Hegel, Kierkegaard, Marx, Nietzsche
TTh 10:00-11:50  MI 208

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Course Description
The nineteenth century was an age of great innovation in European thought, for revolutions in philosophy both echoed and announced revolutions in politics, science, and the arts. Hegel, Kierkegaard, Marx, and Nietzsche are four of the most important philosophers who flourished during this period. Beginning around the 1820s, the philosophy of Hegel, one of the last systematic philosophers, began to dominate the German intellectual scene, including the work of the other three figures covered in this course. Kierkegaard, under various pseudonyms, produced a body of writings that inspired existentialist philosophy in the twentieth century. With the communist revolutions in Russia and China, the political and economic theories developed by Marx made him arguably the most influential philosopher in modern history. Finally, Nietzsche posed serious challenges to moral and religious values that helped to shape existentialism and postmodern theory. This course will be a survey of some of the most enduring works and challenging ideas of these four thinkers.

Learning Objectives
What are the goals of this class?
- To learn about the contributions made by Hegel, Kierkegaard, Marx, and Nietzsche to the development of philosophy in the nineteenth century and beyond
- To become familiar with their ideas by reading selections from some of their major works
- To analyze and respond critically to their arguments in classroom discussions and essays, including one that makes use of scholarly sources

How can you succeed in this class?
- Read carefully – do the reading assignments before coming to class, taking notes on unfamiliar terms, key concepts and arguments, and issues you want to raise in class
- Be active in discussion – come to class prepared with questions and comments, and make quality contributions on a regular basis
- Write weekly – do your reading responses faithfully and your essays will go more smoothly; use every writing assignment as an opportunity to think critically and formulate your own ideas

Texts
The Hegel Reader, Stephen Houlgate, ed.  9780631203476
The Essential Kierkegaard, Howard and Edna Hong, eds.  9780691019406
Karl Marx: Selected Writings, Lawrence Simon, ed.  9780872202184
The Nietzsche Reader, Keith Ansell Pearson and Duncan Large, eds.  9780631226543
Additional texts available online at https://moodle1516.beloit.edu/

Assignments and Grading
Short essays (4-6 pages)  60% (15% each)  Weekly responses  10%
Final paper (8-10 pages)  20%  Class discussion  10%

There will be five short essay assignments during the semester, and you will be required to write at least four. If you choose to write all five, I will drop the lowest grade. Late essays will be reduced by one letter grade for every 24 hours past the deadline. No essays will be accepted more than 72 hours late.

For your final paper, you will revise one of your short essays with the help of my comments and some scholarly sources that you find through your own research. I will provide you with research guidelines and tips shortly after the midterm break. I encourage you talk to me outside of class about your final paper several weeks before the deadline so that I can assist you in your research and revision.
Every week you will write an approximately one-page response to one of the assigned readings in an online discussion forum (at https://moodle1516.beloit.edu/). For full credit, each response must engage deeply with the text and be posted at least one hour before the class in which that text will be discussed. These responses will help prepare you for class and for writing your essays. When I read them, I will assume that you are still at work figuring out the material, so I do not subtract points for mistakes or misunderstandings. Failure to fulfill this requirement will result in the loss of one letter grade at the end of the semester.

Finally, you will be responsible for participating regularly in class discussion by raising questions, comments, and critical objections. I encourage you to prepare for class by writing down anything you want to raise for discussion. You should also feel free to bring a copy of your weekly response and raise points you wrote about in it. Discussion is a crucial part of doing philosophy, and you will have a much more rewarding experience in the classroom if you engage in it fully. Regardless of your level of understanding or your confidence as a speaker, you have valuable contributions to make.

Attendance and Conduct
Attendance is mandatory. When you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out about the material that was covered and any assignments that were made or changed. I will excuse up to five absences with no questions asked, but each absence over five will reduce your final grade by one-third of a letter (that is, by a + or -). Eight or more absences will result in failing the course. I will penalize distracting behavior in class such as talking, texting, sleeping, or regularly arriving late. Disrupting class in these ways or others will lower your final grade according to my discretion. No laptops or other electronic devices may be used in class without prior permission and a signed agreement concerning appropriate use.

Academic Honesty
Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own in a piece of writing. In accordance with Beloit’s academic honesty policy (www.beloit.edu/studentaffairs/policieshandbooks/), any written work that is plagiarized will receive a zero, and the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students. To avoid plagiarism, always use quotation marks and cite your source for direct quotations. Include a bibliographic reference for any source that you use, whether print or online. If you have any questions about using and citing sources in your writing, ask me about it or visit the Writing Center’s web site.

Special Considerations
If you have a disability and need accommodations, contact the Learning Enrichment and Disability Services Office located on the 2nd floor of Pearsons (north side) by calling 363-2572 or emailing learning@beloit.edu. For accommodations in this class, please bring me an Accommodation Verification Letter from the Director of that office and then we will discuss how to meet your needs. Contact that office promptly; accommodations are not retroactive. Also, free peer tutoring is available for most classes. For a tutor, apply by going to Portal, clicking on the Student Life tab, and using the Tutoring Forms (on the left). If for any reason you are concerned about your ability to do well in this course, please make an appointment with me early in the semester so we can talk about it.

Office Hours
My office hours are Monday 12-2, Wednesday 1-3, and by appointment (I will be off campus on Fridays). To get the most out of this course, you should visit me during office hours to discuss your questions about the material and to get feedback on your written work. I encourage you to talk with me about the assignments and your ideas, especially for the first essays. A conversation about how to approach your essay can save you a lot of time and help you to be more focused and efficient when writing. I also invite you to come to me with any problems you have in this course so I can help you overcome them. I want everyone in the class to succeed, and discussions outside of class are often one of the keys to success.
Calendar

Week 1  
Tues. 8/25  “German Idealism” and “Hegel” (online)  
Thurs. 8/27  Scruton, Kant: A Very Short Introduction (online)  

Hegel  

Week 2  
Tues. 9/1  Phenomenology of Spirit, Preface (HR 45-69)  
Thurs. 9/3  Phenomenology of Spirit, Introduction and Consciousness (70-86)  

Week 3  
Tues. 9/8  Phenomenology of Spirit, Self-Consciousness (87-113)  
Thurs. 9/10  Pippin, Hegel on Self-Consciousness (online)  
Fri. 9/11  First essay due (noon)  

Week 4  
Tues. 9/15  Philosophy of Right, Preface and Introduction (319-339)  
Thurs. 9/17  Philosophy of Right, Abstract Right and Morality (340-355)  

Week 5  
Tues. 9/22  Philosophy of Right, Ethical Life (356-379)  
Thurs. 9/24  Philosophy of Right, Ethical Life (380-399)  
Fri. 9/25  Second essay due (noon)  

Kierkegaard  

Week 6  
Tues. 9/29  Journals (3-12) and Either/Or (37-46)  
Thurs. 10/1  Either/Or (50-62, 66-83)  

Week 7  
Tues. 10/6  Fear and Trembling (93-101; online)  
Thurs. 10/8  Philosophical Fragments (116-125)  

Midterm Break 10/10-10/18  

Week 8  
Tues. 10/20  The Concept of Anxiety (138-155)  
Thurs. 10/22  Concluding Unscientific Postscript (198-215, 225-229, 242-246)  
Fri. 10/23  Third essay due (noon)  

Marx  

Week 9  
Tues. 10/27  The Communist Manifesto (158-186)  
Thurs. 10/29  “On the Jewish Question” (1-26)  

Week 10  
Tues. 11/3  Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (54-79)  
Thurs. 11/5  Theses on Feuerbach and The German Ideology (98-132)  

Week 11  
Tues. 11/10  Capital (214-264)  
Thurs. 11/12  Capital (264-300)  
Fri. 11/13  Fourth essay due (noon)  

Nietzsche  

Week 12  
Tues. 11/17  The Birth of Tragedy (42-87)  
Thurs. 11/19  Human, All Too Human (161-190)  

Week 13  
Tues. 11/24  Daybreak (191-206) and The Gay Science (207-237)  
Thurs. 11/26  No class – Thanksgiving Break  

Week 14  
Tues. 12/1  Beyond Good and Evil (311-361)  
Thurs. 12/3  On the Genealogy of Morality (390-435)  
Fri. 12/4  Fifth essay due (noon)  

Week 15  
Tues. 12/8  Conclusion  
Fri. 12/11  Final paper due, 5pm