

PHIL 3142 Existentialism and Phenomenology

MW12 Mon, Wed 12:50pm – 2:05pm

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The course offers an overview of the main topics and issues that characterize the philosophical movement known in the 19th and 20th century as “existentialism”.

Our principal objective throughout the course will be to follow the different ways in which philosophers have been addressing issues concerning the meaning of life and death, the significance of human individuality against the power of universal reason, the relationship between reason and faith, the place of the human subject in the world of nature and history, and the meaning of historical and individual contingency.

We will read, among others, selections of work by the following authors: Hegel (Phenomenology of Spirit, master-slave dialectic), Kierkegaard (Fear and Trembling), Nietzsche, Heidegger, Dostoevsky (Notes from Underground), Sartre, and Buber (I and Thou).

Objectives of the course are learning to read, analyze, and critically interpret philosophical texts, as well as assessing historical transformations of philosophical ideas.