

McGill University
Department of Philosophy
19th Century Philosophy PHIL 367 (Fall 2020)

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Course Content

In this course we will study some of the most illustrious and complex continental thinkers of the nineteenth century, paying particular attention to their aesthetics and to the moral dimension of their thought. We will study systematic thinkers such as Fichte, Hegel and Schopenhauer, as well as anti-systematic thinkers, such as Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. We will study brief excerpts from the works of Fichte, Hegel and Schopenhauer, and will focus more thoroughly on the philosophies of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. Nietzsche felt that his modern society was morally, politically and intellectually corrupt and wanted to create a whole new society and culture that recognized the value, indeed the *lifesaving power*, of great art. *Art* is the only activity that makes human life worth living, Nietzsche argues in *The Birth of Tragedy*, and he turns to the great art of the ancient Greeks such as Aeschylus, Homer and Sophocles to make his case. We will be especially interested in his arguments. We will carefully examine both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche's profound critique of reason and systematic philosophies. Both these thinkers argued that an overemphasis on reason and coherence failed to do justice to the complexity and open-ended nature of human being. More importantly, attempts to systematize human spirit signaled not only intellectual, but indeed, moral and spiritual impoverishment.

The course will consist of live Zoom lectures twice a week. On Tuesdays, the lecture will be approximately 60 minutes. We may use the whole class time on Tuesdays during the live Zoom meeting. On Thursdays, the lecture will be much shorter, 20-30 minutes.

A power point, with an accompanying voice thread, or a power point with no voice thread but substantial notes on the slides will be uploaded to My Courses immediately following the

lecture. Occasionally, a live lecture may be replaced by a prerecorded lecture. The live in class lecture will be more substantial than the uploaded power point notes.

Students are not permitted to record the live in class lecture.

I remind everyone of their responsibility in ensuring that this video and associated material are not reproduced or placed in the public domain. This means that each of you can use it for your educational (and research) purposes, but you cannot allow others to use it, by putting it up on the Internet or by giving it or selling it to others who may also copy it and make it available. Please refer to McGill's [Guidelines for Instructors and Students on Remote Teaching and Learning](#) for further information.

Academic Integrity

Students should consult: <https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest>

1. You are responsible for being familiar with, and abiding by, the applicable policies, such as the ones listed at the beginning of these Guidelines, in the context of remote learning, and otherwise, while you are a McGill student. The more specific information below complements the information provided in existing policies and is not intended as a summary of all policy information pertaining to McGill students involved in remote learning.
2. Per McGill's [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#), “[t]he integrity of University academic life and of the degrees the University confers is dependent upon the honesty, integrity and soundness of the teacher-student learning relationship and, as well, that of the assessment process.” Note that student obligation measures under the heading “C. Academic Offences” in the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#) (i.e., avoiding plagiarism or cheating) and associated disciplinary measures apply as much during online exams or other remotely-conducted evaluations as exams and other evaluations on McGill premises.

The University recognizes the importance of maintaining teaching spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all involved. To this end, offensive, violent, or harmful language arising in contexts such as the following may be cause for disciplinary action:

1. Username (use only your legal or preferred name)
2. Visual backgrounds

3. "Chat" boxes

After the lecture, the instructor will be available for questions and comments.

The course will also consist of three conferences sections, one during class time on Thursdays, one at another time TBA and one entirely asynchronous. Depending on enrollment, there may be only one conference during class time and one asynchronous conference. Students will sign up for a conference section and must attend their section throughout the semester. It is not possible to weave in and out of the asynchronous and synchronous options. There are 10 conferences and students will receive participation marks for 8 out of the 10 conferences, so it is possible to miss two conference discussions without penalty.

Zoom Platform and Cameras

The instructor will have her camera on at the beginning of class and requests that all students have their cameras on at the beginning of class if at all possible. Once I share my screen and start the power point, feel free to turn your cameras off to save bandwidth. I may do the same, depending on my connection. At the end of class, or if you have a question during the lecture, please turn your camera on if at all possible.

Evaluation

Weekly Questions for Class Discussion 30%

Students are expected to post weekly questions for class discussion on the assigned reading material. The questions for class discussion are intended to demonstrate that the student has done the reading, and has an interesting comment or question about the reading that the class may discuss during the conference. The questions for class discussion should focus on the assigned readings only *not on the lectures*. Questions for class discussion are due on Thursday mornings at 10:00 am. (Please note that this deadline has been tentatively decided and may be changed by the teaching assistant during the first two weeks of the semester.) Questions will be submitted on My Courses. Questions should be 250-300 words. An example of a good question will be posted. Late questions cannot be accepted for grades.

Take Home Midterm 25%

You will have 48 hours to write a midterm. There will be two short (600- 750 words) essay questions to answer. On the day of the midterm there will be no class and no conference to ensure you have adequate time to write the midterm. The midterm date will be November 5th and the exam will be due 48 hours later, that is at 2:30 on November 7th . The midterm will require careful exegesis and some analysis of the required readings. You are expected to draw on all relevant lecture and conference material including discussions, as well the readings

themselves. You should use primary source material and your class notes to write the midterm examination.

Conference Participation 10%

You must attend 8 out of the 10 conferences in order to get 10%. There are no means available to make up for participation marks if you do not attend 8 conferences except for extraordinary extenuating circumstances such as, but not limited to, illness.

Essay/ Take Home Exam 35%

Essay topics will be assigned. The essay is intended as an opportunity for students to *go further* in their understanding and enjoyment of one or two of the philosophers and the philosophical issues they raise. Students are expected to go beyond and not to merely repeat what we have worked on in classes and conferences. Students are expected to do *additional research*, and to focus on *primary sources*. Essays should not be general summaries or overviews, but rather developed careful discussions, that explain all key ideas and concepts. The objective is to write a clear, thoughtful and fair interpretation of the philosopher (s) and the philosophical problems in question. Your essay should be *critical*, that is, your interest, judgment and reflection on the material should be evident. You are discussing the material or taking a position, the way you often do in class when you have a concern, comment, or remain puzzled by a philosopher's position on a given subject. In other words, good exegesis is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition, for your essay. You need to go beyond mere exegesis. Your essay must have a clear goal and everything you write in the essay should contribute to accomplishing that goal.

Your essay is an opportunity to continue a topic we have started in class in greater depth, or, to explore a topic we were not able to cover in class but that class lectures, readings and discussions have prepared you to take on. You should use the class material as a springboard or a starting point.

Your papers will be graded on your ability to understand the material you have been assigned to read, your understanding of the class lectures and conferences, and your ability to draw on the class lectures and assigned readings in a thoughtful, clear and coherent manner. Your paper will be graded on the depth, clarity, and eloquence of your account. You are not giving a mere summary of the thinker in question but offering a thoughtful interpretation based on textual evidence and your own ideas.

The essay will be a scaffolded assignment.

Part 1: Introduction, ten quotes, annotated bibliography, due on November 24th : **5%**

Part 2: Research notes on sources used, full outline of essay due Dec 1st : **10%**

Part 3: Full and final draft of essay (**2000-2500** words) due December 7th : **20%**

You may hand in your final essay any time after December 1st if you like.

Communication

If I have a message for students I will post it on My Courses so please check regularly. Please do not leave messages for me on My Courses, please email me at susan.hoffmann@mcgill.ca

Feel free to arrange a Zoom meeting with me for longer conversations.

Feedback

There is no written feedback on the questions for class discussion although you are welcome, on an individual basis, to discuss your question with the teaching assistant or the instructor during office hours or during an appointment made at a time that is mutually agreeable. Examples of good questions will be posted and general feedback about the quality of the questions will be offered in class and in conference at the beginning of the semester.

Students will receive written feedback on their midterms. Students will receive written feedback on Part 1 and Part 2 of their essays. Part 3 is considered the take home exam and there will be no written comments on this part of the assignment although students may individually request oral feedback or some written comments if they have questions about their essay once they receive their final grade.

Office Hours

The instructor will hold office hours immediately following the lecture on Tuesday and by appointment.

Required and Recommended Reading

The Birth of Tragedy and *Fear and Trembling* will be available at the Paragraphe Bookstore on McGill College. Students can shop online at www.paragraphbooks.com starting August. Students will be able to sort course books by their course code (PHIL 367)

Students have the option to purchase their books by coming into the store (2220 McGill College), calling for curbside pick-up or delivery at 514-845-5811, emailing us at paragraphbooks@paragraphbooks.com for inquiries and finally shopping at our new website www.paragraphbooks.com

The rest of the required texts will be uploaded to My Courses. Some of the recommended texts will be uploaded to My Courses.

Reading Schedule for Nineteenth Century Philosophy 2020 in Chronological Order

Kant

Required:

- Please read the chapter on Kant from Norman Melchert's *The Great Conversation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 426-460.

Recommended:

- Kant, Immanuel. *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*

Fichte

Required:

- *The Science of Knowledge* by Johann Fichte, tr. by Peter Heath and John Lachs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982, “*First Introduction to the Science of Knowledge*” pp. 3-28.

Recommended:

- *The Science of Knowledge* by Johann Fichte, tr. by Peter Heath and John Lachs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982, “*Second Introduction to the Science of Knowledge*”, pp. 29-85.
- “Some Lectures concerning the Scholar’s Vocation” by Johann Fichte, in *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings*, tr. by Daniel Breazeale. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988, pp. 137-191.
- “Concerning the Difference between the Spirit and the Letter within Philosophy” by Johann Fichte, in *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings*, tr. by Daniel Breazeale. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988, pp.192-231.
- “*Concerning the Concept of the Wissenschaftslehre*” by Johann Fichte, in *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings*, tr. by Daniel Breazeale. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988, pp. 94- 135.
- *The Vocation of Man*, tr. by Peter Preuss. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1987.

Hegel

Required

- “*Application of these Categories to the History of Philosophy*” in the *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy* by G.W.F. Hegel, tr. by A.V. Miller & T.M. Knox, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985, pp. 87-99.
- “*Independence and dependence of self consciousness: Lordship and Bondage*”, in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* by G.W.F. Hegel, tr. by A.V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, pp.111-119.
- I may add a short excerpt from Hegel’s *Science of Logic*.

Recommended:

- “*Concept of the History of Philosophy*” in the ***Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy*** by G.W.F. Hegel, tr. by A.V. Miller & T.M. Knox, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985, pp. 65-100.

Kierkegaard

Required:

- ***Concluding Unscientific Postscript*** by Soren Kierkegaard, tr. by Howard and Edna Hong. Princeton: Princeton University Press, Section I, Chapter II, sections entitled “*A logical system can be given*”; “*A system of existence cannot be given*”, pp.109-125 and, in Section II, Chapter I, “*Becoming Subjective*” pp. 129-149.
- ***Fear and Trembling*** by Soren Kierkegaard, tr. by Alastair Hannay. London: Penguin Books, 1985. “*Preface*”, “*Attunement*”, “*Speech in Praise of Abraham*” and “*Preamble from the Heart*”
- “*Problema I*”, “*Problema II*” and “*Problema III*”

Schopenhauer

Required: Short excerpts (TBA) from:

On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason, by Arthur Schopenhauer, tr. by Mme. Karl Hildebrand. London: Chiswick Press, 1907. Short excerpt, exact pages TBA.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/50966/50966-h/50966-h.htm>

Recommended:

- “The World as Representation. First Aspect” in ***The World as Will and Representation, Volume I*** by Arthur Schopenhauer, tr. by E.F. Payne. New York: Dover Publications, 1966, pp. 3-52.
- “On the Primacy of the Will in Self Consciousness” in ***The World as Will and Representation, Volume II***, by Arthur Schopenhauer, tr. by E.F. Payne, New York: Dover Publications, pp. 201-216. (Please note that this is an excerpt from Chapter XIX and ends abruptly.)
- “On the Aesthetics of Poetry”; “On History” and “On the Metaphysics of Music” in ***The World as Will and Representation, Volume II***, by Arthur Schopenhauer, tr. by E.F. Payne, New York: Dover Publications, pp. 424-457.

No conference on Schopenhauer.

Nietzsche

Required:

- *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, by Friedrich Nietzsche, tr. by Ronald Speirs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. We will focus on sections 1-19, pp. 14-89.
- *Twilight of the Idols* by Friedrich Nietzsche, tr. by R.J. Hollingdale. London: Penguin Books, 1990 “*The Problem of Socrates*” and “*Reason in Philosophy*”, pp. 39-49
- “*On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense*” in *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, pp. 141-153.
- *Twilight of the Idols* by Friedrich Nietzsche, tr. by R.J. Hollingdale. London: Penguin Books, 1990, “*How the Real World at Last Became a Myth*”; “*Morality and Anti Nature*”; “*The Four Great Errors*”; “*The Improvers of Mankind*”; “*What the Germans Lack*” pp. 50-77
- *The Genealogy of Morals* by Friedrich Nietzsche, tr. by Maudemarie Clark and Alan Swensen. Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1998, “*First Treatise: ‘Good and Evil’, ‘Good and Bad’*”, pp. 9-35.

Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity> for more information). Students will be expected to write and sign the following on their exams: “I affirm that I will not give or receive any unauthorized help on this exam, and that all work will be my own.” Students will be expected to write and sign the following on their assignments: “I affirm that I have not given or received any unauthorized help on this assignment, and that this work is my own.”

Cheating and Plagiarism include: culling ideas, terminology, passages and other information from electronic or print sources that are not properly quoted or credited; inappropriate paraphrasing of a passage from a source; falsifying, altering or creating a source; assistance from another person to such an extent that the work is no longer your own; submitting your own work, in whole or in part, from a previous course; substituting any part of another’s work, published or unpublished, as your own.