

## HEGEL

### Spring 2011, Phil 455

Office Hours: Mon, 2-3, Wed. 2-4, and by apt.

Office: Wheatley 5-008

### Professor Steven Levine

steven.levine@umb.edu

### Course Description

In this class we are going to read large portions of Hegel's major work the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. We shall read this work as completing Kant's Copernican turn in philosophy and so as ushering in a non-metaphysical and non-skeptical form of Idealism, which we will try to understand as an unusual form of Realism. This reading is in contrast with more traditional readings that see Hegel as a philosopher who propagates a pre-critical monistic metaphysical system and/or a non-standard Christian theodicy. To provide the background for this reading we shall first spend some time on Kant and Fichte, who are essential prerequisites for understanding Hegel.

The *Phenomenology* makes at least two groundbreaking moves: 1) It tries to show that our theoretical and practical relation to ourselves, our very self-consciousness, is bound up with our relationship to an Other, i.e., is bound up with our place in an inter-subjective community of agents who mutually recognize one another, 2) That self-consciousness, and philosophy as a type of higher-order reflection on our self-consciousness, is a historical product. Because of these commitments the *Phenomenology* has a form and structure unlike any other text in the history of philosophy. For it is a narration of our historically situated self-understandings (our social self-consciousness) and how these understandings undermine themselves from within, requiring that we try to 'find satisfaction' in a new and different understanding. This 'dialectical' progression is the conceptual underpinning of History. Hegel's goal in unearthing this progression is not antiquarian, however, but to help *us* become self-conscious, to help us live up to the Socratic injunction to know-ourselves. For to know ourselves requires not only that we make explicit our most basic commitments and norms but also the history of how those commitments and norms came to be taken as binding. It is only in doing *this* that we can provide a justification of—or a well-motivated attack on—our contemporary form of life.

### Required Texts

- Fichte, J. G., *Introductions To The Wissenschaftslehre*, ed. D. Breazeale, Hackett Publishing. (IW)
- Hegel, G. F. W. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Trans. by A. V. Miller, Oxford University Press. (PhS)
- Stern, R., *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit*, Routledge Press. (RG)
- All other readings posted on my website: <http://faculty.www.umb.edu/steven.levine/>

### Secondary Sources

#### German Idealism

- Henrich, Dieter, *Between Kant and Hegel, Lectures on German Idealism*, Harvard.
- Franks, Paul, *All or Nothing*, Harvard.
- Pinkard, Terry, *German Philosophy: 1760-1880*, Cambridge.
- Beiser, Frederick, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte*, Harvard.
- Ameriks, Karl, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, Cambridge.
- Neuhauser, Frederick, *Fichte's Theory of Subjectivity*, Cambridge.

## Hegel

- Taylor, Charles, *Hegel*, Cambridge.
- Beiser, Frederick, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, Cambridge.
- Pippin, Robert, *Hegel's Idealism*, Cambridge.
- Pinkard, Terry, *Hegel's Phenomenology*, Cambridge.
- Bristow, William, *Hegel and the Transformation of Philosophical Critique*, Oxford.
- Westphal, Kenneth, ed., *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, Blackwell.
- Butler, Judith, *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-Century France*, Columbia.
- Hyppolite, Jean, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's 'Phenomenology'*, Northwestern.
- Kojève, Alexandre, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, Cornell.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg, *Hegel's Dialectic*, Yale.

## Course Outline (This schedule is subject to revision)

Week	Date	Class Theme and Activities	Assignment
Week 1	Jan. 24, 26 28	Review of Syllabus and Introduction to German Idealism: The Kantian Enlightenment	Excerpt from the B preface of <i>The Critique of Pure Reason</i>
Week 2	Jan 31 Feb. 2, 4	The Kantian System and its Highest Point: Self-Consciousness	Excerpt from <i>The Critique of Pure Reason</i>
Week 3	Feb. 7, 9 11	Fichte: Idealism and Dogmatism	IW, pp., 7-35
Week 4	Feb. 14, 16 18	Fichte: Self-Consciousness and the Self-Limitation of Reason	IW, pp., 41-51 IW, pp., 59-65, 72-76
Week 5	Feb. 23 25	Introduction to Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit	RG, pp., 1-29
Week 6	Feb. 28 Mar. 2, 4	Hegel's Method: Self-engulfing Skepticism	PhS, § 73-89 RG: pp., 36-42
Week 7	March 7, 9 11	Consciousness: Sense-Certainly and Perception <b>March 7<sup>th</sup>: First Paper Due</b>	PhS, § 90-131 RG, pp., 43-59
		SPRING BREAK	
Week 8	March 21, 23, 25	Transition to Self-consciousness	RG, pp., 59-70 (On Force and the Understanding) PhS, § 166-177 RG, pp., 71-75

Week 9	March 28, 30 April 1	Self-consciousness: Lordship and Bondage	PhS, § 178-196 RG, pp. 71-85
Week 10	April 4, 6, 8	Stoicism, Skepticism, and the Unhappy Consciousness <i>April 7: Course Withdrawal Deadline</i>	PhS, § 197-230 RG, pp., 85-96
Week 11	April 11, 13, 15	The Truth and Certainty of Reason; and The Actualization of Rational Self-Consciousness Through its Own Activity <b>April 11<sup>th</sup>: Second Paper Due</b>	PhS, § 231-239 and RG, pp., 97-102 PhS, § 347-359 and RG, pp., 114-119
Week 12	April 20, 22	Active Reason: The Spiritual Animal Kingdom and Deceit	PhS, § 394-418 RG, pp., 124-7
Week 13	April 25, 27, 29	The Critique of Kant and the Transition to Spirit: Reasons as Lawgiving and as Testing	PhS, § 419-437 RG, pp., 127-133
Week 14	May 2, 4 6	Spirit: The Ethical Order	PhS, § 438-477 RG, pp., 135-145
Week 15	May 9, 11	Absolute Knowing	PhS, § 788-808 RG, pp., 195-201

### Assessable Tasks

1. Class Participation, 15%
2. Two 4-5 page papers, the first due **March 7<sup>th</sup>**, the second due **April 11<sup>th</sup>**, 25% each
3. An 8-10 page final paper due on **May 15<sup>th</sup>**, 35%

### Attendance Policy

Your presence in class is a minimum condition of your success in this course. Attendance as well as lateness will be noted and factored into your final grade, as follows:

- 4 absences: final grade lowered by ½ grade (e.g. from B- to C+)
- 5 absences: final grade lowered by a full grade (e.g. from B- to C-)
- 6 absences: failure; no credit given

In general, the distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences is not recognized (an absence is an absence). Repeated lateness in arriving to class will count as an absence.

### Other Important Information

1. Unless otherwise noted readings, handouts, assignments, and other announcements will be posted on my website which can be reached by clicking the link on my faculty page located on the UMB philosophy department website or at this address:  
<http://faculty.www.umb.edu/steven.levine/>

2. You need to have a working UMB email so that I can contact you through the wiser system.
3. The readings for this class are listed above by the week. If homework is not explicitly assigned in class, these readings are your homework. The reading schedule may change due to events. If it does I will update the schedule on my website.
4. I only give incompletes if there is a really good reason like family emergency.
5. Unless an arrangement is made with me, a paper will be penalized a whole grade if it is up to one week late. Thereafter, it will be penalized a whole grade each additional week that it is late. *I do not accept emailed papers unless I explicitly agree to it.*

### **Policy on Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's work as your own. You need to be careful to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism. This means that if you ever use a phrase, a sentence, or an idea from a text, you must provide a citation. If it is something we read for the class, it is acceptable to give the source and page number. E.g.: (Rawls, "The Justification of Civil Disobedience, p. 100). When utilizing other material, you must provide full bibliographic information of that text. If you don't provide appropriate citations, this will affect your grade. If you have gone so far as to misrepresent another person's work as your own by copying from another's paper, using a paper writing service, copying something off the web or out of a book or in any other way I will assume you intend to commit plagiarism and will give you an 'F.' The current Code of Student Conduct which includes information about academic dishonesty is available online at:

<http://www.umb.edu/academics/undergraduate/office/students/CodeofStudentConduct.html>

### **Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please contact the Ross Center for Disability Services. The Ross Center for Disability Services is located in the Campus Center, UL 211. You can contact them by calling: 617-287-7430 or sending an email to: [ross.center@umb.edu](mailto:ross.center@umb.edu). Once you have received your accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible.