



Philosophy 200 - Honors,

Introduction to Philosophy

Spring Semester 2010, Michigan State University

Dr. Christian Lotz

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

NUMBER	DATE	TOPIC	READING	INFORMATION	SUMMARY	ASSIGNMENTS
1	Jan 12	Introduction				
HEIDEGGER: INTRODUCTION TO METAPHYSICS						
2	Jan 14	Metaphysics and Philosophy	Heidegger, Introduction, pp.1-32	Heidegger		
3	Jan 19	Metaphysics and Philosophy	Heidegger, Introduction, pp.1-32		Ania	
4	Jan 21	Metaphysics and Philosophy	Heidegger, Introduction, pp. 32-55		Thomas	
5	Jan 26	Metaphysics and Philosophy	Heidegger, Introduction, pp. 32-55		Megan	
6	Jan 28	Being, Becoming, Semblance	Heidegger, Introduction, pp.98-122		Alyssa	
7	Feb 2	Being, Becoming, Semblance	Heidegger, Introduction, pp.98-122		Kyle	
8	Feb 4	Being and Thinking	Heidegger, Introduction, pp.122-143		Michael	
9	Feb 9	Being and Thinking	Heidegger, Introduction, pp.143-176		Benjamin	
10	Feb 11	Being and Thinking	Heidegger, Introduction, pp.176-209			First take-home assignment will be passed out in class
11	Feb 16	Being and Thinking	Heidegger, Introduction, pp.176-209		Stephen	
PRINCIPLES, ESSENCES --- ARISTOTLE: METAPHYSICS						
12	Feb 18	Knowledge and Principles	Aristotle, Metaphysics, book I+II	Aristotle	Anne	
13	Feb 23	Aristotle and Protagoras	Aristotle, Metaphysics, book IV		John	Assignment due

14	Feb 25	What is the Law of Non-Contradiction?	Aristotle, Metaphysics, book IV	Andrew
15	Mar 2	What are Essences?	Aristotle, Metaphysics, book VII.1-9	Douglas
16	Mar 4	What are Essences?	Aristotle, Metaphysics, book VII.13-17	Logan

LIFE, BODY, SOUL --- ARISTOTLE: DE ANIMA

17	Mar 9	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break		
18	Mar 11	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break		
19	Mar 16	What are Essences?	Aristotle, Metaphysics, book VII.1-9			
20	Mar 18	no class	no class		Md Munaz	
21	Mar 23	Soul, Form, Matter	Aristotle, De Anima, Book I		Lauren	
22	Mar 25	Senses	Aristotle, De Anima, Book II, 1-4		Kyle	
23	Mar 30	Thinking	Aristotle, De Anima, Book III, 3-8		Steven	
24	Apr 1	Thinking	Aristotle, De Anima, Book III, 3-8		Laura	Second take-home assignment will be passed out in class

EROS, LOVE, BEAUTY --- PLATO: SYMPOSIUM

25	Apr 6	The Force of the Eros	Plato, Symposium, Phaedrus + Pausanias		Monika	
26	Apr 8	Difference and Unity	Plato, Symposium, Eryximachus + Aristophanes		Ryo	Assignment due
27	Apr 13	Love and Beauty	Plato, Symposium, Agathon + Socrates/Diotima		Nicole	
28	Apr 15	Love and Beauty	Plato, Symposium, Alcibiades+Socrates/Diotima			
29	Apr 20	Difference and Unity	Plato, Symposium, Eryximachus + Aristophanes	Plato	Kaylin	Third take-home assignment will be passed out in class
30	Apr 22	Love and Beauty	Plato, Symposium, Agathon + Socrates/Diotima			
31	Apr 27	Love and Beauty	Plato, Symposium, Alcibiades+Socrates/Diotima			
32	Apr 29	Wrap Up	Wrap Up			
	May 5 (final exam day)					Assignment due

Class Meetings:

Days: TTH

Time: 12:40-2pm

Place: Case 342

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 course is offered as an introductory course in philosophy, the focus of which is to prepare students for reading philosophical texts as well as for thinking and writing philosophically. It is hoped that by carefully reading the texts selected for the course, students will learn how to philosophically investigate some of the issues that are of central importance to human thinking, especially questions about being and essence. After a general introduction to philosophy and its sub-disciplines, we will spend most of our time closely analyzing central ideas in the history of metaphysics: [1] Plato, [2] Aristotle, [3] Heidegger, and [4] Fichte. Reading and intensively studying primary - classical - texts is the absolute focus of this class. Students should be aware that this class is neither a contemporary introduction to philosophy nor contains much social-political philosophy and ethics. Students who are interested in latter issues should take phl 340 and/or phl 350. *You should be aware that this class will be one of the most challenging classes in your college life. Accordingly, if you are unable or unwilling to devote most of your energy to the material discussed in class, you should not take this class.*

Course Goals

The format of the course includes lecture, class discussion, and student presentation. Particular emphasis will be placed on the careful reading, interpretation, and discussion of texts. Objectives of the course are learning how to read, analyze, and interpret philosophical texts as well as assessing the historical transformation of philosophical ideas. We will focus on the idea of metaphysics. Accordingly this class is not an introduction to contemporary philosophy.

Specific Course Goals

This class should students introduce to

- the metaphysical tradition in philosophy
- major ways of thinking about being
- read classical philosophical texts
- think philosophically

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. In addition, the study of poetic speaking presupposes that you are interested in poetry and that you are not ignorant of the historical dimension of philosophy. Accordingly, if you are not excited about the prospect of a daily confrontation with abstract reflections on poetry, then you should not take this class. This class is not based on set knowledge; rather, we will try to learn together.

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 context).

Required Texts (Bookstore)

- Plato, Meno + Symposium
- Aristotle, On the Soul + Metaphysics
- Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics
- Fichte, Vocation of Man

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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 pages)
- 3 take-home exams/response papers
- 1 task card
- response sheets
- 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.

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

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.

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.

Response Papers

In order to intensify and improve your understanding of the material, you will turn in on selected days (check schedule for due dates) a brief paper, in which you analyze the readings (2-3 pages, double spaced, no more than 900 words). Assignments will be passed out in class.

Reading Quizzes

There will be - from time to time - unannounced reading quizzes. Students who do not attend class (and have no medical documentation) will lose all points. Reading quizzes cannot be made up. I will waive this requirement if I have the impression that students come prepared to class.

Course Evaluation

You will be evaluated on the basis of:

5 response sheets	15 points
3 response papers	45 points
Reading quizzes	10 points
Summary paper	10 points
1 task card	10 points
participation	10 points

	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.

[Back to homepage](#)