

PHIL 315: 19TH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY
From Kant to Nietzsche (and Beyond!)
SPRING 2008

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Office Hours: MTW, 1-2
(and by appt.)

Course Description:

This course is a survey of the major thinkers of the nineteenth century: Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. We will begin with a brief review of the Kantian legacy in order to situate the development of philosophy in the nineteenth century. Then, in our reading of Hegel, we will concentrate primarily on the dialectic of recognition and the various ways that process is frustrated or realized. Next, we will consider the Marxian “overturning” of Hegelian idealism by analyzing Marx’s dialectical materialism and its relationship to specific formulations of social, political and economic life. Following Marx, we will consider another “rejection” of Hegel in the work of Kierkegaard; specifically, we will address the unique formulation of religious responsibility presented in Kierkegaard’s interpretation of the Abraham/Isaac story. Finally, we will turn to Nietzsche, who famously rejected all philosophy before him, and we will analyze the merits and demerits of Nietzsche’s “genealogy of morals.” In addition to evaluating each of these philosophers individually, we will also attempt to measure their relationship (or lack thereof) to Kant in order to begin to understand what is meant by “post-Kantian” philosophy. In a similar vein, we will also pay close attention to the manner in which many of these thinkers foreshadow the major philosophical movements of 20th C. Continental philosophy, including existentialism, structuralism/post-structuralism, deconstruction, and the various philosophies of “identity.”

Required Texts:

W.T. Jones, *Kant and the Nineteenth Century* (Second Edition)
G.W.F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*
Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Marx/Engels Reader*
Soren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*
Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*

Course Requirements:

Participation and Précis:	25% of final grade
Hegel or Marx Essay:	25% of final grade
Kierkegaard or Nietzsche Essay:	25% of final grade
Final Symposium:	25% of final grade

Notes on Course Requirements:

Participation and Précis:

Due to the quantity and difficulty of the material we are covering, it will be impossible to do well in this course without regular attendance and participation. This course will primarily be conducted in “seminar” format, which means that students are expected to regularly contribute to class discussions and to actively engage in determining the course of those discussions. Perfect attendance will *not* be sufficient to secure the full 25% of your grade; you *must* participate! Each session, one student will be responsible for presenting a short (15-20 minute) “précis.” Students who are “auditing” this course are also responsible for a précis. The précis should include three elements:

- (1) a brief review of the previous class session,
- (2) a synopsis of the material to be covered in the present class session, and
- (3) a few questions designed to initiate and guide the subsequent discussion.

Students’ précis should be typed and handed in to the instructor, and they must also be emailed to the entire class at least 24 hours in advance.

Essays:

There are two short essays required for this course: one on Hegel and/or Marx, and one on Kierkegaard and/or Nietzsche. These essays will be written in response to a question provided by the instructor. (Students may opt to create their own topic, but any alternative topics must be approved in advance by the instructor.) Short essays should be 8-10 pages and should address *only* the material we covered in class. One, *and only one*, of the essays may be re-written and re-submitted, if the student chooses. (NOTE: Rewrites are automatically reduced by one full letter grade. That is, the highest grade a student can receive on a rewrite is a B.)

Final Exam/Symposium:

In lieu of a final exam, we will have a final “symposium” in this course. Students will be randomly assigned a philosopher to represent in the discussion, and will be responsible for answering questions *as that philosopher* and responding to other philosophers in the room, also “in character.” There will be at least 2 “rounds” of the discussion, and students will be re-assigned a different philosopher in each round. Additionally, each student will have the opportunity to submit in advance potential questions/topics for discussion in the final symposium.

Schedule of Readings*

**This is a tentative schedule and may change based on the pace of the class. All syllabus changes will be announced in class and students are responsible for making themselves aware of any changes. From time to time, additional "secondary" readings may be assigned to supplement the primary texts.*

WEEK ONE (Jan 14):	THE KANTIAN LEGACY
WEEK TWO (Jan 28):	HEGEL, <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> (Preface and Introduction)
WEEK THREE (Feb 4):	HEGEL, <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> (Sense-Certainty and Perception)
WEEK FOUR (Feb 11):	HEGEL, <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> (Lordship and Bondage)
WEEK FIVE (Feb 18):	HEGEL, <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> (Morality)
WEEK SIX (Feb 25):	MARX, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844" "Alienation and Social Class"
WEEK SEVEN (Mar 10):	MARX, "For A Ruthless Criticism of Everything Existing" "Manifesto of the Communist Party" "Critique of the Gotha Program" --- HEGEL/MARX PAPER DUE---
WEEK EIGHT (Mar 17):	KIERKEGAARD, <i>Fear and Trembling</i> (Preface – Problema 1)
WEEK NINE (Mar 24):	KIERKEGAARD, <i>Fear and Trembling</i> (Problema 2 and 3)
WEEK TEN (Mar 31):	NIETZSCHE, <i>Genealogy of Morals</i> (Preface and Essay 1)
WEEK ELEVEN (Apr 7):	NIETZSCHE, <i>Genealogy of Morals</i> (Essay 2)
WEEK TWELVE (Apr 14):	NIETZSCHE, <i>Genealogy of Morals</i> (Essay 3)
WEEK THIRTEEN (Apr 21):	FINAL SYMPOSIUM ---KIERKEGAARD/NIETZSCHE PAPER DUE---