20th Century Continental Philosophy
PHIL 307: 20th Century Continental Philosophy

SPRING 2007
MYBK 206
MW 2:00-3:15

Professor Christian Coseru
Office: 4B Glebe Street, Room 205
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10-12, and by appointment
Office Phone: 943-1935
Email: coseruc@cofc.edu

This course offers an examination of central texts of 20th-century philosophical thought in France and Germany. We will seek to gain an understanding of the principal works of Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, and Derrida. Although these philosophers pursue wide philosophical agendas, they share the view that human existence and understanding are fundamentally historicized, embodied, and determined by language. We will focus primarily on movements such as phenomenology and deconstruction. Some of the main problems that will be addressed include the nature of the self, the structure of consciousness, cognition, and language, and the humanist character of continental philosophy.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the College Bookstore)

- Edmund Husserl, *Ideas I* (1913)
- Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (1927)
- Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (1943)
- Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Philosophy of Perception* (1945)

RECOMMENDED READING


Note: You are expected to bring the assigned text to class each day

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

You will be required to write two papers, a short expository/analytical paper (6 pages in length) and a longer research paper (10 pages in length). Topics for papers will be specified.

- First paper (6p) - due in class on Wednesday, January 31
- Mid term essay exam on Wednesday, February 28
- Final paper (10p) - due in class on Monday April 11
- Final Exam - Wednesday, April 25, 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.
GUIDELINES FOR WRITING PAPERS

This is a rough guide to the standards that will be used in the course to evaluate your written work.

• All papers should be clearly written, typed in good form, and checked for spelling and grammatical errors before you hand them in. Handwritten papers are not accepted and you may only submit your paper by email with my prior approval.
• Good papers will have a central argument, thesis, or theme that holds the work together and provides a coherent structure. You must back up your arguments and defend the points you make frequently throughout the paper.
• If you want help on formulating a thesis, developing an outline, etc. feel free to consult me anytime. Alternatively, if you need assistance with writing your paper, visits the College Skills Lab or the Philosophy Department Writing Lab.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: It is essential that you attend classes! You may be allowed four unexcused absences without any penalty. Additional absences will adversely affect your grade, unless you provide a legitimate (i.e. documented excuse). Missing 8 or more classes will result in a WA grade (which is equivalent to an F). Also make sure you come to class on time.

Late policy for papers: Please let me know in advance if you cannot turn a paper on time. Failure to turn in a paper or to attend a required exam will result in a grade of zero for that assignment. Late exams will only be given if you can show that a real emergency has prevented you from taking the exam on the due date.

Plagiarism: You should be aware of what plagiarism is and should avoid it. The College of Charleston has developed an Honor Code that specifically forbids cheating and plagiarism. For information on the Honor Code, see the Student Handbook (www.cofc.edu/about/handbook.pdf). In general, taking passages from other authors verbatim without citation is plagiarism, as is using someone else’s ideas or analysis without acknowledging the source.

GRADING SCALE

The grade will be calculated in the following way (percentage of final grade):

- First paper 15%
- Midterm exam 25%
- Final Paper 30%
- Final Exam 25%
- Participation 5%
# READING ASSIGNMENTS

## Week 1
January 8-10
What is Continental Philosophy?
Ideas I (51-62)

## Week 2
January 17
Husserl: Consciousness and Natural Actuality
Ideas I (63-104)

## Week 3
January 22-24
Husserl: Pure Consciousness and *Epoché*
Ideas I (105-146)

## Week 4
January 29-31
Husserl: Consciousness, Representation, Perception
Ideas I (236-306)

**First Paper due** (Wednesday, January 31)

## Week 5
February 5-7
Heidegger: The Question of Being
*Being and Time* (21-66)

## Week 6
February 12-14
Heidegger: *Dasein*, Temporality, World
*Being and Time* (91-144)

## Week 7
February 19-21
Heidegger: Being, Care, and Authenticity
*Being and Time* (225-273; 312-382)

## Week 8
February 26-28
*Being and Nothingness* (301-340; 471-558; 707-711)

**Mid Term Exam (Wednesday, February 28)**

## Week 9
March 5-7
Spring Break

## Week 10
March 12-14
Merleau-Ponty: Perception, Body, and Embodiment
*Phenomenology of Perception* (77-170)

## Week 11
March 19-21
Merleau-Ponty: Sense, Perception, World
*Phenomenology of Perception* (240-282)

## Week 12
March 26-28
Merleau-Ponty: Space, Human World, Freedom
*Phenomenology of Perception* (283-347; 403-425; 504-530)

## Week 13
April 2-4
*Différance*
*Margins of Philosophy* (3-27)

## Week 14
April 9-11
Derrida: Ousia, Grammē, Eidos
*Margins of Philosophy* (29-67; 155-173)

**Final Paper (due on Wednesday, April 11)**

## Week 15
April 16-18
Derrida: The Ends of Man
*Margins of Philosophy* (114-136)

## Week 16
April 23
Review

**FINAL EXAM on April 25, 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.**