Topics in 20th-century Philosophy:  
Heidegger’s Basic Problems of Phenomenology
Course number PHIL-448/547, prerequisite: 6 cr. in PHIL, 3 at the 200-level or Consent of the Department

Fall 2009 – Wednesday 2:00-5:00 p.m. in ED 258

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Office Hour: Mon-Tue 2:00-3:00 p.m. or by appointment  
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• Course Description:
The course will consist of a careful reading of Martin Heidegger’s Basic Problems of Phenomenology. The text is a lecture course presented at the University of Marburg during summer semester of 1927 (the year of publication of Being and Time). The material covered was intended for division 3 of part 1, and part 2 of Being and Time but never published in that form. In the first and by far longest part of the lecture course, Heidegger looks at the history of ontology through and proposes a “phenomenological reading” of four central theses about being in Western Philosophy.

- Kant’s thesis that Being is not a real predicate;
- The difference between essentia and existentia in Scholastic philosophy
- The modern Cartesian/Kantian distinction between the being of subject (res cogitans) and object (res extensa);
- The logical thesis of being as the “is” of assertion meaning “is-true”.

The discussion aims at “destructing” our traditional understanding of Being and rendering the meaning of Being puzzling. The result of each reading is a question or a problem. Each time we are lead back to the being that is intentionally related to beings (including itself) and understands beings in their being (understands beings as what they are), i.e. Dasein. The first part of the lecture therefore aims at showing the necessity of Being and Time.

The second part of the course jumps over the work accomplished in Being and Time and uses its result (that the ontological constitution of Dasein is grounded in temporality) as its clue. The hypothesis is that if we get an insight into the basic ontological constitution of the being that understand being and are able to show how this understanding is made possible by originary temporality, we will see how Temporality is the “condition of possibility” of being or the horizon upon which being is understood. The aim of this discussion is to grasp the ground of the first problem, that of the ontological difference: that being is always the being of a being but is essentially different from a being, from beings, and secure ontology as the science of being.

The text provides a good introduction to Heidegger’s thinking at the end of the 1920s. The advantage of using the lecture course instead of Heidegger’s magnum opus is that it prevents pragmatist and existentialist readings of Heidegger (there is no discussion of death or guilt, only short mentions of authenticity and inauthenticity and of falling) and focuses on what Heidegger is really after. Not: why is there something rather than nothing, but: what is the “meaning” or the “ground” of this question (of philosophy as metaphysics), or: whence the why? The disadvantage is that it requires extensive discussion and some knowledge of the history of ontology, especially of Aristotle and Kant.

• Required Texts:

• Assignments and Grades:
  - Participation (10%)
  - Glossary Entries of Key Terms (25%)
  - Final Paper (40%)
  - Oral Examination (25%)
1. Participation (1% each = 10%)
During the course of the semester, you will be responsible for sending me questions relating to the reading for the week. I will try to address these questions in class.
You will get one participation point for each week you send me a question (or questions) provided that your questions make sense and are related to the material we are reading for the week. Your questions need to be e-mailed to me before 6:00 p.m. on the Tuesday preceding the class.

2. Glossary Entries of Key Terms (5% each = 25%)
During the semester, you will have to write “glossary entries” for 5 terms. Each entry should be between 50 and 250 words and should provide an explanation of the term and place it in relation to other key terms. Key terms will be given at the end of each class and entries are due at the beginning of class. You will have to post your glossary entries on eClass (but you can wait after class and revise your entries before posting them but you will be graded on your first version).

3. Final Paper (45%)
The final paper will be due on the last day of class and should be ~10-15 pages. I will give you a list of possible topics, but you can also choose your own topic as long as you have it approved by me. Students registered in PHIL-547 are expected to write a slightly longer paper (15-20 pages) addressing more complex issues more in depth.

2. Oral Examination (20%)
The oral examination will take place on the week where the examination is normally scheduled. The exam will last 20-25 minutes. You will receive a set of 8 to 10 questions to prepare beforehand. 30 minutes before your exam, I will tell you which 2 questions you will have to discuss with me. No books, no notes!

• Extensions & Late Papers:
An extension for a paper can only be granted for serious reasons and if you contact me before the due time (that is: not at the beginning of the class on which the paper is due!) Late papers will be penalized 4% (or one letter grade) for every day (24 hours) they are late. Papers will not be accepted more than 5 days after the deadline. No extensions will be granted for Questions or Glossary Entries! If you can’t make it to class, e-mail me your assignment before the deadline.

• Submission of Assignments:
You can submit your papers in class, in my mailbox in the Department Office ASH-20 (note that my mailbox is in ASH 2-43) during regular hours, or by e-mail (in doc, wpd or pdf format). Don’t slip it under my door since I will not know when it got there.

• eClass:
To access eClass, click on the link on the University webpage and type in your username and password. On eClass you can (among other things):
- post glossary entries, comments and questions on the course or on the readings
- get a copy of any handout (including this syllabus and the reading schedule)
- consult the course calendar for deadlines
- check for announcements made in class
- e-mail students in the class
- check your unofficial grades

Grading Scale:
A+ ≥ 92-100%
A ≥ 88-92
A- ≥ 84-88
B+ ≥ 80-84
B ≥ 76-80
B- ≥ 72-76
C+ ≥ 68-72
C ≥ 64-68
C- ≥ 60-64
D+ ≥ 55-60
D ≥ 50-55
D- ≥ 46-50
F < 50
• **Academic Integrity:**
The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standard of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm](http://www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm)) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

In particular, note that “No Student shall submit the words, ideas, images or data of another person as the Student’s own in any academic writing, essay, thesis, project, assignment, presentation or poster in a course or program of study” (Code of Student Behaviour, §30.3.2(1)). This applies to all information you find on the internet, whether it is signed by its author or anonymous.
**Reading Schedule PHIL 448/547 Fall 2009**  
*Topics in 20th-century Philosophy: Heidegger’s Basic Problems in Phenomenology*

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<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td>Introduction to the course, to Heidegger and to the text</td>
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| 9       | Introduction to the lecture course  
Philosophy, Ontology, Phenomenology | §§ 1–6  
+ SZ § 6 |
| 16      | First Thesis: Kant  
"Being is not a real predicate"  
Intentionality and Understanding of Being  
(Problem: Ontological Difference) | §§ 7–9 |
| 23      | Second Thesis: Aristotle and the medieval ontology  
*essentia* and *existentia* (Whatness and Existence)  
Intentional comportment of production  
(Problem: Basic Articulation of Being) | §§ 10–12  
(except § 10c) |
| 30      | Third Thesis: Modern ontology  
*res extensa* and *res cogitans*  
Dasein, Existence, Being-in-the World  
(Problem: Modifications of Being and Unity of the Concept of Being) | §§ 13–15  
(except § 13b) |
| Oct. 7  | cont. Third Thesis  
+ Guest Lecture | ($§ 15) |
| 14      | CLASS CANCELLED | |
| 21      | Fourth Thesis: Logic  
The Being of the Copula ("is")  
Assertion, Predication, Truth  
(Problem: The Truth-Character of Being) | §§ 16–18  
(except § 16b-c-d) |
| 28      | cont. Fourth Thesis | ($§ 18) |
| Nov. 4  | Time and Temporality  
Vulgar and Originary Concept of Time | § 19  
(except § 19a) |
| 11      | REMEMBRANCE DAY | |
| 18      | Temporality and Understanding  
Temporal Interpretation of Understanding and World | § 20 |
| 25      | Temporality Capital T and Being  
The Ontological Difference | §§ 21–22 |
| Dec. 2  | Wrap-up | |

**Final Paper due on Thursday Dec. 10 at 5:00 p.m. in my mailbox, my office or by e-mail.**  
**Oral Examination held Monday Dec. 14 and Tuesday Dec. 15.**