

PHL 550-301: Heidegger I, *Being and Time*

Spring Quarter 2017

Thursdays 3:00-6:15pm, Philosophy Conference Room

Instructor: Will McNeill

Office Hours (150.3): Tuesdays, 9:00-11:00am or by appointment

Outline:

This course will present a condensed, thematic approach to the study of this central text of 20th century European philosophy. We will encounter the text through a sequence of inter-related yet distinct themes such as: the phenomenological method; the ontological difference; being-in-the-world and the problem of world; subjectivity and singularity; Care and the unity of Dasein; the deconstructing of truth; the problem of foundations; being-toward-death and authenticity; ekstatic temporality; historicality and *Destruktion*. Students will be expected to read the entire text in advance, and we will use these themes as lenses through which to enhance our understanding of the central argument and its complexities.

Required Texts:

Everyone is expected to acquire the Macquarrie & Robinson translation of *Being and Time* (ISBN 978-0-06-157559-4), which is the edition we shall use in class. (A second translation, by Joan Stambaugh, also exists, but is less helpful overall.)

If you can read German, or are learning German, you should acquire the Niemeyer edition of *Sein und Zeit* (ISBN 3-484-70122-6). I will be referring to this edition throughout to clarify the original German and associated translation issues.

Additional readings will be made available on D2L.

Course Assignments:

1. Full attendance is expected. It should go without saying that you must have done the assigned readings in advance, several times over, given a text of this difficulty.
2. Everyone is expected to come to class with a written “discussion point” each week. This should be no more than a page in length, and intended to raise a question or questions from the assigned reading for further discussion in class. Your topic should present a problem or problematic. It could be an aspect of the text that you find problematic or intriguing, an issue that you disagree about, or something that you want to examine in greater detail. You may pick a topic from the primary reading, or from the extra or suggested readings. Each week I will call on people to present their discussion point, and will collect the written assignments at the end of class.

3. A final paper of 12-15 pages, double-spaced. This can be on any topic of your choosing from *Being and Time*, but must integrate some substantial reference to one of the additional readings touched on in the seminar. You are encouraged to discuss your essay topic with me in advance. DUE FRIDAY, JUNE 9TH, by 12:00 noon.

Schedule of Study

Note: This is subject to modification from week to week, depending on the progress made in class.

Week 1

The question of Being and the ontological difference:

- The programmatic statement: “Being ‘is’ not itself a being”
- Motivation for the inquiry: the forgottenness of the question of Being
- Unity and multiplicity of Being: “Being” is said in many ways.
- Fundamental articulation of Being: essence and existence
- Being and truth
- Being as possibility and actuality
- Unity and multiplicity of Being in SZ: Being of Dasein versus Being of other beings (cf. *res cogitans* / *res extensa*, spirit /nature...)
- The ontic-ontological status of Dasein
- The ontic foundation of ontology

Reading: Introduction, Chapter 1
Heidegger, Letter to Richardson
 See also: Richardson, *Letter to Heidegger* (in German)

Week 2

On the question of method:

- The problem of access 1) to Being in general; 2) to the Being of Dasein; 3) to the Being of other beings (§5)
- The task of deconstructing the history of ontology (§6)
- The phenomenological method (§7)
 - The concept of phenomenon
 - The concept of *logos* as *apophainesthai* and *hermeneuein*
 - Phenomenology as ontology: ‘science’ of the Being of beings (SZ 35, 37)

Reading: Introduction, Chapter 2
The Basic Problems of Phenomenology, §5
 See also: McNeill, “From Destruktion to the History of Being,” 24-30.

Week 3

Hermeneutic Phenomenology in action:

- The analysis of readiness-to-hand
- The hermeneutic phenomenology of Dasein:
 - Dasein is Being-in-the-world: the displacement of subjectivity
 - Subjectivity and individuation / mineness. Mineness and (as) Being-with.

Reading: Division I, Chapters 1-4 (can omit §§19-22)
The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic, §10 (excerpt)

Week 4

Dasein, Possibility, and Disclosedness:

- The problem of world: world as horizon
- The disclosedness of Dasein: Dasein's Being as thrown projection with the tendency toward self-concealment (falling): Care
- The pivotal role of Angst as fundamental attunement
- Dasein and truth: original and derivative truth

Reading: Division I, Chapters 5-6
 McNeill, "Rethinking the Possible," Introduction & Parts I-III.

Week 5

The Possibility of Impossibility: Dasein as Being-toward-death

Reading: Division II, Introduction (§45) and Chapter 1
 McNeill, "Rethinking the Possible," Parts IV-V.

Week 6

Authenticity, Inauthenticity, and Everydayness

- The hermeneutic status of everydayness
- Everydayness and averageness; the They
- Authenticity and inauthenticity as modes of Dasein's self-understanding
- The relation between authenticity and inauthenticity
- The hermeneutic problem of modification and the phenomenon of conscience
- Dasein as thrown ground of a nullity: Dasein's fundamental impotence

Reading: Division II, Chapter 2
The Basic Problems of Phenomenology, §15
 See also: McNeill, "The Hermeneutics of Everydayness."

Week 7

Dasein's Being as temporality:

- Dasein's authenticity as anticipatory resoluteness
- Authenticity in light of Greek ontology (authentic Being as *theōrein*; Entschlossenheit as *boulē*; Dasein as *praxis*)
- Temporality as the ontological meaning of Care
 - The fundamental features of ecstatic temporality
 - Authentic and inauthentic modes of ecstatic temporality

Reading: Division II, Chapter 3
 Heidegger, *Plato: The Sophist*, §22

Week 8

Temporality, Disclosedness, and World:

- The temporality of disclosedness
- Temporality and horizontality: the problem of world and its transcendence

Reading: Division II, Chapter 4
The Basic Problems of Phenomenology, §19 (excerpt)
The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic, §12-13

Week 9

Temporality and Historicity

Reading: Division II, Chapter 5
 McNeill, “Rethinking the Possible,” Part VI.

Week 10

Temporality and Within-time-ness

Conclusions: The fate and relevance of *Being and Time*

Reading: Division II, Chapter 6

RESEARCH RESOURCES AND OTHER RECOMMENDED READING

There is a huge amount of literature on Heidegger, encompassing commentaries, anthologies, critiques, and specialized studies, as well as a large number of Heidegger's own works that are now available in translation. Here I am recommending just a few works that you may wish to consult initially. You should ask me if you need more specific recommendations for either primary or secondary reading.

A good general resource is the Heidegger Circle website, at www.heideggercircle.org. Here you will find links to reviews of primary and secondary works (see especially the *Ereignis* site), as well as a list of the *Gesamtausgabe*, or Complete Edition of Heidegger's works, published and unpublished, with an indication of the chronology of those works.

Here are some primary and secondary texts that I particularly recommend or that may be useful to consult:

Texts by Heidegger

The Concept of Time. Translated by William McNeill. Blackwell, 1992. This is the text of a short lecture that Heidegger delivered in 1924, one that sums up in just a few pages many of the central theses of *Being and Time*. A fairly accessible, quick orientation.

Other important resources are the texts containing lectures from Heidegger's Marburg and Freiburg periods, including:

The History of the Concept of Time, translated by Theodore Kisiel (1925)
The Basic Problems of Phenomenology, translated by Albert Hofstadter (1927)
The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic, translated by Michael Heim (1928)
The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude, translated by William McNeill & Nicholas Walker (1929-30)

All are published by Indiana University Press.

Secondary Texts

Magda King, *A Guide to Heidegger's Being and Time*. Edited by John Llewelyn. State University of New York Press, 2001. Probably the most helpful available commentary on *Being and Time*. A bit uneven: sometimes little more than paraphrase, but often has helpful reflections.

Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Heidegger's Ways*. State University of New York Press, 1994. A collection of accessible, accurate, and thought-provoking essays on Heidegger by one of his most prominent students. Very good on the intellectual climate in which Heidegger's

philosophy emerged, and on the historical significance of his thought. Highly recommended.

Otto Pöggeler, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thought*. Humanities, 1987. One of the best philosophical and historical appreciations of Heidegger's thought and its significance. Extends beyond the *Being and Time* period to include Heidegger's later thought. Highly recommended.

David Krell, *Intimations of Mortality: Time, Truth, and Finitude in Heidegger's Thinking of Being*. Pennsylvania State University, 1986. Still one of the best commentaries, especially on fundamental ontology and temporality. Highly recommended.

Robert Bernasconi, *Heidegger in Question: The Art of Existing*. Humanities, 1993. A set of state-of-the-art essays on diverse aspects of Heidegger's work, including ethics, politics, art, and historiography. Highly recommended.

William Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*. 4th edition. Fordham University Press, 2003. The first major study of Heidegger's work in the English-speaking world, originally published in 1963. Includes a preface by Heidegger. Still a classic, and highly recommended.

Theodore Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*. University of California Press, 1995. The most complete account of Heidegger's path up to *Being and Time*. A reliable "sourcebook" for factual and historical information.

John van Buren, *The Young Heidegger: Rumor of the Hidden King*. Indiana University Press, 1994. Insightful account of the young Heidegger; especially helpful on the theological background and kairological time.

Kisiel & van Buren, eds., *Reading Heidegger From the Start*. State University of New York Press, 1994. An excellent collection of essays on the early Heidegger.

McNeill, William. Many (though not all) of my essays are available on my page at www.academia.edu. The fundamentals of my reading of *Being and Time* in terms of a phenomenological retrieval of Aristotle's *praxis* and *phronesis* are found in chapters 2-4 of *The Glance of the Eye: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the Ends of Theory* (SUNY, 1999); this reading is further developed in terms of the ethical implications of Heidegger's temporal understanding of being in *The Time of Life: Heidegger and Ethos* (SUNY, 2006). Other essays that you may find useful include:

"From *Destruktion* to the History of Being." In: *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual*, Volume 2, 2012, 24-40.

“The Hermeneutics of Everydayness: On the Legacy and Radicality of Heidegger’s Phenomenology.” In *Consequences of Hermeneutics*, ed. J. Malpas & S. Zabala. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2010, 98-120.

“Rethinking the Possible: On the Radicalization of Possibility in Heidegger’s Being and Time.” Published in *the condition of possibility*, theory@buffalo 13 (2009), 105-125. <http://wings.buffalo.edu/theory/>.

“Care for the Self: Originary Ethics in Heidegger and Foucault.” *Philosophy Today*, 42:1, Spring 1998. 11pp. Also appears as a chapter in *The Time of Life*. Contains a reading of selfhood and mineness in relation to *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, among other texts.