

The Analytic/Continental Divide in Philosophy

PHIL 6314 / HIST 6381

Wednesdays 4-6:45pm

Fall 2020 Syllabus

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Office Location and Hours: Wednesdays 4-5pm and by appointment

Appointments: <https://doodle.com/mm/matthewjbrown/book>

Course Modality and Expectations

Instructional Mode Remote/Virtual - Synchronous online learning at the day and time of the class.

Course Platform Microsoft Teams, primarily. eLearning for some assignments.

Expectations All students are expected to do the weekly readings and turn in all assignments, and to participate in class discussion and group projects either synchronously or asynchronously via Microsoft Teams. More details below under “Requirements.”

(But reasonable expectations) The pandemic is causing difficulties for all of us, some of which we have cannot have planned for, and none of which we deserve. I promise generosity and flexibility, and I ask it from you in return. We’ve had time to prepare, but unanticipated issues are to be expected. Let’s not treat this as business as usual. If you can, I encourage you to participate synchronously. Staying in touch that way can help. I would like you to use your cameras if possible; it seems to me to make the whole thing more humane, and I’m fine if you need to show up to class in pajamas and unkempt hair. Of course, some of

you will have bandwidth problems and can turn the camera off when they flare up. If you need to be asynchronous some or all of the time, I completely understand.

Asynchronous Learning Guidelines Asynchronous students will have access to any lecture materials via written or video recorded versions of the lecture on Teams and eLearning. They will be able to participate in asynchronous discussions and turn in all materials online via Teams and eLearning.

Course Description

From the late nineteenth century into the middle of the twentieth century, the discipline of philosophy began to divide into two movements or schools: “Analytic Philosophy” on the one hand and “Continental Philosophy” on the other. Through the latter half of the twentieth century to today, that divide has continued to be significant to many philosophers. The names reveal little about the nature of the two sides of the divide, as “Analytic Philosophy” refers to a method, logical or linguistic analysis, which is no longer widely practiced among so-called “analytic philosophers,” and “Continental Philosophy” refers to the European Continent, though practitioners from either school can be found in strong numbers in Continental Europe, the British Isles, the United States, and throughout the world, and arguably, both movements began in the late nineteenth century Germanic world. Analytic philosophy is the mainstream of the discipline, particularly in the Anglophone world, but continental philosophy is a sizable and vocal minority with strong ties to other disciplines in the humanities. The divide also leaves out various traditions of philosophy that do not fit with either side, such as American Pragmatism, traditional speculative philosophy, and the wide variety of philosophical traditions typically lumped into the category of “non-Western philosophy.” There are many conflicting explanations for what the divide amounts to, and little agreement about what constitutes the identity of either school.

This course is about the history and the historiography of philosophy, and particularly of the formation of this divide within the discipline of philosophy. We will engage philosophically with those who are considered “founding figures” of the tradition. We will also explore competing explanations from philosophers and intellectual historians about the causes, reasons, and nature of the divide, as well as exploring the significant common ground between

thinkers in the tradition. This includes a shared desire for a revolution in philosophy away from traditional metaphysics, shared interests in logic and its meaning for philosophy, a strong reaction against psychologism in philosophy, and an appreciation of the philosophical significance of language.

Is the analytic/continental divide a matter of philosophical methodology and the relative importance of language or subjective experience? Is it better understood as differing attitudes about the relevance of the history of philosophy to philosophy or of differing emphases on logic and science vs art and politics? Or is the difference largely sociological or political? If the latter, is the politics of the divide best understood as a flight of left-wing analytic philosophers from the rise of fascism and Nazism on the continent, and the complicity of major continental philosophers with the latter? Or is the significance of analytic philosophy best understood in terms of the depoliticization in the face of both Nazi and anti-communist/McCarthyist persecution? These are examples of some of the historiographical questions this course will investigate.

This course is cross-listed under two course descriptions:

PHIL 6314 Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Philosophy This course will focus on major thinkers, texts, and movements within nineteenth and twentieth-century philosophy.

Students with a primary interest in Philosophy will benefit from the close reading of foundational texts of the 19th and 20th centuries and the exploration of different interpretations of the formation of their discipline, focused on a divide that still resonates in contemporary philosophical practice.

HIST 6381 History of Modern Thought Introduction to and examination of the authors and texts influential in shaping modern Western culture since 1800. The course will treat philosophy as well as social, political, and religious thought during particular periods.

Students with a primary interest in Intellectual History will benefit from learning about modes of historiography of philosophy coming from both the disciplines of History and Philosophy, as well as sharpening their skills at the close reading of philosophical texts and historiographical analysis.

Course Goals

The proximate purpose of this class is to create a community of inquiry that will, for the period of fifteen weeks, embark on the collaborative exploration of the questions raised above, in order to understand how we should understand the analytic/continental divide in philosophy. This project is important both to the self-understanding of philosophers and to the history of ideas in the twentieth century.

The ultimate purposes of the class are (i) to contribute to the development of the skills and knowledge of the students in the course (see **Student Learning Objectives** below), (ii) to foster intellectual community in the History of Ideas program around issues related to the history and historiography of philosophy, and (iii) to further original research into our understanding of the analytic/continental divide.

Student Learning Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate close reading skills that allow them to understand the argument and deep structure of a text.
2. Students will demonstrate an ability to write cogently about the history of philosophy, aggregating relevant evidence and using it to support their interpretation.
3. Students will demonstrate advanced knowledge of foundational works in analytic and continental philosophy.
4. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the range of historiographical explanations for the analytic/continental divide in philosophy.
5. Students will develop skills of collaboration and communication with peers in pursuit of research and analysis.

Readings

Required Texts:

- Andreas Vrahimis, *Encounters Between Analytic and Continental Philosophy*
- Michael Beaney, *Analytic Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*
- Simon Critchley, *Continental Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*

- Michael Dummett, *Origins of Analytic Philosophy*
- Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways: Carnap, Cassirer, Heidegger*
- John McCumber, *Time in the Ditch: American Philosophy and the McCarthy Era*

Articles and other excerpts will be provided as PDFs via eLearning.

Schedule

Brief Schedule of Topics

1. Introduction: The History of Philosophy and the Historiography of Philosophy
2. A Survey of Accounts of Analytic and Continental Philosophy and their Divide
3. Frege & Husserl I
4. Frege & Husserl II
5. Russell, Bergson, and Costelloe
6. Heidegger's Early Work on Logic
7. Carnap and Heidegger on Metaphysics
8. Carnap, Heidegger, and the Kantian legacy
9. Ryle, Wittgenstein, and Heidegger
10. The Politics of the Divide: The Rise of Fascism on the Continent
11. Logical Positivism, Popper, and the Frankfurt School
12. Ryle and Phenomenology at the Royaumont Colloquium
13. Iris Murdoch, Mary Warnock, and Existentialism
14. The Politics of the Divide: The Cold War and Analytic Philosophy
15. Derrida and Searle

Requirements

Structure of the Course

1. Discussion of readings (~20%)
 - a. Synchronous video discussions
 - b. Asynchronous text chat discussions

2. Research clusters
 - a. Cluster presentations (~15%)
 - b. Shared bibliographies (~15%)
3. Term paper (~50%)

Course and Instructor Policies

Class Meeting expectations

You are expected to have **read the assignments *before* class**, and it would be to your benefit to also read them again after class. You are expected to **bring a copy of assigned readings** for each day's class, and have them available to refer to. You are expected to **listen respectfully** to the professor and your fellow students, and **participate** in class discussions and activities.

Failure to abide by these expectations will result in you being asked to leave the class meeting.

Late Work, Make-Up, and Completion

It is important to stay on track with the class schedule, or else you will fall behind and not be able to complete the work to a satisfactory standard. That said, our lives are under a lot of stress and turmoil at the moment. Extensions will be given upon request whenever asked, for any reason, as long as you ask ahead of time or as soon as possible after the deadline.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Don't do it! If you incorporate any work that is not your own into any project that you do, and you do not cite the source properly, this counts as plagiarism. This includes someone doing the work for you, taking work done by another student, verbatim copying of published sources, *paraphrasing* published work without citation, and paraphrasing in an inappropriate way even with citation. Re-using work created for another course also counts as plagiarism in most contexts. Unless group work is *explicitly* permitted or required, it is expected that all of the work that you turn in is original and your own, and that any sources that you make use of are correctly cited.

If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing, it is absolutely mandatory for me to turn you in to the Dean of Students Office of Community Standards and Conduct.

University Policies

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus: <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

A syllabus is a living document. This descriptions, timelines, and policies contained in this syllabus are subject to change in the interest of improving the quality of the course, at the discretion of the professor. Adequate notice will be provided for any changes, and in many cases they will be discussed with the class.