

PH 490 CORE TEXTS IN 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY GERMAN PHILOSOPHY
IES Abroad Freiburg

DESCRIPTION:

An introduction to the various traditions of philosophical thinking in Germany which trace the history of ideas as well as the political and social situation in Germany. The most important philosophers (Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Dilthey, Heidegger, Adorno, Gadamer and Habermas) are introduced in their specific historical and political contexts, followed by discussion and analysis of selected excerpts from their most important works. Students develop a more thorough understanding of political culture in modern Germany, tracing the repercussions of ideas that extend into the present day. The selected philosophical texts also magnify cultural differences and similarities, thus heightening students' awareness of their own country's philosophical and political tradition and leading to the development of their own intercultural competence.

CREDITS: 3 credits

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: German

PREREQUISITES: Consent of instructor. Students should be prepared to spend a great deal of time on reading and writing outside of class. Thus, they should have very good reading and writing skills.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lectures
- Discussions

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Oral participation (10%)
- Final version of weekly written assignments (40 %)
- Final version of papers I (Midterm) and II (Final) (40%)
- 30 Minute oral exam (10%)

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Improve their reading and writing skills in German
- Profoundly develop skills necessary for independent critical thinking and intercultural competency
- Easily read philosophical texts in German

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Readings
1	Introduction to the history of philosophy with concentration on modern philosophy. Descartes and the crisis of rationalism, Hume and the crisis of imperialism. The synthesis of the apparent polarization of rationalism and imperialism through Immanuel Kant's "Copernican turn."	Kant "Kritik der reinen Vernunft" (2nd edition preface, excerpts from the introduction, pp. 19-21). The Copernican turn.
2	The synthesis of the apparent polarization of rationalism and imperialism through Immanuel Kant's "Copernican turn." Explanation of the concept of recognition a priori and a posteriori, synthetical and analytical judgement.	Kant "Kritik der reinen Vernunft" (2nd edition preface, excerpts from the introduction, pp. 19-21 and pp. 38 - 59.)

3	Analytical judgement a priori, synthetical judgment a posteriori and a priori. Examination of the question: "How are a priori synthetical judgements possible?"	Kant, "Kritik der reinen Vernunft." Introduction, pp. 38 - 59.
4	What are the basic principles of Kantian ethics?	Kant, "Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten." Preface, pp. 3 - 9.
5	What is good will?	Kant, "Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten," pp. 10 - 24.
6	Hypothetical imperative and categorical imperative. Three of the same forms.	Kant, "Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten," pp. 25 - 42.
7	Hegel's critique of Kant.	Hegel, "Phänomenologie des Geistes." Introduction, pp. 57 - 68.
8	Pure negation and definite Negation. "Für-sich" and "an-sich" as knowledge and truth.	Hegel, "Phänomenologie des Geistes", introduction, pp. 57 - 68.
9	"Für-sich" and "an-sich" as knowledge and truth.	Hegel, "Phänomenologie des Geistes." Introduction, pp. 57 - 68.
10	"Lordship and bondage" (Herrschaft und Knechtschaft)	Hegel, "Phänomenologie des Geistes." Excerpts from the sections: "Selbständigkeit und Unselbständigkeit des Selbstbewußtseins"; "Herrschaft und Knechtschaft", pp. 127 – 136.
11	Overcoming the dialectics of "lordship and bondage" via recognition.	Hegel, "Phänomenologie des Geistes." Excerpts from the sections: "Selbständigkeit und Unselbständigkeit des Selbstbewußtseins"; "Herrschaft und Knechtschaft", pp. 127 – 136.
12	Marx's critique of old materialism.	Marx, "Elf Thesen über Feuerbach"
13	The determiners of mankind. A critique on idealism.	Marx, "Die Deutsche Ideologie"
14	The "Übermensch."	Nietzsche, "Also sprach Zarathustra." Preface 3 and 4, pp. 14 - 18.
15	The "letzte Mensch."	Nietzsche, "Also sprach Zarathustra." Preface 5, pp. 18 - 21.
16	Nietzsche's ethic: "How the spirit becometh a camel, the camel a lion, and the lion at last a child."	Nietzsche, "Also sprach Zarathustra". Speech "Von den drei Verwandlungen," pp. 29 - 31.
17	Transisiton to philosophy of the 20th Century. Emergence of the individual disciplines and the development of hermeneutics as a central principal in the humanities. The opinions of Schleiermacher, Droysen and Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer.	Heidegger, "Sein und Zeit," § 32, pg. 153.

18	The Hermeneutic circle and the problem of prejudices as predispositions of understanding.	Gadamer, "Wahrheit und Methode" and "Grundzüge einer Theorie der hermeneutischen Erfahrung"
19	Critique of instrumental reason.	Horkheimer and Adorno, "Die Dialektik der Aufklärung"
20	Communication as a social, non-intentional/rational act. System versus lived-in world.	Habermas, "Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns." Preliminary discussion on oral reports.

REQUIRED READINGS:

(Students enrolled in the course receive a reader containing the required texts as well full bibliographical information on modern editions of the core texts along with the university library references numbers).

- Adorno, Theodor W. Die Dialektik der Aufklärung. New York, 1944.
----- Minima Moralia. Frankfurt a. M., 1951.
----- Negative Dialektik. Frankfurt a. M., 1966.
----- Ästhetische Theorie. Frankfurt a. M., 1970.
- Dilthey, Wilhelm. Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften. Leipzig, 1883.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer Hermeneutik. Tübingen, 1960.
- Habermas, Jürgen. Erkenntnis und Interesse. Frankfurt a. M., 1968.
----- Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns. Frankfurt a. M., 1981.
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. Phänomenologie des Geistes. Bamberg/Würzburg, 1807.
----- Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts. Berlin, 1821.
- Heidegger, Martin. Sein und Zeit. Halle, 1927 (in: Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung, Bd. VIII).
- Kant, Immanuel. Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Rev. ed. Riga, 1787.
----- Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik. Riga, 1783.
----- Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten. Riga, 1785.
----- „Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht". Berlinische Monatsschrift 4, 1784.
----- Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein Philosophischer Entwurf. Königsberg, 1795.
- Marx, Karl. Ökonomisch - philosophische Manuskripte. Berlin, 1932.
----- Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Paris, 1844.
----- Thesen über Feuerbach. Stuttgart, 1888.
----- Deutsche Ideologie. Moskau, 1932.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. Also Sprach Zarathustra. Parts 1 and 2: Chemnitz, 1883; Part 3: Chemnitz, 1884; Part 4: Leipzig, 1885.
----- Die fröhliche Wissenschaft. Chemnitz, 1882.
----- Jenseits von Gut und Böse. Leipzig, 1886.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Helferich, Christoph. Geschichte der Philosophie. (5th ed.) München, 2002. In particular "Die Philosophen der neuen, der bürgerlichen Zeit", pp. 158-292, "Das neuzeitliche Jahrhundert. Philosophie in der Maschinenwelt", pp. 293-372, "Die Philosophie unserer Zeit", pp. 373-446 and "Lebendige Philosophie: Debatten und Kontroversen der siebziger und achtziger Jahre", pp.447-483.
- Höffe, Otfried. Kleine Geschichte der Philosophie. München, 2001.