

Course Syllabus

Course Information

HUHI 6329 PHILOSOPHY & POETRY

Charles Bambach

SPRING 2020 T 4:00 PM- 6:45 PM **FOR POST-CORONA REVISION**

We will be meeting at our usual times for class on Tues. 4:00 PM, but now on the elearning website of UTD under the name “Blackboard Collaborate”....I may also decide to post or send via email shorter video presentations/ writings of mine where I do a close reading of a text under discussion. Check your email regularly for updates.

Professor Contact Information

My office hours, in JO 5.416, are from 3:00 PM-4:00 PM on Tuesday and by appointment; the phone number is 972-883-2006. My e-mail address is: cbambach@utdallas.edu

Course Description

In this graduate seminar, we will attempt to offer a way into twentieth-century continental philosophy by initiating a conversation between two major poets (Friedrich Holderlin & Paul Celan), read against the work of Martin Heidegger. By reading the works of these figures, we will try to come into a different experience of language---one which challenges the mere "representational" notion of words as tools in service of clear communication and exchange. Instead we will offer a vision of philosophical language that is itself "poetic." In so doing we shall try to rethink a proper relationship between language and "truth."

Some of our crucial questions will be: How can poetry properly come to an engagement with "truth", esp. a truth that has been covered over and concealed by our very practices of engaging language? How might a poetic sense of language challenge the traditional notion of philosophical writing as "assertoric" and innocent? What does it mean that philosophy turns to poetry as a way of rethinking what the technological dimension of language that has shaped modern discourse in the sciences and social sciences?

I choose these figures because it seems to me that the kind of writing/thinking that occurs here is decisive for a way of rethinking our very relation to language and understanding as a phenomenological process that changes and transforms our relation to ourselves, others, and the enviroing world.

We will read each work closely, sometimes spending an entire seminar session on a single poem, reading line-by-line in a slow, hermeneutically focused way. Holderlin's poems are difficult, resistant to easy analysis and requiring a rare concentration on detail, context, texture, resonance, and rhetorical frame. Part of my interest in our interpretations will be style, part translation--but the real focus here will be a philosophical reading of poetry that tries to grasp philosophy as a kind of poetic thinking. By reading each poetic text both

through and against Heidegger's/Derrida's philosophical writings, my hope is to spur a dialogue about language and hermeneutics in relation to the practice of philosophy itself.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes Students will learn interpretive skills in reading texts with care, improve their writing ability, and gain a hermeneutic awareness of the philosophical complexities in any approach to tragedy, poetry, and justice.

Required Textbooks and Materials

The following editions are REQUIRED. You may find them at the UTD Book Store, Off Campus Books, and commercially. It is imperative that you purchase the EXACT editions of these texts and NOT just any translation of these works.

Friedrich Hölderlin *Selected Poems and Fragments* (Penguin) **ISBN-10:** 0140424164

Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* (Harper Perennial) **ISBN-10:** 0060937289

Martin Heidegger, *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry* (Humanity Books) **ISBN-10:** 157392735X

Paul Celan *Selected Poems and Prose* (W.W. Norton) **ISBN-10:** 9780393322248

Suggested Course Materials

Martin Heidegger *Early Greek Thinking*

Charles Bambach *Thinking the Poetic Measure of Justice: Hölderlin-Heidegger-Celan*

Charles Bambach *Heidegger's Roots*

Jacques Derrida *Sovereignities in Question*

John Felstiner *Paul Celan*

Assignments & Academic Calendar

14 January: Course introduction

21 January: Hölderlin "As on a Holiday" *Selected Poems and Fragments* pp. 172-177.

28 January: Hölderlin "Remembrance", *Selected Poems and Fragments* pp. 250-253.

4 February: Hölderlin "The Ister" *Selected Poems and Fragments* pp. 188-195.

11 February: Heidegger "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry" *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry* pp.51-66.

18 February: Hölderlin "In lovely Blueness" (Handout)

25 February: Heidegger, “Poetically Man Dwells....” in: *Poetry, Language Thought*, 209-227.

3 March: Paul Celan, “Deathfugue” + “Shibboleth” in *Selected Poems and Prose* (hereafter: SPP), 30-33 + 74-75

10 March: : Paul Celan, “Streak” SPP: 100-101.
March 16-20 Spring Break

March 23-27 University Classes Canceled

March 31: Paul Celan, “Tübingen, Jänner” SPP: 158-159.

April 7: Paul Celan, “Todtnauberg” SPP: 314-315.

14 APRIL: **PAPER PROPOSALS DUE** + Paul Celan, JERUSALEM POEMS: “There Stood,” SPP: 354-355; “The Shofar Place” SPP: 360-361.

21-28 April: Paul Celan, JERUSALEM POEMS: “The Poles,” SPP: 362-363 AND “I Drink Wine” SPP: 366-367.

TUESDAY 5 MAY: FINAL ESSAY DUE--- EMAIL A WORD DOCUMENT TO MY EMAIL ADDRESS: CBAMBACH@UTDALLAS.EDU

Grading Policy

Course requirements include ONE ESSAY of 10-12pp. length due at the end of the term, ONE Paper-Proposal due APRIL 14 and ONE in-class PROTOKOLL (based on quality of insight).. Grades are assessed on a 4.0 scale as described in the graduate catalog. + and – grades will be assigned to graduate students.

Course & Instructor Policies

You cannot hope to pass this class if you do not attend it and complete all of the required work. I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE PAPERS. This course will be conducted according to strict codes of academic honesty. All cases of plagiarism will be fully investigated and the deliberate instances reported to the Dean of Students. Penalties for deliberate cheating may include failing the assignment in question, failing the course, or suspension and expulsion from the University. Students are expected to know the University’s policies and procedures on such matters, as well as those governing student services, conduct, and obligations.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.