

This seminar introduces the thought of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) by focusing on selected themes such as his critique of morality and religion, the problem of nihilism, perspectivism, the transvaluation of all values, living dangerously, pity and nausea, the overman, eternal recurrence, and the will to power. We will explore the relationship between Nietzsche's style and his thought, and we will examine how Nietzsche's ideas developed by reading Hollingdale's biography and the following works:

Learning Goals:

- (1) Study what Nietzsche said in eight major works and some unpublished writings.
- (2) Practice interpreting (in responsible and creative ways) what Nietzsche said.
- (3) Acquire a sense for the development of Nietzsche's thought.
- (4) Place Nietzsche's ideas in the context of his times, his personal life, and the history of Western philosophy
- (5) Taste diverse interpretations of Nietzsche by a few well known philosophers.
- (6) Develop subtle reading, writing, and analytical skills, including critical evaluation.
- (7) Practice writing both shorter and longer philosophical essays.
- (8) Practice working together with others in class.
- (9) Explore your own views about Nietzschean themes to develop your own philosophy of life

Texts:

1. Hollingdale, R.J., Nietzsche: The Man and His Philosophy, Revised Edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999/2001).
2. Nietzsche, Friedrich, Beyond Good and Evil trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1966).
3. -----, The Birth of Tragedy and the Case of Wagner trans Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1967).
4. -----, The Gay Science trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).
5. -----, On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1969).
6. -----, Thus Spoke Zarathustra trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1961).
7. -----, Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968).
8. Tanner, Michael, Nietzsche: A Very Short Introduction (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Schedule of Assignments:

24: Introduction--

- (a) Existential themes: Gill & Sherman, from The Fabric of Existentialism (handout);
- (b) The Birth of Tragedy (1872): Attempt at a Self-Criticism (1886) & sections 1-16 (1872) (pp. 18-104); optional: sections 17-25;
- (c) Ecce Homo (1888), pp. 270-275 on The Birth of Tragedy;
- (d) Hollingdale, Ch. 5-8 (this includes pp. 78-85 on The Birth of Tragedy);
- (e) Tanner, Ch. 1-3.

26: Ecce Homo (1888), pp. 293-294 on The Gay Science;

- Preface (1886) for the Second Edition to The Gay Science, pp. 32-38;
- Prelude in German Rhymes (1881-82) to The Gay Science, #3, 7, 9, 23, 33, 47, 52, 54, 62, 63;
- The Gay Science, Book One, sections 1-56 & Book Two, sections 57-59 (1881-82).

****Recommended****: Hollingdale, Ch. 1-4.

28 (Friday, 3:45-4:30): Optional discussion of Hollingdale, Ch. 1-4.

31: The Gay Science, Book Two, sections 106-107 & Book Three, sections 108-275 (1881-82).

- 2: The Gay Science, Book Four, sections 276-315 (1881-82); Alex (Terence); Terence (Alex) Tanner, Ch. 4-5.

- 7: The Gay Science, Book Four, sections 316-342 (1881-82); Jeremy (Warren)
Hollingdale, Ch. 9.

- 9: The Gay Science, Book Five, sections 343-360 (1887). Warren (Jeremy)

14: The Gay Science, Book Five, sections 361-383 (1887) & Appendix (1887)--Songs of Prince

Vogelfrei: To Goethe, p. 351; Toward New Seas-Sila Maria, p. 371; To the Mistral, pp. 373-5;

Hollingdale, Ch. 10. Ely (?)

16: Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Zarathustra's Prologue, pp. 39-53 & First Part (1883), pp. 54-78.

21: Ecce Homo (1888), pp. 295-309 on Thus Spoke Zarathustra;

Thus Spoke Zarathustra, First Part (1883), pp. 78-104 & Second Part (1883), pp. 107-133;
Hollingdale, Ch. 11; Annick (Charles)
Tanner, 6.

23: Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Second Part (1883), pp. 133-169. Charles (Annick)

28: Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Third Part (1884), pp. 175-213; Adam (Dan) Heidegger, "Who Is Nietzsche's Zarathustra?" (handout).

- 2: Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Third Part (1884), pp. 214-247; Dan (Adam)
Stambaugh, "The Other Nietzsche" (handout).

4: (Friday, 3:45-4:30): Optional discussion of Essay #1 topics.

- 7: Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Fourth Part (1885), pp. 251-294.
 9: Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Fourth Part (1885), pp. 294-335.
 11 (Friday): Essay #1 due in Ladd 217 by 10:00 a.m. sharp.

14 Spring
 16 break

- 21: Ecce Homo (1888), pp. 310-311 on Beyond Good and Evil;
Beyond Good and Evil (1886). pp. 1-56. Brian (Josh)
 23: Beyond Good and Evil (1886), pp. 59-94. Josh (Brian)
 28: Beyond Good and Evil (1886), pp. 95-141. Michelle (Zachary)
 30: Beyond Good and Evil (1886), pp. 145-198. Zachary (Michelle)

****Recommended****: Heidegger, “The Word of Nietzsche: ‘God Is Dead’” (handout).
 1: (Friday, 3:45-4:30): Optional discussion of Heidegger, “The Word of Nietzsche.”

- 4: Beyond Good and Evil (1886), pp. 201-245; John Thomas (Jeff)
 Hollingdale, Ch. 12.
 6: Ecce Homo (1888), pp.312-313 on On the Genealogy of Morals;
On the Genealogy of Morals (1887), Preface & First Essay. . Jeff (John Thomas)
 11: On the Genealogy of Morals (1887), Second Essay & Third Essay; Robert Y (Robert Z)
 Tanner, Ch. 7-8.
 13: Ecce Homo (1888), pp. 314-316 on Twilight of the Idols; .
Twilight of the Idols (1888), pp. 21-66. Robert Z (Robert Y)

15 (Friday, 3:45-4:30): Optional discussion of Essay #2 topics.

- 18: Twilight of the Idols (1888), pp. 67-111;
 Hollingdale, Ch. 13-15;
 Tanner, Ch. 9 & Postlude: Nietzsche and Life Insurance.
 20: The Anti-Christ (1888), pp. 114-187
****Recommended****: Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” (handout).
 22 (Friday, 3:45-4:30): Optional discussion of Foucault.
 25: Ecce Homo (1888), pp. 217-335;
 Hollingdale, Ch. 16-17;
 6 reports on Essay #2.
 27: “On the Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense“ (1873; from unpublished notebook) (handout);
 Essay #2 due in class; 6 reports on Essay #2.
 2: The Will to Power (1883-1888; excerpts from unpublished notebooks) (handout);
 Hollingdale, Postscript 1999 (and review Ch. 14); 6 reports on Essay #2.

Course Requirements:

(1)Participation (20%): Class attendance and regular participation in class discussion will count 20% of your final course grade.

(a)Participation in class is essential to your learning in this course, especially since this is a seminar. I urge you to participate actively in our class discussions. The quality of your comments is more important than the quantity of your comments. However, you should contribute to every class.

(b) ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED AT ALL CLASSES. Missing even one class will severely damage your grade. The only excused absences are for religious holidays or illness or family emergency. The following guidelines express my expectations about participation:

A or A- = attend all classes and make useful contributions in every class.

B+ or B = attend all classes and make regular contributions.

B- = attend all classes but seldom speak.

C, D, or F = one or more absences no matter how much you talk.

Please come to class on time. Please do not eat during class. Please turn off your cell phones or pagers. Unless it is absolutely necessary, please do not leave during class, since this distracts me and other students and suggests lack of attention on your part.

Since learning during class depends directly on the reading and writing assignments, all assignments must be completed on time. Your understanding of class discussions, and the quality of class discussion itself, depend on how well you have prepared the reading assignments, so read the assignments carefully and critically. Take notes or outline or highlight or underline the readings so you are well prepared for class discussion.

Skidmore's expectation is that students should study two hours outside of class for every hour of class time. Indeed, I expect you to spend 3 ½ hours preparing for each of our classes, and I have assigned work based on that expectation. I suggest that you work out a study schedule that sets aside a regular 3 ½ hour period of time to prepare for each class (perhaps a block of time before class on Mondays and Wednesdays).

(2) Reflection and Response (20%): Each person will present a written and oral Reflection, and a Response to someone else's Reflection, in the following way:

(a) For your assigned class (see Schedule of Assignments above), read the assignment and write a 2 page mini-essay on a specific passage. Type (single-space) the passage (or part of it) at the top of your Reflection and include the reference for it. Your Reflection must be absolutely no more than 2 typed pages (double-spaced). Bring 20 photo-copies (double-sided on a single sheet of paper) to class to distribute.

(b) Discuss your Reflection with the class after everyone has read it. Your assigned partner (named in parenthesis above) will begin discussion, then the rest of the class will also join in.

(c) Two days later, your assigned partner will give you and me her/his written Response in the form of a list of the most valuable comments (from her/him and others in class).

(d) In light of the oral and written comments, revise your Reflection. The revised Reflection must be absolutely no more than 3 typed pages (double-spaced).

Due dates are as follows—For Reflections due on Monday, the written Response is due on Wednesday, and the revised Reflection is due on Friday. For Reflections due on Wednesday, the written Response is due on Friday, and the revised Reflection is due on Monday.

The combination of (a)–(d) will count 20% of your final course grade.

3. Two Essays (30% each). Essay #1 will be due on Friday, March 11 in my office. Essay #2 will be due in class on April 27. I will provide detailed written instructions later. Each essay should be about 10 pages long (typed, double-spaced).

4. Recommended readings: There are three readings marked ****Recommended**** in the Schedule of Assignments above. To be eligible for a grade of A or A-, you must read them and discuss them with me. I will arrange brief (30-45 minutes) small group discussions outside of class (usually on Friday) to discuss them. Aside from eligibility for an A or A-, reading and discussing them will also earn extra-credit in case your grade is borderline.

There is no final exam for this course.

Office hours: I will be delighted to talk with you outside of class. Make an appointment or stop by during my office hours:

Monday & Wednesday: 2:00- 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday & Thursday: 5:00- 6:00 p.m.
Friday: 11:00-12:00 a.m.
(other times by appointment)

Email: jsmith@skidmore.edu

Office: Ladd 217.

Office Phone: (518) 580-5407 (Please do not call me at home.)