

The University of Auckland
Department of Philosophy

**PHIL 215/335:
20th Century French Philosophy**

Semester 1, 2014

A. General Course Information

A.1. Teaching staff

Lecturer: Dr Dominic Griffiths

Consultations: Room 205, Arts II

Office hour: Tuesday: 09:00-10:00

dgri051@aucklanduni.ac.nz

A.2. Course description

We will study the development of 20th century French philosophy, moving from Existentialism through to Poststructuralism. This will include a critical examination of a selection of thinkers, namely Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Simon de Beauvoir, Ferdinand de Saussure, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Jean Baudrillard and Alain Badiou. A main goal will be to understand how, across the century, the foundations of French philosophizing in the areas of metaphysics, ethics, social philosophy and literary theory shifted from a close attention to the lived qualities of individual experience, to a more social, language-centred understanding of people, as they stand within, and are significantly constituted by, historically variable social contexts. We will also explore how 20th century French philosophy embodied a revolutionary, anti-authoritarian spirit that was influenced significantly by the thought of Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud.

A.3. Learning outcomes

Students are expected to gain familiarity with the defining movements and concepts in 20th Century French Philosophy and to develop an understanding of some major thinkers from this period. By the end of the course students will have grown in their ability to reflect upon philosophical issues of contemporary interest, and be able to articulate their own views concerning these issues in a way that demonstrates familiarity with the recent French philosophical thought.

A.4. Prerequisites

For Stage II students: Any 30 points in Philosophy or EUROPEAN 100 and 15 points in Philosophy.

For Stage III students: Any 30 points at Stage II in Philosophy or EUROPEAN 100 and 15 points at Stage II in Philosophy.

A.5. Lectures and tutorials

The course is taught through weekly lectures and tutorials. Students are expected to attend both regularly.

Lectures are scheduled for Monday 14:00 – 16:00, 201N-370 (Human Sciences - North, Rm 370)

Tutorials are scheduled for Tuesday 08:00 – 09:00, 273-104 (Fale Pacifica, Rm 104) or,
Tuesday 10:00 – 11:00, 273-107 (Fale Pacifica, Rm 107)

You will need to sign up for tutorials on SSO (Student Services Online).

A.6. Texts and recommended reading

All **required reading** and **further reading** is available via CECIL.

The following texts are recommended reading. All of these titles are available in the Short Loan Collection of the library, or electronically through the library website.

Wicks, Robert. *Modern French Philosophy: From Existentialism to Postmodernism*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2003. (Also accessible via Library website as an eBook.)

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Essays in existentialism*, edited by Wade Baskin. Secaucus, N.J.: Carol Publishing, 1997.

Camus, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus, and Other Essays*, translated by Justin O'Brien. New York: Vintage Books, 1991.

Caws, Peter. *Structuralism: The Art of the Intelligible*. New Jersey and London: Humanities Press, 1988.

Sturrock, John (ed.) *Structuralism and Since: From Lévi-Strauss to Derrida*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Barker, Philip. *Michel Foucault: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998.

Hill, Leslie. *The Cambridge Introduction to Jacques Derrida*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

May, Todd. *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. (Also accessible via Library website as an eBook.)

Hallward, Peter. *Badiou: A Subject to Truth*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003. (Also accessible via Library website as an eBook.)

The follow internet resources will provide to be invaluable for this course:

Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, access online through the UoA library databases

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://plato.stanford.edu/>

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

A.7. Study commitments

In line with the University of Auckland Workload Guidelines, this course requires on average 10 hours of work per week, including attendance at lectures and tutorials, preparation for tutorials, completing the weekly readings, and preparing work for assessments.

You may wish to organise your 10 hours per week in something like the following way:

2 hrs	lecture
1hr	tutorial
4 hrs	required reading and further reading, including taking notes or writing summaries
3 hrs	recommended reading (see A.6. above), or finish off further reading, or coursework essay, or exam revision

A.8. Grievance procedures

If you have any problems or complaints concerning your work in a particular course, you should take them in the first instance to the relevant lecturer or tutor. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved in this way, then you should refer it to the Course supervisor of the course concerned. If your problem is still not resolved, then you should refer it to the Head of Department.

Any general problem concerning the running of the Department and Department policy should be referred in the first instance to the Head of Department. Where problems arise concerning a particular course it is often useful to consult the student class representative on the Staff/Student Consultative Committee.

The University of Auckland *Student Learning and Research Grievances Procedures for Undergraduate Students* may be consulted at the following website: <http://www.ausa.auckland.ac.nz/wave/grievance.html>

The University has a network of contact people who will help both students and staff who experience harassment in the course of academic life and work. Information about Resolve (the Harassment Support Network), and the University Mediator, may be found at the following website: <http://www.auckland.ac.nz/mdr/>

B. Assessment

B.1. Assessment components

<i>Weight:</i>	
1. Weekly writing tasks	10%
2. Coursework essay	40%
3. Final exam	50%

B.2. Weekly writing tasks

Each week you are asked to complete the following short writing task:

Accompanying each week's required reading in the course outline is a question. This question is meant to help you focus on a central argument or concept in the reading for that week. **Write a short response to this question each week—between 150 and 250 words—and submit it via Turnitin before the lecture.**

See B.3.3 below for instructions on setting up and using Turnitin.

In total, **because of the public holiday on Monday 2 June**, there will be 10 short writing tasks to complete, one for each week of lectures excluding the first. *Your best 9 marks will count.* **If you complete less than 9 assignments you will not receive any marks for this portion of the assessment.**

Marking: Only responses received via Turnitin *prior to the corresponding lecture* will be marked; otherwise you will receive 0 (out of 2) for that writing task. If some kind of **adequate response to the question** that meets the minimum word limit is received on time, you will receive 1 (out of 2). If a response is received, it meets the word limit and it **demonstrates that you have engaged thoughtfully with the reading**, you will receive 2 (out of 2). You can demonstrate that you have engaged with the reading by including in your answer relevant quotations and/or relevant summaries of the material.

B.3. Coursework essay

**** Due date: Monday, 28th April by 2pm ****

The **word limit** is **1500 words** for Stage II students; **2500 words** for Stage III students. Please record the word count on the title page of your submitted essay. (Strictly no more than 10% over the word limit and no less than 20% under the word limit. Essays that are not within these limits will be penalized 10%. The word count does not include footnotes or bibliography, but footnotes should be kept to a minimum.)

B.3.1. Essay questions

Essay questions and instructions will be available in class and on CECIL on the 31 March.

B.3.2. Submission and late submission

Submitting your essays:

- (1) Complete and attach the Philosophy Department's coversheet to your essay and submit it at General Reception, level 3, Arts I.
- (2) You must also submit your essay electronically to Turnitin (see instructions below).

Late essays: A 5% penalty will be applied if the essay is less than one week late; a 10% penalty will be applied if the essay is more than one week but less than two weeks late. No essays will be accepted after two weeks from the due date. Late essays will receive no feedback.

Extensions will only be granted under very rare circumstances, i.e. due to a doctor-certified medical debilitation or other documented tragedy. Heavy work-load will not be considered grounds for an extension. If you can demonstrate that your circumstances warrant an extension, permission must be sought from the lecturer **prior** to the due date. Do not assume that your request for an extension will be granted.

B.3.3. Turnitin

Go to Turnitin.com. Create a profile if you need to (click 'new user' and follow the instructions). Once you have created an account you can 'sign in' to a course, which involves entering the seven-digit course code, with the name of the course as the password:

Phil 221: Class ID: **7729844**
Enrolment password: PHIL215

Phil 341: Class ID: **7729849**
Enrolment password: PHIL335

For further details, see the PDF file "Turnitin for students: what it is and how to use it", which will be made available via CECIL.

For further information on the use of Turnitin, see <http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/pid/uoa-home/current-students/cs-academic-information/cs-academic-honesty>

Note that, as well as submitting the essay to Turnitin, a hard copy with a coversheet must be submitted in the usual way to the Philosophy Department Office.

B.3.4. Guidelines for format and style of essays

Please ensure that your essay is properly referenced. In this course, **we require that you use the Chicago referencing style**. Make sure you understand it, learn it, and use it consistently. Instructions on using the Chicago style and others can be found on the Student Learning Centre website: <http://www.cite.auckland.ac.nz/quick.php>. See also the 'quick guide' on the Chicago Style at: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/>. The style will also be discussed in lectures, and a sample document in Chicago Style will be posted on CECIL for you to examine.

N.B. When citing works found on Cecil, cite the original source and page number(s) where possible.

More extensive advice on formatting and style will be provided in a document posted on CECIL. Please make sure you consult it.

B.4. Final examination

The final examination will be a **2-hour** examination. **Stage II students** will be asked to answer **three (3)** unseen essay questions. **Stage III students** will be asked to answer **two (2)** unseen essay questions. More information on the structure of the exam will be given after the mid-semester break.

Examinations are held in the three weeks at the end of each semester after lectures finish. The examination times are noted in the information for each course on SSO, the University's on-line enrolment system. If you accidentally miss an examination you should go immediately to the Examinations Office. If you are ill or suffer some other problem that seriously interferes with your examination performance or preparation, and wish to apply for aegrotat or compassionate consideration, you should consult the Examinations Office and see Student Health or Counselling urgently. (Do NOT wait to see your results first!) You should always sit your examination if at all possible.

B.5. Plagiarism

Students should be aware of the plagiarism policy of the University and comply with it.

The University asks us to advise you of the following:

The University of Auckland will not tolerate cheating, or assisting others to cheat, and views cheating in coursework as a serious academic offence. The work that a student submits for grading must be the student's own work, reflecting his or her learning. Where work from other sources is used, it must be properly acknowledged and referenced. This requirement also applies to sources on the world-wide web. A student's assessed work may be reviewed against electronic source material using computerised detection mechanisms. Upon reasonable request, students may be required to provide an electronic version of their work for computerised review.

The policy of the Department of Philosophy is as follows:

Plagiarism is taking and using as your own the work or thoughts of another person. The University and the Philosophy Department regard plagiarism as completely unacceptable. Wherever you make use of work or ideas of other people, published or unpublished, these must be properly cited and acknowledged. This includes material obtained from the World Wide Web. Acknowledgement is usually done by providing a reference (either in a footnote or in brackets in the text) to where the material can be found. Failure to fully acknowledge the work of others in your essays will result in a mark of zero for the offending essay, and may also result in a mark of zero for the entire coursework component of the relevant course. Students who plagiarise will not receive the benefit of plussage in courses which offer that option: the calculation of their final mark will include the mark of zero given for the coursework component.

If you prepare for essays by copying out sentences or passages from texts and references, you must make sure to keep a clear record for yourself of where the material comes from, and of what is quotation and what is your own summary or comment. Anything that is quoted should be indented or appear within quotation marks.

Simply pasting together passages, or close summaries of passages, from things you have been reading (whether these are texts, suggested reading, or lecture handouts) can amount to plagiarism. Even if you give references in footnotes and in your Bibliography, and are not intending to deceive the marker into thinking that you have thought and said these things yourself, you will be penalised for this sort of essay preparation. A marker cannot give you a grade for your ability in the course unless you can put things into your own words, to show your own understanding of what is being said.

For further information and advice on how to avoid plagiarism, see "Plagiarism and Cheating" at <http://www.arts.auckland.ac.nz/students>. You may also wish to consult the University's "Guidelines: Conduct of Coursework", and (if you are a research student) "Guidelines: Conduct of Research" at the following websites:

<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/fms/default/uoa/about/teaching/policiesprocedures/docs/conductcoursework.pdf>
<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/fms/default/uoa/about/teaching/policiesprocedures/docs/conductresearch.pdf>

C. Course content

C.1. Lectures and readings

Lectures in this course are designed to provide a general introduction to the themes and figures under discussion. Some attention will be given to the set readings in lectures, but the tutorials will provide the main forum for discussion of the set readings. Therefore, it is imperative that you study the set readings carefully prior to each tutorial. The Further Reading in most cases will provide help with the Required Reading.

Lecture 1. Introduction: Historical background and overview

- Required reading: Badiou, Alain. "The Adventure of French Philosophy." *New Left Review* 35 (2005): 67-77.
Rockmore, Tom. *Heidegger and French Philosophy. Humanism, Antihumanism and being*, 1-17. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Further reading: Paulson, William, "Intellectuals." In *The Cambridge Companion to Modern French Culture*, edited by Nicholas Hewitt, 145-164. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Lecture 2. Jean-Paul Sartre [Existentialism]

- Required reading: Sartre, Jean-Paul. 'Existentialism is a Humanism.' In *Existentialism from Dostoyevsky to Sartre*, translated by Walter Kaufmann, 287-311. New York: Meridian Books, 1956.
- Further reading: Daigle, Christine. *Jean-Paul Sartre*, 59-71 & 86-97. London: Routledge, 2010.
- Writing task: Explain the claim that "existence precedes essence." (289). [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 10/03/2014]

Lecture 3. Simone de Beauvoir [Existentialism]

- Required reading: de Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. Translated and edited by H.M. Parshley, 274 & 642-673. London: Jonathan Cape, 1956.
- Further reading: Andrew, Barbara. 'Beauvoir's place in philosophical thought'. In *The Cambridge Companion to Simone de Beauvoir*, edited by Claudia Card, 24-45. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- de Beauvoir, Simone. 'What is Existentialism?' In *Simone de Beauvoir: Philosophical Writings*, edited by Margaret A. Simons, Marybeth Timmermann and Mary Beth Mader, 323-326. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004.
- Writing task: Explain the relationship between labour and emancipation in de Beauvoir's account of the subordinate position of woman in society. [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 17/03/2014]

Lecture 4. Albert Camus [Existentialism]

- Required reading: Camus, Albert. *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, translated by Justin O'Brien, 2-12, 34-44 & 75-78 [as per Pdf]. New York: Knopf, 1955.
- Further reading: Sherman, David. *Camus*, 21-55. Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, 2009.
- Writing task: Why/how does one 'imagine Sisyphus happy?' (Pdf: 78). [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 24/03/2014]

Lecture 5. Ferdinand de Saussure [Structuralist Linguistics] & Claude Lévi-Strauss [Structuralist Anthropology]

Required reading: de Saussure, Ferdinand, *Course in General Linguistics*, edited by Charles Bally & Albert Sechehaye, translated by Wade Baskin, 65-100. New York: Philosophical Library, 1959.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude, "The Structural Study of Myth". *The Journal of American Folklore* 68, no. 270 (1955): 428-444.

Further reading: Wicks, Robert. *Modern French Philosophy. From Existentialism to Postmodernism*, 99-124. Oxford: Oneworld, 2003.

Writing task: Explain a consequence that results from the arbitrary nature of the sign, according to de Saussure. [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 31/03/2014]

Lecture 6. Jacques Lacan [Psychoanalyst]

Required reading: Lacan, Jacques. "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience." In *Écrits*, translated by Bruce Fink, 75-81. New York: Norton, 2006.

Interview with Jacques Lacan Published in *L'Express* in May 1957. <http://braungardt.trialectics.com/sciences/psychoanalysis/jacques-lacan/interview-jacques-lacan/>

Further reading: Homer, Sean. *Jacques Lacan*, 1-12 & 17-31. Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.

Writing task: What occurs at the end of the 'mirror stage'? [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 07/04/2014]

Semester break 14 April – 26 April

Movies to watch over the semester break:

The Battle for Algiers (2004). Directed by Gillo Pontecorvo (AV Library DVD-V LD08-0897)

Of gods and men (2011). Directed by Xavier Beauvois (AV Library DVD-V OF GODS AND MEN)

The 400 blows (2002). Directed by Francois Truffaut (AV Library DVD-V 400 BLOWS)

Holy Motors (2012). Directed by Leos Carax (AV Library DVD-V LD13-0420)

ESSAYS DUE MONDAY 28 APRIL

Lecture 7. Michel Foucault [Structuralism to Post-structuralism]

Required reading: Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan, 195-228. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Further reading: Rabinow, Paul. "Introduction". In *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow, 3-29. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.

Writing task: Explain the relationship between the panopticon and power. [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 28/04/2014]

Lecture 8. Jacques Derrida [Deconstruction]

Required reading: Derrida, Jacques. "Différance". In *The Margins of Philosophy*, translated by Alan Bass, 1-27. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982.

Further reading: Royle, Nicholas. *Jacques Derrida*, 1-19 & 71-83. London: Routledge, 2003.

Writing task: Why, according to Derrida, is *différance* neither 'a word nor concept'? (4) [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 05/05/2014]

Lecture 9. Gilles Deleuze [Post-structuralism]

Required reading: Deleuze, Gilles. *Difference and Repetition*, translated by Paul Patton, xv-11, 28-33 & 70-75. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Further reading: May, Todd. *Gilles Deleuze. An Introduction*, 1-25. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Writing task: Why does Deleuze think repetition is a transgression? (3). [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 12/05/2014]

Lecture 10. Jean Baudrillard [Postmodernism]

Required reading: Baudrillard, Jean. *Basic Writings*, edited by Mark Poster, 10-28 & 166-184. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

Further reading: Jane, Richard. *Jean Baudrillard*. 12-15, 27-43 & 83-101. London: Routledge, 2000.

Writing task: What does Baudrillard mean when he writes that the map precedes the territory? (166) [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 19/05/2014]

Lecture 11. Jean-Francois Lyotard [Postmodernism]

Required reading: Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi, xxiii-6 & 71-82. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Further reading: Malpas, Simon. *Jean-Francois Lyotard*, 1-11 & 15-32. London: Routledge, 2003.

Writing task: Explain what Lyotard sees as the crisis of legitimation. [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 26/05/2014]

Monday 2 June is a public holiday so the below material will not be taught or examined. The writing task does not have to be completed. The readings will be available on CECIL for those interested.

Lecture 12. Alain Badiou [“Post” post-structuralism?]

Required reading: Badiou, Alain. *Manifesto for Philosophy*, translated by Norman Madarsz, 27-39. Albany: State University of New York Press. 1999.

Badio, Alain. *Being and Event*, translated by Oliver Feltham, 1-6 & 23-30. London: Continuum, 2007.

Further reading: Pluth, Ed. Badiou. *A Philosophy of the New*, 17-21 & 29-47. Cambridge: Polity Press: 2010.

Writing task: Why, according to Badiou, have philosophers decided to plead guilty? [Submission via Turnitin 14:00pm, 02/06/2014]

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