings (2-3 pages, double spaced, no more than 900 words):


Course Evaluation

You will be evaluated on the basis of:

- 2 take-home exams: 40 points
- 1 class essay: 20 points
- Unannounced reading quizzes: 10 points
- 1 task card: 10 points
- 1 summary paper: 10 points
- Participation: 10 points

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100 points

Grading:

- 4.0 (=A)  100 - 93
- 3.5  92 - 87
- 3 (=B)  86 - 82
- 2.5  81 - 77
- 2 (=C)  76 - 72
- 1.5  71 - 65
- 1.0 (=D)  64 - 60
- 0.0 < 60

Generic Syllabus (might not be applicable to each class)

Class Attendance

As mentioned above, 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

Check out this page for grading criteria, example of assignments, etc.

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. 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.

Integrity of Scholarship and Grades (Plagiarism)

The following statement of University policy addresses principles and procedures to be used in instances of academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards, and falsification of academic or admission records, herein after referred to as academic misconduct. [See General Student Regulation 1.00, Protection of Scholarship and Grades.]: download document (pdf)

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. 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.