

Point Loma Nazarene University

**HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY IV**

PHL 304 and PHL 490

SPRING 2013

MW 10:55-12:40

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**PLNU MISSION:**

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The goal of this class is to explore issues related to philosophical, theological, and ethical discourse, with an emphasis on the limitations of language about God, the world, and ourselves. The class will be centered around 20th century philosophers who are themselves exploring the role of linguistic systems and meaning formation. We will engage with significant texts and figures that question some fundamental assumptions of the Western philosophical tradition. Our hope is that we will acquire a basic understanding of the views held by many of the more important philosophers in the contemporary period, and that we will be able to reflect on some of the most significant topics within theological discourse - like immanence/transcendence, one's ethical obligation to the neighbor, gender performance, hospitality, hermeneutics, realism, truth, forgiveness, corporate responsibility, and so on.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

1. Students will engage in the disciplined practice of asking questions about God, the world, and of themselves, including questions for which there may be no easy answers.
2. Students will differentiate among interrelated movements or figures in contemporary philosophical movements.
3. Students will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of human reasoning or experience to provide an adequate account of significant issues that relate to our human condition, the world, ethics and Christian life.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To study 20<sup>th</sup> century western philosophy and critically reflect upon those trajectories of **thought that arise out of and respond to the philosophical work of the Western** philosophical tradition as a whole.
2. To examine the philosophical impact of *temporality*, understood with a gaze toward the future.
3. To examine the philosophical significance of *language* to metaphysical and epistemological engagement.
4. To study historically significant figures in the history of philosophy in order to enrich our engagement with the discourse within western philosophy.
5. To reconsider the term 'philosophy' in light of these thinkers.
6. To read some really good but difficult texts that question some 'fundamental' assumptions of the Western philosophical tradition.
7. To acquire a basic understanding of the views held by many of the more important philosophers in the contemporary period, as well as the primary philosophic movements, and major themes that make up the intellectual climate of that period.
8. To critically engage the philosophers of the contemporary period and evaluate their views and the impact of their views on contemporary thought and culture.
9. To study and critically evaluate the relationship between discourse, theology and human thought.
10. To wait in hopeful anticipation for that *impossible possibility*...

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:**

All students are expected to meet the minimum standards for this course as set forth by the instructor. Students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should first discuss options and services with the Academic Support Center (ASC) during the first two weeks of the semester. The ASC, in turn, will contact professors with official notification and suggested classroom accommodations, as required by federal law. Approved documentation must be provided by the student and placed on file in the ASC prior to the beginning of the semester.

### **INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE:**

The School of Theology and Christian Ministries is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people often use language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the School strongly urges students to join faculty and staff in avoiding any sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions and in writing.

### **TEXTBOOKS:**

Required:

1. Reading Packet. This can be purchased from Pat Jafry in Smee for \$
2. Heidegger, Martin, *Being and Time* (Stambaugh trans.) 0-7914-2678-5
3. Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness, trans.) 0-4152-5408-6

## PROCEDURE/REQUIREMENTS:

The format of the class will be seminar style. It will be team-taught by Rob Thompson and Heather Ross. Both of us will be present each day for the class discussion. There will be class presentations by students, small and large writing assignments and two oral exams. To take the class you must register for both PHL 304 (3 units) and PHL 490 (1 unit). You will need to be cleared by Rob Thompson or Heather Ross for the PHL 490 portion of the class.

1. We will be reading from some of the most significant **texts** in the history of western thought. It is vitally important that you become acquainted with the material in order that you get a feel for not simply what the writer says, but how she or he makes you think. We want you to be thoughtful and critical of what each of the thinkers writes, as well as of what we say in class. A significant portion of your grade will be based upon the amount of reading you do. You will be asked to give a verbal report each day on your **reading** progress (scale of 0-10). For example, an 8.5 means that you read carefully and thought about carefully 85% of the assigned reading for that day.

2. Regular and punctual **attendance** is required for the full benefit of this class. If you are late, it is your responsibility to see one of us after class in order that your attendance may be recorded. Any three tardies will be recorded as one absence. Dialogue tends to spawn new ideas and creativity, so discussion will also be extremely important. Therefore, *each* student will be expected to enter into class discussion. The extent to which this occurs, along with attendance will be considered in your final grade. *You cannot pass the class* if you miss more than three weeks of class (six sessions). See the catalogue.

3. There will be one paper proposal and **bibliographic assignment**. The purpose of the latter is to familiarize you with our library's database holdings in philosophy, specifically journal articles, and standard methods of philosophical research. For this assignment, you must provide three bibliographic references, complete with abstracts, to full text journal articles, including the database in which you found each article. The articles themselves should be related to your research proposal for the final term paper, which is included in this assignment. In other words, the bibliographic assignment should be related to this paper. If it turns out that no abstract is provided by the database, you must provide your own brief summary. No more than a paragraph is required in this case, and can usually be accomplished by reading the introduction and conclusion of the article carefully and skimming the remainder. You will also need to present a final paper proposal, complete with a thesis statement and paragraph explaining your project, to us as a part of this assignment. NB: While important, secondary source research should never be used in lieu of careful engagement with primary sources. Careful scrutiny of the primary text(s) is always the first step in serious philosophical research.

4. There will be a **final paper** due May 3<sup>rd</sup> at noon –Smee Hall mailboxes (12-15 pages). The paper will be a summative project. It will make use of the research and reading you have done all semester. In partial preparation for your final paper, you will need to read Jean-Luc Marion's "The Crossing of Being" over spring break. This reading will provide for you an example of a way to approach the question we will be asking this semester "How does one speak of God?" This question will always be asked from an unavoidable position within the

world. Your paper must address these questions with this concern in mind. You will make use of the research accomplished with your **library/bibliographical work assignments**. You will need to present a thesis statement/paper proposal to us as a part of your bibliographic assignment. The papers are formal and will need to include formal citation (any manual of style is acceptable). Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in either zero credit for the assignment(s) and a full grade reduction for the class or failure of the course all together (this is up to our discretion). Both will result in a letter to the Provost to be placed in your academic record.

5. Scattered throughout the term each of you will do two **in-class presentations**. If it is the first day discussing a figure, the presenter should include a brief and general philosophical introduction to the figure covered during that session. The presentation should mainly be an outline of the text(s) for the day. You should reference 10-12 significant portions (quotations or specific page/text references) of the text to be covered in class. You must provide a detailed outline and bibliography for each member of the class. Please refrain from using electronic sources unless these are full text journals accessed through our library's numerous database collections. Libraries are good. An "\*" below will indicate which days are not available for presentations.

6. There will be **two exams**. Each will contain a matching portion and an oral component. The oral portion will include an extended group oral dialogue following a matching section that will be completed individually. The first exam will be the length of the class period (though it could be longer). The second exam will be approximately 2 hours (the final exam period). The final exam is Monday 4/29, 10:30-12:30.

7. The **grades** are based on all of these mentioned assignments. All outside assignments are due at the beginning of class. We will not accept late work. We will give no make-up exams unless you have an excused absence (doctor's note required) AND have notified either of us in advance. All make-up exams must be taken within one week of the exam. Do not expect to be able to make-up the exam unless one of us has written or spoken this to you explicitly.

READING	15%
BIBLIOGRAPHIC ASSIGN.	2+5=7%
PRESENTATION	8x2=16%
ORAL MID-TERM	18%
FINAL PAPER	24%
ORAL FINAL	20%

TOTAL 100%

100-94% A	79-77% C+	63-60% D-
93-90% A-	76-74% C	59-0% F
89-87% B+	73-70% C-	
86-84% B	69-67% D+	
83-80% B-	66-64% D	

**GUIDELINE:**

- 1/8 Introduction to the Course  
1/9 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b016x2jp>  
1/14 Frege, Sense and Nominatum (186-197); Russell, Descriptions (167-180)  
1/16 Wittgenstein, Tractatus (1-5.13)\*  
1/21 MLKj Day –No Class  
1/23 Wittgenstein, Tractatus (5.13-7)  
1/28 Heidegger Being and Time pp. 59-94\*  
1/30 Being and Time pp. 94-134  
2/4 Being and Time pp. 134-168  
2/6 Wittgenstein, PI (2-31 Paragraph 63)  
2/11 Wittgenstein, PI (31-61 Paragraph 155)  
2/13 Attend Wiley Lecture and write a brief response  
2/18 Heidegger *On the Way to Language* pp. 393-426  
2/20 Moore, In Defence of Common Sense (32-59)  
2/25 Wittgenstein, OC (171-184, 28-40 Paragraphs 1-316)  
2/27 **Mid-Term**  
3/4-3/8 Spring Break-Read Marion’s “The Crossing of Being” pp.53-107  
3/11 Foucault pp. 76-100  
3/13 Foucault pp. 101-120  
3/18 Butler “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution”  
3/20 Quine, (450-462); Quine, (45-61)  
3/25 Levinas pp. 133-153  
3/27 Levinas pp. 159-177 **Paper Proposal/Bibliographic Assignment Due**  
4/1 Easter Break  
4/3 Kripke, (72-89)  
4/8 Derrida *Difference* pp. 396-420  
4/10 Putnam, (103-134)  
4/15 Putnam, (134-149 and 201-216)  
4/17 Derrida *On Forgiveness*  
4/22 Marion pp. xix-24  
4/24 Flex  
4/29 **Final Exam**  
5/3 **Final Paper due**