Magolego: MA Elective Course

Heidegger and Contemporary Philosophy

Heidegger is arguably the most important philosopher of the 20th Century. From his major work, *Being and Time* to his text "Letter on Humanism," Heidegger seeks to raise (once again) the question of the meaning of being. In this course, we will attempt to raise this question for ourselves. In so doing, we will also examine questions of knowledge and self-knowledge, nature and world, thinking and acting, subjectivity and death, violence and metaphysics, ethics and politics.

Professor:
Andrew Haas (Office Hours: Mon./Wed., 9:00-11:00, by appointment): ahaas@hse.ru

Assessment:
50% class participation and/or presentation; 50% paper.

Syllabus

Week 1:   Lecture: Introduction to Heidegger
                 Introduction.b

Week 2:   Lecture: Exposition of the Question
                 Heidegger, *Being and Time* (§1-6).

Week 3:   Lecture: Preparatory Analysis
                 Heidegger, *Being and Time* (§7-11).

Week 4:   Lecture: Space and World
                 Heidegger, *Being and Time* (§12-17).

Week 5:   Lecture: Self and Other
                 Heidegger, *Being and Time* (§25-30).

Week 6:   Lecture: Understanding and Care
                 Heidegger, *Being and Time* (§46-53).
                 (Suggested: §40-45).

Week 7:   Lecture: Being and Human Being
                 Heidegger, "*Letter on Humanism.*"

Week 8:   Lecture: Being and Truth
                 Heidegger, "*Letter on Humanism.*"
                 Concluding discussion.

Some General Internet Resources in Philosophy:
HSE library website: http://library.hse.ru/
Oxford University Library: http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/
UCD Philosophy Subject Guide: http://libguides.ucd.ie/philosophy

Some Secondary Sources on Heidegger:
Robert Bernasconi, *Heidegger in Question,* New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1993.
William Blattner, *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1999.
Walter Brogan, *Heidegger and Aristotle*, Albany: SUNY, 2005.
Richard Capobianco, *Engaging Heidegger*, Toronto: University of Toronto, 2010.
Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic,* Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003.
Cristian Ciocan, *Translating Heidegger's Sein und Zeit,* Studia Phaenomenologica V, 2005.
Daniel Dahlstrom, *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*, Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2001.
Francoise Dastur, *Heidegger and the Question of Time*, New York: Humanities Books, 1999.
Jacques Derrida, *Given Time*, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992.
Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1982.
Jacquest Derrida, *Of Spirit*, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989.
Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, Cambridge: MIT, 1990.
Christopher Fynsk, *Heidegger: Thought and Historicity*, Ithaca: Cornell University, 1993.
Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Heidegger's Ways,* Albany: SUNY, 1994.
Michael Gelven, *A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time,* Dekalb: Northern Illinois University, 1989.
Trish Glazebrook, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Science*, New York: Fordham, 2000.
Graham Harman, *Heidegger Explained,* Chicago: Open Court, 2007.
Drew Hyland, *Heidegger and the Greeks,* Bloomington: Indiana University, 2006.
Magda King, *A Guide to Heidegger's Being and Time,* Albany: SUNY, 2001.
Theodore Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*, Berkeley: University of California, 1993.
Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics,* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990.
James Luchte, *Heidegger's Early Thought,* London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2008.
Heath Massey, *The Origin of Time: Heidegger and Bergson*, Albany: SUNY, 2015.
William McNeill, *The Glance of the Eye.* Albany: SUNY, 1999.
Andrew Mitchell, *The Fourfold: Reading the Late Heidegger,* Evanston: Northwestern University, 2015.
Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Birth to Presence,* Stanford: Stanford University, 1993.
Francois Raffoul, *French Interpretations of Heidegger*, Albany, SUNY, 2008.
William Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1963.
Thomas Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger,* London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015.

<u>Some Possible Paper Topics</u>

Dasein as Care

Being-in-the-world

The Worldhood of the World

Being-in

Attunement and Mood

Signs and Meaning

Knowing and Phenomenon

The Mode of the They

Fear and Angst

Truth as *Alêtheia*

Authentic Being-toward-Death

Destruction of Metaphysics

Dasein's Wholeness

Time and Dasein

Course Methods:

Lectures and discussions, presentations and exams, will be used to teach students how to read, write, argue and think philosophically with regards to course-content.

Objectives and Competencies:

Students will learn how to avoid the following errors:

1. Confusing argument with *debate*, taking a strong, oppositional position on a topic and then trying to win points.
2. Mistaking *assertion* for argument—for even the most powerful rhetoric remains unconvincing, if not supported by clear evidence and logical reasoning.
3. Assuming that merely *describing* an issue or question is as good as arguing for a position.
4. Thinking in *simple* black-and-white terms, neglecting the nuances of argument.
5. Citing an *authority* with almost blind reverence, and *ignoring* other points of view.
6. Taking *opinion* for argument, writing papers that are *subjective*.
7. Constructing a *weakly-supported* or *poorly-reasoned* argument because it is, after all, their opinion, and they have a right to it.
8. Believing mere *comparing-and-contrasting* is an argument.
9. Relying on *structures* learned in school or university, which may not suit arguments or academic requirements in philosophy.
10. Not going from *facts* to an argument for the interpretation of the facts.

Thus, we will learn how to prepare a philosophy presentation and/or paper with an original thesis, and a strongly-supported and well-reasoned argument based on textual evidence—*not* observation, data, information, opinion, examples, belief, experience or feeling. Students will learn how to be as accurate and as complete as possible (two major criteria).

Students Learn How to:

1. Do philosophical research.
2. From this research (reading, thinking), come to establish evidence.
3. From evidence, or its absence, make inferences.
4. Testing the validity of inferences, come to philosophical intuitions.
5. Taking those intuitions and develop a thesis.
6. Consider the thesis' validity, and use evidence and reason to construct arguments.
7. Test the arguments to determine how convincing they are, and challenge the arguments of others by employing critical analysis.

The process is not linear; rather, as students learn to craft arguments, they will be encouraged to return to the evidence, draw new inferences and form new insights that, in turn, affect the arguments that we are making. If the goal of philosophical argument is knowledge, we need to begin with the assumption—like Socrates—that we do not know. We need to understand that our own premises and biases are not fact, that what we learned at school or university, from this expert or that authority, is not necessarily correct. We thus challenge our premises and biases. In this way, we can hope to discover and to challenge the premises and biases of others. In short, students will learn to be open to experiencing some shift in understanding, to being convinced by others, and so to arguing in such a way that others experience it and are convinced as well.

One way to facilitate this shift is to think in a way that moves back-and-forth between evidence and argument—while maintaining a clear and logical progression. Thus, students will learn to:

1. Know the difference between reliable and unreliable interpretations;
2. Be persistent to observe objectively and thoroughly, and to collect textual evidence;
3. See patterns or relationships in what we have observed or discovered in our reading;
4. Infer and assume carefully;
5. Form conclusions (and provisional conclusions) while keeping an open mind;
6. Create original and convincing arguments, understanding that these arguments are not the last word, but part of an ongoing debate in a scholarly process.

Students will learn how to construct a presentation and/or paper. Although there are many methods, one is "the movement from thesis to analysis to synthesis" in order to:

1. Introduce the work in a way that catches the reader's attention. A startling claim or a question that ends in a (hypo)thesis. (1/10 of the text.)
2. Gather and analyze the textual evidence: "See the trees for the forest." Apply the criteria of "accuracy and completeness." Analyze texts and logical reasoning; find ambiguities, questions, problems. Examine secondary sources. Consider translations. (4/5 of the text.)
3. Evaluate the evidence: immanent critique means "giving them enough rope to hang themselves." Synthesize our arguments into a whole: "See the forest for the trees." Use logical reasoning to make it convincing. Draw out and clarify the implications. Conclude that the hypothesis has been proven, but that questions remain. (1/10 of the text.)