

Proseminar in Twentieth-Century Philosophy

Phil 8601 / 0600-001

Focus: Philosophical Reasoning

Professor Lewis Gordon

Time: Mondays, 12:00 pm–2:40 pm

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Office hours: Mondays 10:30 AM–12:00 PM, by appointment only, Room 738 Anderson Hall

This seminar will be a semester-long discussion on various approaches to philosophy and some of the philosophical problems they raise. The objective is to provide students with a heightened and sustained discussion of the problematics of philosophical reasoning and their impact on various areas and conceptions of philosophy. Discussions will range from analytical philosophies of logic to transcendental, phenomenological, hermeneutical, and dialectical approaches, as well as challenges posed by feminist philosophy and Africana philosophy. We will also explore a variety of research resources in professional philosophy.

Required Texts:

Susan Haack, *Philosophy of Logics*. Cambridge UP. ISBN: 0521293294

Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*. Martinus Nijhoff. ISBN: 9024720524

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *"The Primacy of Perception" and Other Essays*. Northwestern UP. ISBN: 0810101645

Charles Sanders Peirce, *Selected Philosophical Writings of Charles Sanders Peirce*. Dover: # ISBN-10: 0486202178

Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter (eds.), *Feminist Epistemologies*. Routledge. ISBN: 041590451X

Miriam Solomon. *Social Empiricism*. MIT Press. ISBN-10: 0262693526 / ISBN-13: 978-0262693523

Laurie Calhoun, *Philosophy Unmasked: A Skeptic's Critique*. University of Kansas: # ISBN-10: 0700608338

Lewis R. Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man: An Essay on Philosophy and Human Sciences*. ISBN: 0415914159

Lewis R. Gordon, *Disciplinary Decadence: Living Thought in Trying Times*. # ISBN-10: 1594512566 / ISBN-13: 978-1594512568

Recommended:

Lewis Gordon, *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy*. Cambridge UP. ISBN ISBN-10: 0521675464 / ISBN-13: 978-0521675468

Hagi Kanaan, *The Present Personal*. Columbia UP. ISBN: 0231133502

Matustik, Martin J. Beck, and William L. McBride, *Calvin O. Schrag and the Task of Philosophy after Postmodernity*. Northwestern UP. ISBN-10: 0810118750 / ISBN-13: 978-0810118751

There will also be readings posted on blackboard.

Requirements: Attendance and participation in each seminar; a proposed philosophical problem you would like to address over the course of the semester through examining the usefulness or limitations of each approach to it; and 10 weekly one-page single-spaced papers addressing the usefulness or limits of the week's reading to the proposed problem. The 10 papers are worth 5 points each for a total of 50% of your grade. The final paper is 30 %. The presentation is worth 10 %. And 10% is the rest of your grade (attendance, class participation). The presentation of the final project must be done during the last two sessions. The written submitted paper is due on 12/14/09 by email attachment, MS Word or RTF, at 5 PM. The presentation must be a 10-minute outline of your argument with 10 minutes of discussion.

Dates	Readings and topics
8/31	Introduction of the course and handing out of syllabus. Scheduling presentations. Assignment: Prepare a one-page statement of the problem you would like to examine throughout the semester. It will be due on the first meeting of class because of notice of it over the summer. Handout: selection from Karl Jaspers <i>Ways to Wisdom</i> and recommended reading: "Introduction" to Gordon, <i>An Introduction to Africana Philosophy</i>
9/14	Susan Haack, <i>Philosophy of Logics</i> (first half) and <i>blackboard</i> : Gödel's completeness theorem and Tarski and Jaspers on truth. Discussion of consistency, validity, truth, and formalism; varieties of logics
9/21	Susan Haack, <i>Philosophy of Logics</i> (second half). Completeness and incompleteness. <i>Blackboard</i> : Frege, "Sense and Reference." Quine, "On What There Is?" and Husserl, "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science." Discussions of thought, sense and reference, and critique of psychologism and historicism. Deviant logics.
9/28	Yom Kippur. No class.
10/5	Edmund Husserl, <i>Formal and Transcendental Logic</i> . Distinction between rationality and reason, problem of meta-evaluations. <i>Recommended</i> : additional reading: Alfred Schutz, <i>Problem of Social Reality I</i> , essay on concepts in phenomenology; J. Mohanty, <i>The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl</i> , chap. 1.
10/12	Colonization Day. No class. Read: Maurice Merleau-Ponty, " <i>The Primacy of Perception</i> " and <i>Other Essays</i> . Discussion of natural science and human science and their impact on philosophical approaches to their study. <i>Recommended</i> : Hagi Kenaan, <i>The Present Personal</i> .
10/19	Discuss Merleau-Ponty on phenomenology of the human sciences. Philosophical problems of discourse, speech, action, and metareflection. <i>Blackboard</i> : C.S. Peirce, "How to make Our Ideas Clear."
10/26	Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter (eds.), <i>Feminist Epistemologies</i> . Impact of standpoint epistemologies on philosophical reasoning.
11/2	Miriam Solomon, <i>Social Empiricism</i> . Possible guest: Miriam Solomon
11/9	Laurie Calhoun, <i>Philosophy Unmasked: A Skeptic's Critique</i>
11/16	Calhoun continued
11/23	Lewis Gordon, <i>Fanon and the Crisis of European Man: An Essay on Philosophy and Human Sciences</i> and <i>Disciplinary Decadence</i> . Postcolonial Africana dimensions of philosophical reasoning.
11/30	Presentations.
12/7	Presentations. Concluding discussion. Papers due by email on 12/14 to lewgord@gmail.com

Any student who has a need for special accommodations due to disabilities should speak with me as soon as possible to discuss the specific situation and contact Disability Resources and Services, located in Ritter Annex, at 215.204.1280.