**Graduate Course Descriptions**

**Spring 2021**

**Studies in Ancient Philosophy**

Tim Roche

PHIL 4/6211

R 2:30-5:30

<History>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course investigates the different styles of interpreting the Platonic literary and philosophical dialogue form. We conduct this study through (1) examinations of a range of dialogues in the Platonic corpus and (2) analyses of several modern scholarly studies that discuss the nature and significance of Plato’s use of the dialogue form to present his method of doing philosophy. We inquire into whether the “unitarian” (or philosophical “mouthpiece,” or “analytic”), “esoteric”, “maieutic”, or “periodization” interpretation of the Platonic dialogue is the correct way to understand Plato’s style of engaging in philosophy. Dialogues to be studied include *Euthyphro*, *Euthydemus*, *Apology*, *Phaedo*, *Republic,* books 4-7, *Parmenides* 126a1-135c6, and *Theatetus*.

**TEXT**

J.M. Cooper and D.S. Hutchinson (eds.), *Plato. Complete Works* (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company. ISBN: 978-0872203495.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Regular attendance and class participation are required of all students. Additionally, both **undergraduate students** and **graduate students** must submit a highly focused, critical discussion mid-term paper and a final research paper. Further details about the papers will be explained during one of our meetings via Zoom.

**Philosophy of Mind**  
David Miguel Gray  
PHIL 6421/4421  
M 2:30-5:30  
<Theoretical>

**Course Description**

The course will look at certain key aspects of the mind. While we will start with issues in the metaphysics of mind (the mind-body problem and dependency relations) we will continue to discuss mental phenomena in a way that avoids any particular metaphysical view about how the mind must relate to the body. This involves developing an understanding of intentionality, phenomenology, consciousness, visual experience, and bodily sensations. We will also explore some ‘higher-level’ issues concerning multiple levels of explanation and reductive explanations. Additionally, we will explore what it is to explain mental phenomena in phenomenal, intentional, and physical terms. We will focus on some foundational texts as well as the state of the art.

**Readings**

All readings will be provided on Courseware

**Requirements**

Class preparedness and participation, bi-weekly homework. For undergraduates, bi-weekly quizzes and three 1000-word papers. For graduate students, two 3000-word papers or one 6000-word research paper.

**Heidegger’s *Being and Time***

James Bahoh

PHIL 7020/8020

T 5:35-8:35

<Theoretical>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This seminar will be a close reading of the central text of Martin Heidegger’s early work, *Being and Time*. *Being and Time* proposes a major overhaul of philosophy and a revisionist account of being, human existence, and the worlds we inhabit. The text is a core reference point for subsequent 20th- and 21st-century phenomenology and ontology. Our seminar will emphasize the way Heidegger formulates the project of ontology, the methodology he implements, and the way that methodology operates in terms of the phenomenological, existential analytic of Dasein or the human being. Among other topics, we will discuss Heidegger’s critique of representation, his arguments regarding the necessary ground of ontology, and his accounts of tool use, language, truth, anxiety, death, history, space, time, and the existential structure of the human being. Throughout the semester I will highlight some of the main competing interpretations of the text among Heidegger scholars and draw connections to work by a variety of recent philosophers.

**TEXTS**

Required:

1. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962).

Recommended:

2. Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2006).

3. I will provide a list of useful secondary material.

**REQUIREMENTS**

Class participation (includes preparing at least one protocol), a short presentation of paper research in progress at the end of the semester, and a 5,000-8,000-word research paper. Protocols: on a rotating basis, each week one student will be tasked with writing a condensed summary of our class discussion (maximum of two pages). The following week, this protocol will be read at the beginning of the session.

**Social and Political Philosophy: Fanon, Humanism, and Decolonization**

Mike Monahan

PHIL 7/8451

R 5:30-8:30, CL 333 (or Zoom)

<Practical>

Fanon’s analysis of the colonial milieu leads to a powerful critique of European ‘humanism’ (indebted to Aimé Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism*) as positing a very particular (White, bourgeois, male) model of the allegedly universal concept of the human. Nevertheless, Fanon seems to consistently invoke a *decolonial* humanism from the beginning of *Black Skin, White Masks* to the final pages of *Wretched of the Earth*. What are the prospects for the theorization of a universal concept of the human beyond the colonial mindset? Sylvia Wynter (in her efforts to articulate an account of “the human after [Euro-modern] *Man*”) and Lewis Gordon both draw on Fanon’s work to further raise questions about and attempt to advance this fundamental project. This seminar will explore this project of a decolonial humanism through the careful study of selected works from Fanon, Wynter, and Gordon.

**TEXTS**

Wynter’s essays are largely available online, and we will be reading a selection of those. We will read (nearly) the entirety of the three principle Fanon and Gordon texts listed below, along with selections from their other works

Frantz Fanon – *Black Skin, White Masks* (Grove Press, 2008)

*The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove Press, 1963)

Lewis Gordon – *Freedom, Justice, and Decolonization* (Routledge, 2020)

**REQUIREMENTS**

2 Reading précis (a short exegesis of the most significant points from a reading along with questions for discussion, 3-5 pages each). Term Paper (Approx. 20 pages)

**Cognitive Science Seminar**

PHIL 7/8514

W 2:20-5:20

FIT 405

**Note: Please contact Dr. Bidelman for the course description.**