

PHIL 4242
German Idealism 德意志觀念論
Fall 2016
Professor Gregory S. Moss

Lecture: THU 10:30-12:15

Tutorial: THU 12:30-13:15

Room: LSK306

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*Advisory to Majors: to be taken in year 2 or above.

Description and Objective:

In this course we will investigate the historical and conceptual aspects of German Idealism, a philosophical movement in Germany from Kant to Hegel in the 18th and 19th centuries. German Idealism, in all its varieties, is motivated by Kant's critical philosophy. Accordingly, the course will begin with an analysis of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Following this critical analysis, we will investigate the various ways philosophers in Germany both critiqued and attempted to complete Kant's critical project. This course will focus on theoretical issues in Metaphysics and Epistemology in the work of central figures in the tradition, including Fichte, Schelling, Jacobi, Novalis, Hölderlin, and Hegel.

Topics

1. Immanuel Kant's critical philosophy
2. Various responses to Kant's critical philosophy in the German Idealist tradition
3. Skepticism and the Foundations of Knowledge
4. The Problem of Self-Consciousness
5. Philosophical Romanticism and Mysticism
6. Dialectical Reasoning in Hegel and German Idealism more generally.
7. Metaphysical problems concerning ontological categories, the meaning of Being and the ground of determinate existence

Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the main ideas and theories of the German idealists, especially with regard to the aforementioned topics.
2. In their papers, students should also demonstrate the ability to understand the works of the German idealists, to identify and clearly explicate a significant problem in their philosophy and formulate and defend a thesis of their own concerning the problem.

Learning Activities

In class:

1. Attend lectures and participate in class discussions. Each lecture is approximately 2 hours.
2. Tutorials: Attend and participate in tutorials (held every week following the lecture.) Each tutorial is approximately 45 minutes. Each student is expected to give one 15-minute presentation in the tutorial hour.

Outside of Class:

1. Reading: Read each reading assignment *before* lecture. After lecture read the same assignment again whenever feasible.
2. Writing: Regarding writing, begin your argument reconstructions and critiques *at least two weeks* before they are due in order to give yourself time to edit, re-write, and integrate feedback from the professor. Students should begin work on the term paper at least one month before it is due.

Required Texts:

- (1) Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Cambridge, 1999)
<http://www.bookdepository.com/Critique-of-Pure-Reason-Immanuel-Kant-Paul-Guyer-Allen-W-Wood/9780521657297?ref=grid-view>
- (2) Hegel, *Science of Logic* (Cambridge, 2015)
<http://www.bookdepository.com/Georg-Wilhelm-Friedrich-Hegel-The-Science-of-Logic-Georg-Wilhelm-Fredrich-Hegel-George-Di-Giovanni/9781107499638?ref=grid-view>

*Announcements, handouts, and additional reading will be posted on Blackboard.

Suggested Primary Literature:

(These texts are available for reference at the university bookstore.)

1. Fichte, *Science of Knowledge* (Cambridge, 2003)
2. Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy* (Suny, 2008)
3. Jacobi, *The Main Philosophical Writings and the Novel Alwill* (McGill-Queens, 2016)

Other Recommended Learning Resources:

1. Hegel, *The Difference Between Fichte and Schelling's System of Philosophy*
2. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*
3. Hegel, *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*
4. Hölderlin, *Gesammelte Werke*
5. Fichte, *Vocation of Man*
6. Schelling, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature*
7. Novalis, *Hymns to the Night*
8. Frank, Manfred, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*

9. Nassar, Dalia, *The Romantic Absolute: Being and Knowing in Early German Romantic Philosophy*
10. Rosen, Stanley, *The Idea of Hegel's Science of Logic*
11. Bowman, Brady, *Hegel and the Metaphysics of Absolute Negation*
12. Förster, Eckart, *The Twenty Five Years of Philosophy*
13. Ameriks, Karl, *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*
14. Henrich, Dieter, *From Kant to Hegel*
15. Gabriel, Markus, *Transcendental Ontology*
16. Maker, William, *Philosophy Without Foundations*,
17. Winfield, Richard Dien, *Hegel's Logic: A Critical Re-thinking in 30 Lectures*
18. Beiser, *German Idealism*

Tentative Grading Percentages:

Argument Reconstruction I	5% (20 Pts)
Argument Reconstruction II	15% (60 Pts)
Tutorial Presentation	15% (60 Pts)
Argument Critique	20% (80 Pts)
Term Paper	20% (80 Pts)
Final Exam	25% (100 Pts)

Total Points: 400 Points

Grade Criteria:

A:

The student knows the authors positions, and proves this knowledge by knowing the argument(s) supporting the theses in the text. Student evidences *self-initiated* thinking and understanding of the arguments through his/her ability to present *her own* counter-arguments and possible replies to counter-arguments. The student exhibits thorough understanding of the relations of the themes presented in the various texts.

B:

The student knows the authors positions, and generally understands the arguments supporting them. Student has difficulty developing *her own* criticisms and rebuttals to criticism. The student exhibits relatively complete understanding of the relations of the themes presented in the various texts.

C:

The student shows the ability to properly relay information about the text and the positions contained therein, but has difficulty re-constructing the arguments, presenting counter-arguments, and criticism. Student has a difficulty understanding arguments. The student shows an incomplete understanding of the relations of the themes presented in the various texts.

D:

The student cannot explicate the positions or the arguments for such positions in the text. The student exhibits seriously incomplete understanding.

F:

The student exhibits all the failures mentioned under '**D**'. The student earns an F by having a blatant disregard for the great masters of the global philosophical traditions by not reading and not attending lectures.

Grade Scale:

A: 87-100

A-: 80-86

B+: 77-79

B: 71-77

B-: 68-70

C+: 65-67%

C: 59-64%

C-: 56-58%

D+: 53-55%

D: 50-52%

F: < 50

Remarks

Argument Critique

The argument critique consists of three parts. In respect to the papers, I shall provide you with passages from the texts which we are reading, and I will ask you to choose one passage to work on. You will **formulate the argument** contained in that passage, and **formulate a critique** of that passage. The last stage consists in formulating a **reply to the criticism** that you raise. I encourage you to utilize the texts that we are reading in formulating the criticisms; you are encouraged to employ the philosophers against each other. Argument critiques ought not to be more than 3-6 double spaced pages.

Final Exams

The exam contains two sections. One section will consist of **short answer questions**, in which you will be asked to provide arguments for particular conclusions elicited from the texts. You will not be asked to provide arguments for any conclusions except those which are discussed in the lectures and tutorials. The second section will consist of **long-essay questions** in which you will re-construct the position and the arguments of a philosopher(s) on a particular theme, e.g. 'moral responsibility'. You will also be asked to critique these arguments and relate them to other philosophers and texts that we have discussed.

Tutorial Presentations

Beginning with Hegel's *Science of Logic*, each student is required to give a 15-minute presentation. Each presentation will offer an exegesis of a portion of Hegel's text. Students are required to offer a commentary and criticism of the text, as well as pose questions that have arisen for them in their reading.

Term Paper

The term paper will require students to uncover a philosopher problem in one of the texts that we have read together and clearly explicate that problem. Following the explication of the problem, students should work through various solutions to the problem and clearly formulate their own thesis concerning that problem. I highly recommend that students use either the Tutorial Presentations or Argument Critiques as the groundwork of their Term Paper. The term paper requires students to consult and cite at least work of secondary literature in addition to the required readings. The term paper should not be more than 5-7 double spaced pages.

Participation

Attendance and participation in both lecture and tutorial is mandatory. Two unexcused absences are allowed. Illness and family emergencies usually count as excused absences, as long as documentation is submitted. For every unexcused absence after the second, one letter grade will be deducted from the final grade. Whether an absence counts as excused is subject to the professor's discretion.

Late Work/Make-Ups:

Late assignments will be penalized **one-half a letter grade** for **each day** the paper is tardy. If you would like a grade changed, you must provide me with a detailed written argument for why you think it should be changed, otherwise I will not consider it.

Assignments: Read and study each assignment on the day it is assigned. To maximally benefit from these readings, I suggest a minimum of *two* readings: First, read the assigned text. After participating in lecture and the tutorial, read the text once more.

Consider the following schedule *tentative*.

September

8 Introduction to German Idealism, *No Readings*
15 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*
22 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* **Argument Reconstruction I**
29 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*

October

6 Fichte, *Introduction to the Science of Knowledge* (Handout) **Argument Reconstruction II**

13 Jacobi, *On Critique's Attempt to Reduce Reason to the Understanding*, Hölderlin, *Judgment and Being*, Novalis, *Aphorisms* (Handouts)

20 Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy* (Handout)

Argument Critique

27 Hegel, *Science of Logic*

Tutorial Presentations (Nov. 27th-Dec. 6th)

November

3 Hegel, *Science of Logic*

10 Hegel, *Science of Logic*

17 *Holiday*

24 Hegel, *Science of Logic*

December

1 Hegel, *Science of Logic* w/excerpts from *Philosophy of Nature*

6 Hegel, *Science of Logic* w/excerpts from *Philosophy of Mind*

Term Paper Due

Final Exam: TBD: December 7-23

Academic Integrity

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.