

Philosophy of History

(Philosophy 315) Fall 2021

Instructor: Jeffrey A. Bell, Ph.D.

Time: 2-3:15pm MW, in Fayard 239

Office Hours: 9:30-11:00am, 12:30-2:00pm, MW or by appointment.

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Required Reading:

Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (online)

Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life* (online)

On-line readings available at course web page. These readings are listed in the syllabus with (web) to indicate they are at the course web page.

Course Objectives

This course will examine many of the key issues involved in the philosophy of history such as determining historical causation, understanding motives, the role of narrative, and more. These themes will be discussed in the context of a classroom discussion of course readings.

Course Requirements

There will be one midterm exam (20%), a final (30%), and two written assignments (25% each). The first written assignment is to be 4 pages long (1000 words, no less) on a topics that I will hand out in class. Topics will be handed out one or two weeks before they are due. The second written assignment (1500 words) is to be on a topic or your choosing that is relevant to the course. You may also elect to write one 2500-word essay on a topic of your choice. This paper will be worth 50% of your grade. These topics must be pre-approved. Regardless of whether you choose the one-paper or two-paper option, you must make notable use of course readings in your paper(s). "Notable" means that you refer to at least two of the course readings and do so in a manner that incorporates some of the points and arguments into your paper. **Papers that do not refer to and cite from course readings will not pass.** Similarly, research papers that do not use outside material, meaning texts not required for this course, will not be accepted. If you use a computer word processing program, keep a copy of your work on a backup disk and back up your files regularly. Loss of a computer file will not be accepted as an excuse for not turning in work on time. The two exams will have a section of short answers and essay questions. I will hand out a study sheet one or two weeks prior to each exam. Exams will be closely monitored and written assignments will be checked for plagiarism. It is your responsibility to know what plagiarism is and to avoid it. Anyone caught cheating or turning in plagiarized work

will fail the course and will be reported to appropriate university officials.

Attendance Requirements

Class participation is an integral part of the course. Failure to attend class regularly will harm your final grade. **Note: the readings will be supplemented with lectures, and material from these lectures will appear on the exams.** Students who are not listed on the official class roll are not properly registered for the course, will not be allowed to attend class, and will not receive a grade for the course under any circumstances. Students bear the responsibility for ensuring that they are listed on the official class roll. Students with disabilities: If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Office of Student Life, Room 203, Student Union.

Student behavior/classroom decorum: Free discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable. Examples may include routinely entering class late or departing early; use of beepers, cellular telephones, or other electronic devices; repeatedly talking in class without being recognized; talking while others are speaking; or arguing in a way that is perceived as "crossing the civility line." In the event of a situation where a student legitimately needs to carry a beeper/cellular telephone to class, prior notice and approval of the instructor is required, and students who have such approval must use the device that vibrates instead of ringing.

Students may not bring to class any children, family members, friends, or others not registered for the course except for sign-language interpreters, note-takers, or other helpers allowed by the ADA and approved by the Office of Student Affairs. No animals are allowed in the classroom except for approved seeing-eye dogs. Eating and smoking in class are prohibited. Students may consume non-alcoholic beverages in class but must properly dispose of bottles/cans/cups.

Grading:

At the end of the semester, all students who have completed all the requirements listed above will have a certain number of points out of a hundred (e.g., possible of 20 on midterm, 30 on final, etc.). Students with a grade between 90-100 will receive an A, 80-90 a B, 70-80 a C, 60-70 a D, and below 60 an F. Incomplete (I) grades: University policy states that the grade of "I"

(incomplete) will be given only for work which is of passing quality at examination time but which, because of circumstances beyond the student's control, is not complete. This means, first of all, that students may receive an "I" grade only in the case of sudden dire emergencies, for example, severe and prolonged illness or injury requiring lengthy hospitalization. Students may not receive an "I" grade for prolonged absences over which they do have some control, for example, incarceration or court-ordered rehabilitation for chemical dependency. Secondly, instructors may give a student an "I" grade only if the student has completed all required assignments with due dates prior to the date of the emergency, with a passing grade. In those rare and extraordinary cases in which an "I" grade is given, the instructor and student must complete an "I" Contract form in the department office and obtain the department head's approval. No "I" grades can be given after the end of the final exam period. Students who receive "I" grades must follow the procedure for removing the "I" described in the current *Southeastern General Catalogue*, or the grade will become an "F".

Posting Grades:

During the semester grades will not be posted for this class. All graded assignments will be returned in class as soon as they are graded. The instructor is required to keep final exams on file for a year following completion of the course. Final course grades will be posted on the Peoplesoft system. Do not call the department office or the instructor's office to ask about grades—it is illegal to give such information over the phone.

Reading Assignments

Aug 18 Introduction
 Aug 23 Schiller, "The Nature and Value of Universal History" (web).
 Aug 25 Humboldt, "On the Historian's Task" (web)
 Aug 30 Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, Introduction
 Sep 1 "
 Sep 6 No Class. Labor day.
 Sep 8 " Oriental World
 Sep 13 Oriental World, end.
 Sep 15 Greek World
 Study Guide for Midterm posted.
 Sep 20 German World
 Sep 22 German World
 Review for Midterm.

Sep 27 **Midterm.**
1000 word paper topics posted.
 Sep 29 Nietzsche, "The Use and Abuse of History," pp. 96-113.
 Oct 4 "Use and Abuse of History," pp. 113-34.
 Oct 6 Windelband, "On History and Natural Science" (web).
 Oct 11 Collingwood, "Are History and Science Different Kinds of Knowledge" (web).
 Oct 13 Walter Benjamin, "Concept of History" *1000 word Papers due*
 Oct 18 Wallerstein, "A World-System Perspective on the Social Sciences" (web).
 Oct 20 Collins, "Market Dynamics as the Engine of Historical Change" (web).
 Oct 25 "
 Oct 27 "
Oct 29 is last day to withdraw or drop
 Nov 1 McNeill, "Mythhistory, or Myth, Truth, History and Historians" (web)
 Nov 3 "
 Nov 8 Ginzburg, "Clues: Roots of a Scientific Program" (web).
 Nov 10 "
 Nov 15 Carr, "Narrative and the Real World: An Argument for Continuity" (web).
 Nov 17 "
 Nov 22 David Christian, "The Return of Universal History"
 Nov 24 No Class. Thanksgiving holiday.
 Nov 29 "
 Dec 1 "
Review for final.
Research Papers Due.
 Dec 9 (Thursday) **Final Exam: 12:30-2:30pm**