



UNSW
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

**Arts and
Social Sciences**

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & LANGUAGES

Freedom, Alienation and Modern Life

ARTS2362

"Universal *Geist* does not stand still"*

SEMESTER 2, 2013

* G.W.F. Hegel, *Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 10.

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Course arrangements

This is a one-session course carrying six units of credit. Students must attend two hours of lectures and a one hour tutorial each week.

Lecture time: Friday 9 – 11am (Mat 312)
Tutorial times: Friday 12 – 1pm (Mat 125)
Friday 2 – 3pm (Mat 104)

Inquiries

If you are contacting me by E-mail please *provide a telephone number* as well as your E-mail address. I am available for consultation at the following time and at other times by appointment (contact details below).

Course Lecturer and coordinator

Simon Lumsden
Room 335 Morven Brown Building
Ph. 9385 2369
Email: s.lumsden@unsw.edu.au

Consultation Time

Friday (wks 1-13)
11.00 am - 12:00pm
At other times by appointment

Course Description

Examines how the notions of freedom, alienation, self-determination and historical progress have come to assume a central place in modern and 20th Century Philosophy. The central question this course is concerned with is if in a secular age human beings can be at home in the world and with nature. Covers the different approaches to these notions developed in the work of key figures in early philosophy (St Augustine), and 18th, 19th and 20th century Philosophy. Figures examined include Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Heidegger, Adorno, Lukács, Arendt, Taylor.

Course objectives and Learning Outcomes

The primary objectives of the course are:

- Introduce the work of a number of key thinkers and themes in modern philosophy and 20th Century European philosophy.
- Involve students in their own learning through course structure and ongoing assessment.
- Enhance ability to interpret texts and develop appreciation of core philosophical concepts.
- Provide a philosophical understanding of concepts in a way that allows the philosophical issues to be recognised and developed in diverse forms of human experience.
- Provide the basis for ongoing engagement with many of the key figures in 20th Century European philosophy and political philosophy
- Situate the historical background to contemporary philosophy. This should allow students to have an ongoing appreciation of the dialogue between the history of philosophy and contemporary developments in philosophy.

Reading and textbook

Text: ARTS2362 *Course Reader*

- Reader for sale at the University Bookstore.

The material in this reader will form the basis of discussion in the tutorials each week. You must be able to access the readings in the tutorials each week.

Assessment for the course will be based on:

1. Tutorial attendance and participation (10%)
2. Textual analysis (20%) Due - 31 March by 4pm
3. Workbook (30%) Due – Week 12 to be collected in the tutorial.
4. Essay (40%) Due – Friday 1 November by 4pm

(1.) Tutorial attendance and participation (10%)

This mark is based on your contribution and attendance at tutorials and also on your preparation for each class.

(2.) Textual analysis (20%)

Length – 1,200 -1,500 words

Due –Monday 28 March by 4pm

The topic will be distributed in Week 2

The point of this exercise is for you to unpack, explicate and critically examine a short section from a philosophical work.

To be submitted electronically and in hard copy to the school of history and philosophy essay box

(3.) Workbook (30%)

Due –Week 12 to be collected in the tutorial.

Your preparation for each class and reflection upon the material discussed in class should be recorded in a workbook. Time will be made available in tutorials for you to work individually and collaboratively on your workbook entries. Though where work is collaborative you will need to specify with whom you have worked.

I may look at workbooks during the tutorial, so please bring them to class each week. There will be opportunity to get help with your workbook from other students. If you would like feedback on your workbook please give it to me some time before mid-semester break.

The form and content of the workbook

Form: Exactly what form the workbook will take is up to you. It is expected that something be written on the readings each week *before* the tutorial.

For the final assessment the *minimum* requirement will be 6 x 500 word entries. These should be predominantly prose rather than abbreviated notes, though some notes and bullet points are fine.

The workbook can be handwritten in a notebook, or a print out of computer files, a blog or some other online forum. A list of questions will be available on Moodle prior to week two that relate to each week's reading. You may use these to guide your response to the readings.

Marking Criteria: *The primary expectation* of the workbook is that it should demonstrate that you have thought about the weekly readings independently and that you have *actively engaged* with the text and the themes of the course. The mark you receive will be based on the depth and comprehensiveness of your engagement. The form that engagement will take is largely up to you.

What you may wish to cover in the workbook:

- A substantial component of your entry should be comprehension of the primary text, i.e. explaining what you think is articulated in the primary text, that is the ideas and argument in themselves.
- A useful thing to do in the workbook is to use it to prepare for the tutorial – noting questions you would like to raise. After the tutorial you could write in answers to the questions or correct misunderstandings.
- Raising questions and objections to the text.
- You may try to understand and explain the material by, for example, connecting the ideas with your experiences of art, popular culture, politics, the media and so on: for example modern mechanised animal husbandry as an exemplification of Heidegger's idea of enframing, you might find in Romantic poetry or music an explication of Heidegger's idea of dwelling or films that illustrate his critique of technology, or contemporary discussion of religious fundamentalism as an example of modern alienation. You could appeal to literature and/or film to question a core philosophical distinction.
- You are *not required* to relate the texts and ideas to your experience, culture, media or art but you may find it productive to do so.
- Preparation of material for a tutorial presentation. Should you decide to participate in the tutorial by offering a short presentation of how the texts connect to some form of artistic medium you could incorporate this into your workbook, including your experience of talking to the class; how you might improve your presentation, why this was useful and so on. You could also reflect on the experience of presenting: how might that experience itself be exemplary of for example the theme of alienation.

It is hoped that suggestions will be made for music, films or literature that might help other students to explore the issues. Opportunity will be made for examining any such media in class.

All explorations of the ideas that emerge from the readings should be tied back to the text – to its overall theme or a particular passage. The aim of the workbook is to provide a forum for you to explore passages and ideas from your weekly readings that have made you think. How you explore them is largely up to you. You can also explore your negative reaction to the readings: if there is something you find objectionable – say why you think it is objectionable.

The workbook might also be a useful place to explore ideas that you may wish to cover in your essays or as a forum for relating ideas to your experience and developing your writing skills, though it should not be a draft of your essay.

Above all the workbook should represent your engagement with the texts and the ideas. If the ideas are not convincing this is a forum for you to examine why you think this to be the case.

Reflection on the Workbook: I also expect a reflection on the workbook itself, how it does or does not help in your learning, you might also like to include suggestions as to how it could be improved, or if you think it is not a useful learning tool state your reasons.

Referencing: I do not expect elaborate referencing in the workbook – but you must indicate where work is not your own.

(4.) Essay (40%)

Length – 2,000-2,500 words

Due – November 1 by 4pm

COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Student evaluative feedback on this course is welcomed and is gathered periodically, using among other means UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

Student feedback is taken seriously, and continual improvements are made to the course based in part on such feedback. Significant changes to the course will be communicated to subsequent cohorts of students taking the course.

Assignment Submission

- The cut off time for all assignment submissions in the School is **4pm** of the stated due date.
- 2 assignment copies must be submitted for every assessment task - 1 paper copy and 1 electronic copy.
- All hard/paper copy assessments should be posted into the Assignment Drop Boxes outside the front counter of the School of Humanities and Languages on level 2, Morven Brown Building by 4pm on the due date.
- A completed cover sheet must be securely attached to assignments. The School is not responsible for any missing pages from poorly bound or stapled assignments.
- In addition, a soft copy must be sent through **Moodle** by 4pm on the due date

Important Note

- Electronic copies will not be marked. Only hard copies submitted in the drop boxes will be marked.
- The electronic copy will be used as evidence of assignment submission during appeal and dispute cases. Students have no recourse if a soft copy is not submitted. Therefore it is essential that students keep the electronic record of their sent assignment.
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Assignment Collection

A stamped self-addressed envelope must be provided on submission if students require their *final* essay to be posted back to their home address. Only essays submitted with stamped self-addressed envelopes will receive written feedback unless prior arrangements are made.

Assignment Extensions

A student may apply to for an extension to the submission date of an assignment. Requests for extension should be made directly to me before the submission due date, and must demonstrate exceptional circumstances, which warrant the granting of an extension. If medical grounds preclude submission of assignment by due date, contact should be made as soon as possible.

Late Submission of Assignments

Unless an extension has been granted, written work submitted after the due date will incur a penalty of 1% of the *final mark for the course* per day (including weekends). (For example, if your essay is awarded 24 out of 30 but is one day late without extension, then your actual mark will be 23).

ATTENDANCE

To successfully complete this unit you are required to attend minimum 80% of classes. If this requirement is not met you will fail the unit. Attendance records will be kept.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Students seeking information on plagiarism should visit the following web site:

<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/index.html>

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others.

Any OHS concerns should be raised with your immediate supervisor, the School's OHS representative, or the Head of School. The OHS guidelines are available at:

http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/ohs_policies/index.html

STUDENT EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to, or at the commencement of the course. Alternatively, the Student Equity and Diversity Unit can be contacted on 9385 4734. Further information is available at: <http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au>

GRIEVANCES

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should in the first instance attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors. If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at: <https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html>

OTHER STUDENT INFORMATION

myUNSW is the single online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing & current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au>

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html>

Wk	Date	Lecture and tutorial Topic	Readings
1	2/8	Background and examination of course themes: What is Modernity?	No tutorial <i>Useful Background Reading: Velkley Being after Rousseau</i> , introduction. Löwith intro to <i>Meaning in History</i> , Robert Pippin, <i>Modernism as a Philosophical Problem</i> , Habermas <i>Philosophical discourse of Modernity</i> (a very difficulty book)
2	9/8	St Augustine: Early approaches to history. God's destiny for the earth, The fall, break with the cyclical view of nature.	St Augustine, various extracts, pp. 1 – 11
3	16/8	Rousseau: History, progress and the corruption of civilisation, the relation of humanity to nature.	Reading: Rousseau, 'Preface and extracts from Part two of Second Discourse' pp. 12 – 33.
4	23/8	Kant: Does history progress or is it static? The quest for wholeness, self-determination, freedom and history	Kant 'Idea for a universal history' pp. 34 – 40.
5	30/8	Hegel and Lear: Reconciliation, historical development, modern freedom	Hegel extract from <i>Lectures on History of Philosophy</i> pp. 41-49 and Lear <i>Radical hope</i> pp. 50-56.
6	6/9	Lukács : The commodity economy, modern rationality, the ideological character of technology and science, reification	Lukács, 'Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat' pp. 57-67.
7	13/9	Adorno and Horkheimer: The limits of modernity, The rationalisation process in Western modernity, reason as myth	Adorno and Horkheimer 'The Concept of Enlightenment' pp. 68-84
8	20/9	Heidegger: The instrumentalism of modernity, enframing, nature as resource	Martin Heidegger, 'Question Concerning Technology,' pp. 85-94.
9	27/9	Heidegger: The relation of humans and world, dwelling, Technology and Ecology	Martin Heidegger, <i>Ge-stell</i> , remainder of 'Question Concerning Technology,' pp. 94-100 and 'Building, dwelling, thinking' pp. 101-109
10	11/10	Arendt: Modernity, history, the reaction against tradition	Arendt, Ideology and 'Tradition in the Modern age' pp. 110-132
11	18/10	Arendt: The social, the public realm, speech and action	Arendt, <i>The Human Condition</i> , 'the rise of the social' and other extracts. pp. 133-147.
12	25/10	Charles Taylor: Authenticity and Individualism	Taylor, 'the slide to subjectivism' and 'The Iron Cage' pp. 148-160