I. Catalog Information

PHIL 20C History of Western Philosophy: 1800 - the Present 4 Unit(s)

(See general education pages for the requirement this course meets.)

Advisory: English Writing 1A or English as a Second Language 5.

Four hours lecture.

An introduction to the major philosophers of the Western tradition from 1900 to the present with an emphasis major philosophers such as Hegel, Russell, Nietzsche, Sartre, DeBeauvoir, and Wittgenstein. An examination of questions about the relationship between language and thought, the nature of human existence, and the limits of Philosophy.

II. Course Objectives

A. Explore the nature of philosophy as a discipline and look at the place of the history of western philosophy in it.
B. Investigate the historical background to the western world in the 19th and 20th centuries.
C. Summarize, analyze, and critically engage with the philosophical views of the Idealist philosophers.
D. Summarize, analyze, and critically engage with the philosophical ideas of 19th century realism, pragmatism, developments in logical positivism, proto-existentialism, and radical political philosophy.
E. Summarize, analyze, and critically engage with the philosophical ideas of the analytic movement.
F. Summarize, analyze, and critically engage with the philosophical ideas of the continental tradition.
G. Investigate the challenges raised by critics of some of the central ideas of the western tradition.

III. Essential Student Materials

None

IV. Essential College Facilities

None

V. Expanded Description: Content and Form

A. Explore the nature of philosophy as a discipline and look at the place of the history of western philosophy in it:
   1. The relationship between historical and philosophical forms of inquiry.
   2. The place of western philosophy in the discipline.
   3. Methods of analysis used in philosophy as a whole and in western philosophy.
B. Investigate the historical background to the western world in the 19th and 20th centuries:
   1. The Enlightenment.
   2. Romanticism.
   3. Capitalism, colonialism, and democracy.
C. Summarize, analyze, and critically engaging with the philosophical views of the Idealist philosophers:
   2. Fichte: the relationship between self and reality, the foundations of science.
D. Summarize, analyze, and critically engage with the philosophical views of 19th century realism, pragmatism, developments in logic and the philosophy of language, and 19th century positivism:
   1. J.S. and Harriet Taylor Mill: political economy, rights of women, theory of democracy
   2. Comte: the origins of positivism.
3. Pragmatism: Pierce, James, Dewey.
4. Realism: Brentano, Meinong.
6. Marx: human nature, political economy, critique of capitalism

E. Summarize, analyze, and critically engage with the philosophical ideas of the analytic movement:
1. Frege: the relationship between mathematics and logic.
2. Russell: the philosophical foundations of mathematics, symbolic logic, critique of idealism.
4. Logical positivism: empirical verification and science.
5. Wittgenstein: the relationship between thought and language, the relationship between math and logic.
6. Quine: epistemological pragmatism and the relationship between mathematics and logic.

F. Summarize, analyze, and critically engage with the philosophical ideas of the continental tradition:
1. Phenomenology: Husserl and Heidegger.
2. Existentialism: Jaspers, Sartre, Marcel, DeBeauvoir, Merleau-Ponty, Fannon.

G. Investigating the challenges raised by critics of some of the central ideas of the western tradition:
1. Feminist criticisms of traditional western ideas about reason and emotion, and feminist criticisms of science.
2. Kuhn and the challenge to positivist ideas about the nature of scientific knowledge.
3. Challenges to traditional epistemology by thinkers such as Rorty.

VI. Assignments
A. Verbal: Students will participate in class discussions and in small problem solving groups. The class may involve some oral presentation, individually or in groups.
B. Written: Students will write answers to weekly homework problems. Students will write short papers. The course will involve multiple choice, identification and/or essay tests.
C. Reading: Students will carry out daily reading assignments.

VII. Methods of Instruction
Lecture and visual aids, Discussion of assigned reading, Discussion and problem solving performed in class, Collaborative learning and small group exercises

VIII. Methods of Evaluating Objectives
A. Students will be evaluated on their participation in small group discussions.
B. Students will be tested, including essay exams. The class will require a final examination.
C. Students will be assigned to write papers.

IX. Texts and Supporting References
A. Examples of Primary Texts and References
B. Examples of Supporting Texts and References