

# PL 320 Nietzsche: Philosophy at the Limit

Instructor: Tracy Colony  
Course times: Tuesday & Thursday 17:30-19:00  
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Office Hours: TBA

## Course Description

The influence of Nietzsche's work upon later continental philosophy is perhaps unparalleled. In this advanced course we will read selections from his major works in order to introduce central themes of his philosophy such as the will to power, the eternal recurrence and the death of God. Reading chronologically, we will trace through the development of Nietzsche's thought with special attention to Nietzsche's understanding of metaphysics and his preparations for an alternative future for philosophy. Of particular importance will be the role which Nietzsche's understanding of genealogy plays in these preparations. In this course we will also chart the history of the reception of Nietzsche's philosophy and become familiar with seminal works in the secondary literature such as those of Heidegger, Deleuze, Derrida, and Malabou. All texts will be read in translation, however, parallel readings in the original German will be supported and encouraged.

## Requirements

Attendance is required in all classes. Absences are registered in all classes, and lateness is registered as an absence. More than two absences in a semester will affect your participation grade for the class. For periods of illness or leaves of absence consult the Student Handbook.

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FALL 2021:** Some students may need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

**Assessment and Writing Assignments:** There will be specific reading assignments for each meeting. Everyone is expected to have done all assigned reading in advance. There will be a midterm essay of 2000 words due at 23:59 on October 16. There will be a final essay of 3000 words due at 23:59 on December 17. Each person will be required to give one 15 min. in class presentation introducing the specific reading for that meeting.

**Policy on Late Submission of Papers:** All written work must be submitted electronically and on time. As the Student Handbook states: essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+ for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

## Course Readings

Book to be purchased:

(Keith Ansell Pearson and Duncan Large eds.) 2005. *The Nietzsche Reader*, revised edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers (ISBN-13: 978-0631226543).

## Grade Breakdown

Midterm Essay 20%

Final Essay 30%

Presentation 20%

Participation 30%

## Schedule

All selections are taken from Keith Ansell Pearson and Duncan Large (eds.) *The Nietzsche Reader*

Aug. 31 Introduction (no readings)

Sept. 2 Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Birth of Tragedy," pp. 42-54

Sept. 7 Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Birth of Tragedy," pp. 54-66

Sept. 9 Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Birth of Tragedy," pp. 66-87

Sept. 14 Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," pp. 114-118

Sept. 16 Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," pp. 118-123

Sept. 21 Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," pp. 124-135

Sept. 23 Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," pp. 135-141

Sept. 28 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Human, All Too Human," pp. 161-190

Sept. 30 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Daybreak," pp. 191-206

Oct. 5 Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Gay Science," pp. 207-219

Oct. 7 Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Gay Science," pp. 219-237

Oct. 12 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra," pp. 254-270

Oct. 14 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra," pp. 270-277

Fall Break

Oct. 26 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Thus Spoke Zarathustra," pp. 277-292

Oct. 28 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Beyond Good and Evil," pp. 311-324

Nov. 2 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Beyond Good and Evil," pp. 324-335

Nov. 4 Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Gay Science V," pp. 362-383

Nov. 9 Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Genealogy of Morals," pp. 390-424

Nov. 11 Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche* vol. 1, lectures 24 and 25, pp. 200-220

Nov. 16 Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Genealogy of Morals," pp. 424-435

Nov. 18 Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* chapter 2 "Active and Reactive," pp. 39-72

Nov. 23 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Twilight of the Idols," pp. 458-473

Nov. 25 Jacques Derrida, *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, pp. 35-83

Nov. 30 Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Anti-Christ," pp. 486-499

Dec. 2 Catherine Malabou, "The Eternal Return and the Phantom of Difference"

Dec. 7 Friedrich Nietzsche, "Ecce Homo," pp. 500-516

Dec. 9 Final Summary

Dec. 13-17 Completion Week