

PHILOSOPHY 311

Existentialist Thinkers: Nietzsche

PHIL 311 (CRN 22337)
SPRING 2020
Tues., Wed., Fri.: 11:30-12:20
DSB C130

Instructor: Nina Belmonte
Office: CLE 326
Office Hours: Tues: 1:30-2:30
Email: belmonte@uvic.ca

Course Objectives

A founding figure of our intellectual epoch, Nietzsche's influence cannot be overstated. He wrote "in blood" - his language artful, excessive and notoriously opaque. How are we to understand him, then?

In this course we will explore Nietzsche's work in the context of the larger existentialist and general philosophical tradition, from his roots in Shopenhauer and Emerson to the development of his extraordinary notions of the Will to Power, the Overman and Eternal Return, Genealogy, Art and Life. We will read widely in his works, including *The Birth of Tragedy* and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, *Beyond Good and Evil*, *Genealogy of Morals* and *Ecce Homo*. We will delight in the enigmatic force of his language and endeavor to comprehend him on his own terms, as profoundly as possible, then make up our minds for ourselves.

Readings will undoubtedly be difficult and class attendance necessary. As with all great adventures, what you take away will depend on what you put in. Graded work will include homework questions, two short exegetical papers, and a final paper.

Texts: In the Bookstore: *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, trans. Kaufmann, Modern Library, 2000
[Includes: *Birth of Tragedy*, *Genealogy of Morals*, *Beyond Good and Evil* & *Ecce Homo*.]
Thus Spoke Zarathustra, trans. Graham Parkes, Oxford Univ. Press, 2008

Additional Material will be available online and on Reserve in the Library.

Assignments

Class Participation/Homework:	20%
Two Short Papers (25% each)	50%
Final Term paper:	<u>30%</u>
	100%

Evaluation

Percentages will convert to a letter grade according to the following scheme:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 65-69	D = 50-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 60-64	F = 0-49

PHIL 311-Nietzsche
Course Outline

2

A- = 80-84 B- = 70-72

Description of Assignments

Class Participation/Homework:

I expect you not only to attend class, but also to read the assignments and do them on time. This is necessary for the sake of a high-quality course experience. To that end, there will be regular homework assignments based on the readings and **due in class at the beginning of class**. Because these questions are intended to help you come to class prepared to engage in discussion, it will not be possible to make them up. *DO NOT EMAIL THE HOMEWORK.*

Two Short Papers (~1000 Words):

There will be two short papers required for this course. These will be predominantly exegetical writings, intended to improve skills of critical reading and concise composition, and to prepare you for your final essay. Paper topics will be given out one week before the due date, but you are always free to write on a topic of your own choice, so long as you speak with me *before the due date*. These will be evaluated on your understanding of the material, and the clarity and presentation of your discussion.

Final Paper:

There will be a more substantial (2500 words) paper due at the end of the semester, deepening your understanding and synthesis of a topic from Nietzsche's writings. I will provide a list of topics, but you are free to choose one of your own, as long as you speak with me *in advance*. This work should draw from at least three of Nietzsche's works, and include at least two secondary sources. The final paper may be a substantial, synthetic reworking of the shorter paper.

Policy on Late Assignments

Limited, short-term extensions may be granted on a case by case basis, as long as the request is made *before the day the assignment is due*. Appropriate accommodations will be made for those with an accommodation letter from the Center for Accessible Learning, but please note that such a letter is not "a blanket extension on all work, nor is it a license to submit work after the course has ended."

A Note on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Actions such as plagiarism, multiple submissions, falsifying materials used in academic evaluations, cheating, aiding others to cheat, or unauthorized use of an editor violate University policies on academic integrity and are considered serious offence. You must inform yourself about the university regulations (see [UVic Policy on Academic Integrity](#)).

Classroom Conduct

Since the quality of the learning environment is paramount, every student has the right to learn in an inclusive, cooperative, and effective environment. In this classroom, we will treat each other with respect, even and especially when we disagree. In order to keep our discussions distraction-free, you are expected to turn off your cell phones, mp3 players, and other electronic devices during class. The use of laptops is not necessary in the dynamic and participatory environment of a discussion-based course.

Schedule of Classes

Week One – Introduction

January	7	Introductions, Explanations, Hesitations
	8	History and Hysterics Read: Domino, <i>Nietzsche's Syphilis</i> (review) Hemseloet et al, "The Neurological Illness of F. Nietzsche"
	10	TBA

Week Two - Roots and Inspirations

14	Roots: Romantic Pessimism Read: Schopenhauer, "The World as Will" (CourseSpaces)
15	Roots: Pessimistic Romanticism Read: Schopenhauer (Cont.)
17	Inspiration Read: Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (CourseSpaces)

Week Three – *Beginnings: The Birth of a Philosophy*

21	Apollo/Dionysus Read: Homer's Contest (CourseSpaces) and <i>Birth of Tragedy</i> , 1-4
22	Dionysian Artist Read: <i>Birth of Tragedy</i> , 5, 7
24	Philosophy and the Death of Tragedy Read: <i>Birth of Tragedy</i> , 12-15, 19

Week Four – *Untimely Meditations*

28	A New Voice Read: Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies In the Extramoral Sense" (CourseSpaces)
29	Language as Metaphor Read: Truth and Lies, (Cont.)
31	The Goal Read: "Shopenhauer as Educator" (Excerpt, CourseSpaces)

Week Five - *A Book for Everyone and Nobody*

February	4	**Camel, Lion, Child Read: <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> , Part I (through Speech 1) ** <i>Short Paper Due</i> **
	5	A New Gospel Read: <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> , Speeches of Zarathustra: 3 (p27); 7(p. 35), 9-12 (p.39-47), 15(p.51), 21(p.62)

- 7 Will to Power/Eternal Return
Read: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part 2, Sect. 12 "On Self Overcoming" (p. 98-101); and Part III, Sects 13-16 (p. 188-203)

Week Six -- *A Philosophy of the Future*

- 11 Eternal Recurrence
Read: *Gay Science*, Sect. 340-342 (Excerpt, CourseSpaces)
- 12 The Death of God
Read: *Gay Science*, Sect. 109, 110, 124-125 (Excerpt, CourseSpaces)
- 14 Sickness and Health
Read: *Gay Science*, Preface

Week Seven -- *READING BREAK*

February 17-21

Week Eight -- *Beyond Good & Evil*

- 25 Philosophers
Read: *Beyond Good & Evil*, Preface, Part One
- 26 Free Spirits
Read: *BG&E*, Part Two
- 28 "Natural" History
Read: *BG&E*, Part Five

Week Nine -- *Noble Virtues*

- March** 3 Scholars and Philosophers
Read: *BG&E*, Part 6
- 4 Virtues
Read: *BG&E*, Part Seven (thru Sect. 231)
- 6 Noble Virtues
Read: *BG&E*, Part Nine

Week Ten -- *Genealogy and Polemic*

- 10 The Good, the Bad, and the Evil
Read: *Genealogy of Morals*, Preface and First Essay
- 11 Noble Beasts
Read: *Genealogy of Morals*, First Essay
- 13 Crimes and Punishments
Read: *Genealogy of Morals*, Second Essay

Week Eleven - *Aesthetic Ideal*

- 17** Aesthetic Ideals
Read: *Genealogy of Morals*, Third Essay
****Short Paper Due****
- 18 Rhetoric and Reversals
Read: *Genealogy of Morals*, Third Essay
- 20 Questions and Answers

Week Twelve -- *How One Becomes What One Is*

- 24 Why I am so Wise
Read: *Ecce Homo*, Part I
- 25 Why I am so Clever
Read: *Ecce Homo*, Part II
- 27 Why I Write Such Good Books
Read: *Ecce Homo*, Part III

Week Thirteen -- The Nietzsche Legacy

- 31 Why I am Destiny
Read: *Ecce Homo*, Part IV
- April** 1 Foucault's Genealogy of Power
Read: Foucault, *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*, "Method"
(CourseSpaces)
- 3 ***Last Class***

****April 9th FINAL PAPERS DUE****