

M: Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of the course the successful student will be able to:

- 1) Identify the major themes of the existentialist movement.
- 2) Be familiar with the phenomenological method, as it is employed by existential thinkers, and be able to discuss and explain it.
- 3) Relate the traditional problems of moral and political theory, and of religion, to contemporary social issues by means of the “methodology” of existentialism.
- 4) Relate the major themes of existentialism to other major philosophies.

N: Course Content:

This course is designed to deal with:

- 1) A systematic survey of the philosophical, historical and cultural backgrounds of the existentialist movement. In particular, it will study Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, considered as pioneers of the movement.
- 2) The phenomenological method which the representatives of existentialism claim to employ. This study will entail an examination of the idea of phenomenology as originally conceived by Husserl and of its later modification by existential thinkers such as Heidegger and Sartre.
- 3) A systematic survey of the common main themes of the movement: “the experience of nothingness”, “existence”, “being”, “the absurd”, “death”, “the problem of time”, “freedom”, “authenticity”, “the other”.
- 4) The central ideas of major modern existential thinkers such as Sartre, Kierkegaard, Jaspers and Heidegger.
- 5) An examination of some major commentaries on existentialism, for example those of Walter Kaufmann and Colin Wilson.
- 6) An examination of some contemporary attempts to rehabilitate and reinterpret existentialism in the light of criticisms raised in 5).

O: Methods of Instruction:

The course will employ a variety of instructional methods to accomplish its objectives, including some of the following:

The course invites (but does not insist upon) student-participation through seminars. An informal, open lecture method, with ample opportunity for discussion will be provided. There are two major assignments, either two essays or one essay and one seminar. A core of basic books on existentialism will be placed on reserve in the library and a supplementary reading list for any desired additional study.

P: Textbooks and Materials to be Purchased by Students:

Texts will be updated periodically. Typical examples are:

Michael Novak. The Experience of Nothingness. Harper, 1971.

Walter Kaufmann. Existentialism from Dostoyevsky to Sartre. Meridian, 1956.

William v. Spanos. Existentialism 2, A Casebook. T.Y. Crowell Co., 1966.

Q: Means of Assessment:

Evaluation will be based on course objectives and will be carried out in accordance with Douglas College policy. The instructor will provide a written course outline with specific criteria during the first week of classes.

An example of a possible evaluation scheme would be:

Essay One	20%
Essay Two or Seminar	20%
Other Evaluation (Consisting of options determined by the instructor)	20%
General Instructor Evaluation *	
a) Participation	
b) Improvement	
c) Quizzes, etc. as specified by instructor	<u>40%</u>
	100%

R: Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition: specify whether course is open for PLAR

No.

Course Designer(s): Brian Davies

Education Council / Curriculum Committee Representative

Dean / Director

Registrar