

Philosophy 177A- Existentialism

Summer 2022, MW 10:45-12:50, Rolfe Hall

Lectures will be recorded

Instructor: Vaheh Shirvanian

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Office Hours: TBD

Course Description

This course will serve as an introduction to the existentialist philosophical tradition by way of exploring the themes of authenticity and inauthenticity. We will investigate these notions as they figure in the works of the existentialist thinkers Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir but also in the works of thinkers who influenced the existentialist tradition, namely Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, and especially Martin Heidegger. In laying the groundwork for this investigation of inauthenticity/inauthenticity, we will also explore such notions as the they/herd, anxiety, and resoluteness. Our guiding questions will be “What is authenticity? And is it something we should aspire to?”

Course Requirements

Section Attendance/Participation - 10%

[Participation involves taking an active and respectful part in discussions during sections.]

Midterm Paper (4 pages) - 40%

Final Paper (5-6 pages) - 50%

Late Assignment Policy

Midterm and final papers that are submitted late will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g. B+ to B) for every 24 hrs past the due date.

Code of conduct

Students are expected to follow the university's policies regarding academic honesty. Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication. When in doubt about what constitutes academic misconduct, consult your instructor for help. Any suspected cases of academic misconduct will be reported directly to the Office of the Dean of Students.

Readings

All required readings for the course will be posted on CCLE.

Reading Schedule

Week 1

Monday August 1: Historical and Thematic Introduction - No reading

Wednesday August 3: Kant - "Critique of Judgment" on genius, Sections 46, 47, 49

Week 2

Monday August 8: Nietzsche - "On the Uses and Abuses of History for Life", Sections II and III

Wednesday August 10: Heidegger - "Being and Time", 'Das Man', pp. 163-168, 210-224.

Midterm Paper Assigned

Week 3

Monday August 15: Heidegger - "Being and Time", Anxiety, Care, pp. 228-241

Wednesday August 17: Heidegger - "Being and Time", Authenticity, Temporality, pp. 349-358, 370-382

Week 4

Monday August 22: Heidegger - Being and Time, pp. 383-400

MIDTERM PAPER DUE on Monday August 22 at 11:59 pm

Wednesday August 24: Heidegger - Being and Time, pp. 421-423, 434-439, 448-449

Final Paper Assigned

(Details of Readings beyond Week 4 are Forthcoming)

Week 5

Monday August 29: Sartre - Selections on bad faith in "Being and Nothingness"

Wednesday August 31: De Beauvoir - Selections on authenticity in "The Ethics of Ambiguity"

Week 6

Monday September 5: De Beauvoir - Selections on authenticity in “The Ethics of Ambiguity”

Wednesday September 7: Is authenticity worth having? - No reading
FINAL PAPER DUE on Wednesday September 7 at 11:59 pm