# Philosophy 4060 – HYBRID VERSION

# Mid-20th Century Continental Philosophy: Heidegger, Arendt, Sartre, Beauvoir, Merleau-Ponty

Office Hours: Tues. 12:00-1:00 and by appointment

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Required Reading;

Heidegger, *Being and Time*, (Harper One, 1962)

Division One, Section I,II, IV, VI (43-44)

Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind, Thinking*, (Harvest/HJB, 1978)

Part I, Appearance and Part II, Mental Activities in the World of Appearance (pp. 19 - 110).

Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, (Washington Square Press, 1993)

Part I, ch. 1&2; Part II, ch. 2; Part III, ch. 1; Part IV, ch. 1

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, (Citadel Books, 2000)

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The World of Perception*, (Routledge, 2004). (If I can find something better I will reserve the right to alter this reading.)

Secondary Texts:

The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Michael Gelven, A Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time, Northern University of Illinois Press, 1989.

Magda King, A Guide to Heidegger’s Being and Time, SUNY Press, 2001.

Martin Heidegger, An Introduction to Metaphysics.

Joseph Catalano, A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre’s, Being and Nothingness, University of Chicago Press, 1985.

Margaret Simons, Beauvoir and The Second Sex, Roman and Littlefield, 2000.

Debra Bergoffen, The Philosophy of Simone de Beauvoir, SUNY Press, 1996.

Hass, Lawrence. Singing the World: An Invitation to Merleau-Ponty’s Philosophy, Indiana University Press, 2007. (Library Reserve)

Course Description:

This course is designed to cover mid-20th century Continental Philosophy. Continental philosophy describes a group of philosophical traditions influenced by 19th and 20th century European philosophers. Its concerns arose relation to the conditions of its historical emergence before during and after WWII. Personal, ethical, environmental and political transformation are all taken to be essential to philosophical theorizing. Thus, much of Continental Philosophy in this period gives ontology (what exists and in what structure) precedence over epistemology (how we know entities we presume to exist).

(See Simon Critchley, Continental Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction (Oxford University Press, 2001) and Simon Glendinning, The Idea of Continental Philosophy (Edinburgh University Press, 2006).

**Part I: The Metaphysical Turn and its Counter**.

Heidegger somewhat mystically redefines philosophy as the "unconcealment of being." To him this means that being (what is, how it is, and the fact that it is) is concealed from human understanding and it is the task of philosophy to let being show itself for the sake of human knowledge. Knowledge of the being of things is their significance or meaningful presence within the realm of human concerns. Thus, Heidegger levies an unrestricted condemnation against modern science, whose aim he identifies with the subjection of nature and the concealment of being.

Although Hannah Arendt is usually characterized as a political philosopher whose work spans issues such as totalitarianism, revolution, the nature of freedom, the faculties of 'thinking' and 'judging', the history of political thought, we will read her work as a counter to Heidegger’s metaphysics. Arendt theorizes about the fundamental structures underlying experience and so she seeks to make available the objective structures and characteristics of being-in-the-world in a manner that does not eliminate science.

**Part II: Sartre and Beauvoir: Two Views of Consciousness**

Sartre’s view of reality is grounded in his view of consciousness as central to thought and action. As Hazel Barnes has pointed out, Sartre’s most striking and original idea is that “consciousness is a Nothingness,” a negativity, but in its nothingness, it reveals Being. The object of consciousness is always outside of and beyond consciousness, resisting and limiting consciousness. Yet, simultaneously, consciousness causes there to be things insofar as it is nothing., Sartre readily makes use of mathematical ideas to construct his view of consciousness and its relation to reality.

Discouraged, if not prohibited, by Sartre from writing philosophy, Beauvoir nevertheless produced a book that is nominally about ethics, but concretely an ontology. Describing consciousness as ambiguous, Beauvoir identifies ambiguity with the idea that we can never succeed in fully revealing the structure of the world, and never fulfill our desire to impress our meaning on the world. Finding that absolutes (such as Nothingness), insofar as they claim to give final answers to our ethical dilemmas and authoritarian justifications for our actions, offer dangerous consolations for our failure to be the source of the world's meaning and being, Beauvoir favors an ontology that acknowledge our limits but recognizes the future as open.

**Part III: In the Realm of Perception**

Like Beauvoir, Merleau-Ponty situates knowledge in our ambiguous being-in-the-world. Taking up the theme of the “lived-body” as the zero-point of our insertion in the world as well as the locus of union between mind and body, Merleau-Ponty describes the structures of our bodily lived experience. These include, spatiality, sexuality and expressivity. Eventually, Merleau-Ponty expands these concerns to include the question of being, which he calls “flesh,” rather than matter or substance. The concept of flesh expresses the idea that the lived body is caught up in the midst of the world, both seer and seen, touching and touched, but that world and self always diverge. Without this there would be no possible expression, no thought, no creation as we would be sunk into the matter of the world.

**Course Requirements:**

THIS IS A HYBRID COURSE. THE COURSE LECTURES (ALONG WITH SLIDES) WILL BE ON BB EVERY WEEK. THERE WILL ALSO BE READING GUIDELINES POSTED ON BB. CLASS WILL MEET EVERY WEEK FOR 1 HOUR 15 MINUTES DURING WHICH TIME WE WILL DISCUSS THE MATERIAL BASED ON THE QUESTIONS YOU BRING TO CLASS.

Reading:

This course teaches the close readings of key texts called primary sources. To help you to learn how to read these kinds of texts, reading guidelines will be posted for some of the texts on Blackboard. You might want to print up a copy of each guideline, use it to help you read and bring it to every class along with the primary text. Lectures will be posted ahead of the class in which they will be discussed.

Weekly Questions:

You will have the opportunity to bring two questions to class for discussion at each class meeting. The questions should be content oriented and based on the reading and lecture. Credit will be given only for students attending each class and posting their questions on BB after each class. **Attendance and questions are 26% of your grade for the semester. (2 X13)**

READING RESPONSES:

For approximately half of the class meetings (5), you will be given the opportunity to write a brief (2 page) response to the reading and lectures covered for those days. YOU ARE ASKED TO SITUATE THESE RR’S IN RELATION TO LECTURE SLIDES. Each RR must focus on a key term or terms from the reading that interest you the most and a discussion of its or their role in the philosophy. **Your RR’s will be posted on BB by midnight the day after the class meets for 50% of your grade for the semester. (5X10)**

FINAL PAPER: A research paper based on the terms you have chosen for your RR’s. You will have the opportunity to create a theory using at least three of the theories or key ideas that we have covered in the semester. The emphasis is on the synthesis of ideas. “A’s” will be awarded only to those students who use 2 external research sources in the development of their ideas. This paper is the culmination of the entire semester’s learning and thinking.

**24% of total grade for the semester.**

**Grading**

A: 100%-94%; A-: 93%-90%; B+: 89%-87%; B: 86%-84%; B-: 83%- 80%; C+: 79%-77%; C: 76%-74%; C-: 73%-70%; D: 69%-60%; F: 60% >

No incompletes will be given except in cases of very serious illness.

Additional Requirements:

It is really important that you come to class! The discussion and reading responses are crucial for understanding the work and developing your own ideas. And, since so much of the grade is based on in-class work, it simply makes sense to be there.

**Texting or using a mobile device of any kind for communication or internet activities during class is terribly bad manners, as is surfing the net! Don’t upset your classmates by doing this while they are talking about their work!**

Any violation of the UCCS Honor Code in the UCCS Schedule of Courses and Registration Instructions will result in an “F” for the course and possible disciplinary action. Internet resources must be fully cited so that it is clear exactly where on the site you found your information.

Non-sexist use of language is really important! For APA Guidelines see:

<http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/publications/texts/nonsexist.html>

Official Stuff: Classroom Behavior and Conduct

Students and faculty both share responsibility for maintaining a positive educational environment. Faculty have a responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect. Faculty also have the right and the authority to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. Disruptive students in the academic setting hinder the educational environment.  Students who fail to adhere to such reasonable limits shall be subject to disciplinary action(s).“Disruption,” as applied to the academic setting, means verbal and other behavior in the classroom that a faculty member judges as interfering with normal academic functions.  Disruptive student conduct is prohibited by Regent Laws, the UCCS Student Code of Conduct and the Student Classroom/Course-Related Behavior Policy.  For more information go to the Office of the Dean of Students website at  http://www.uccs.edu/~dos/studentconduct/index.html.

**Writing Guidelines**

**1. Use a title page for your final paper only.**

**2. You must have page numbers on each page except the title page. Your first page of actually writing is page 1.**

**3. Your papers must be double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman or a nice easy to read font with 1” margins.**

**4. Use subtitles where appropriate. They give order and structure to your paper.**

**5. You must document all your sources in the final paper through a recognized format (MLA, Chicago, APA etc.).**

**6. Your final paper must contain a Bibliography that properly documents all of you sources. (This page does not count as one of your required pages.) Please document ALL secondary sources on the RR’s.**

**7. Information in your writing must be organized in well-constructed paragraphs with minimal grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. Carefully check spelling, punctuation, grammar, capitalization, paragraphing, and documentation. Underline or *italicize* book titles, magazines, and journal titles.**

**8. Do not be overly autobiographical. Do not write, “I think that X is true because of Y.” Simply write “X is true because of Y.” Any personal pronouns must relate directly to the substance of your paper.**

**9. Periods and commas go inside quotation marks—“Like this.”—not outside of them—“Like this”.**

**10. Use but don’t overuse direct quotations from sources. I want to know how YOU summarize the material.**

**11. Paragraphs should contain one main idea. They should not go on for several paragraphs, nor should they be only one sentence.**

**12. Don’t give a report on the life of a philosopher or a paper that is merely describes ideas without explaining them.**

SCHEDULE:

**JANUARY 17: INTRODUCTION**

**JANUARY 24: HEIDEGGER, DIV. 1, SECT. 1, 2.**

**JANUARY 31: HEIDEGGER, DIV. 1, SECT. 4, 6.**

**FEBRUARY 5: ARENDT, PART 1**

**FEBRUARY 14: ARENDT, PART 1 AND 2**

**FEBRUARY 21: ARENDT, PART 2**

**FEBRUARY 28: SARTRE, PART 1, CH. 1 AND 2**

**MARCH 7: SARTRE, PART 2 CH. 2**

**MARCH 14: SARTRE, PART 3 CH. 1 ; PART 4, CH. 1**

**MARCH 21: BEAUVOIR**

**MARCH 28: SPRING BREAK**

**APRIL 4: BEAUVOIR**

**APRIL 11: MERLEAU-PONTY**

**APRIL 18: MERLEAU-PONTY**

**APRIL 25: Discussion of Final Essays**

**May 2: FINAL DUE**