Instructor: Dr. Steve Naragon [office: Ad Bldg., #231c; phone: — office: 982-5041, home: 982-6033]

Required Texts
(1) W. T. Jones & Robert J. Fogelin, The Twentieth Century to Quine and Derrida (3rd ed.).
(3) Ludwig Wittgenstein, Logico-Philosophical Tractatus (various editions and translations available)

Additional Readings (available online)

Requirements and Grading

Readings. Read the assignments closely prior to class, and always bring the text. Class discussions and your success in this class depend upon this.

Attendance. Truth may well be a social construction. If it is, then the inquiry into truth is best pursued as a social activity. If truth is not a social construction, then it is still best pursued socially, as objective reality is rarely if ever the same as plain appearance, and so our only criterion of the real, it seems, will be intersubjectivity. So whatever the nature of truth, it’s clear that everyone needs to show up to class, on a regular basis, if we are to harbor any hopes of finding it. Thus the following policy: Five absences (excused or otherwise) are allowed. After that, each additional absence (of any kind) results in a 1% drop in course grade, apart from any intangible penalties such absenteeism entails.

Short exegetical exercises to be written before breakfast. About once every week there will be a 1-2 page exegetical essay assigned (concerning — at most — a few pages of text). Essays must be typed, proofread, and with proper citations, but otherwise should not involve more than a few hours of your time. Staple your pages together, but avoid title pages, covers, or other peripheral junk. Papers are graded on spelling, grammar, punctuation, and clarity of style, but I’m primarily interested in how well you can tackle a bit of text or philosophical question on your own and make sense of it. Late papers are drastically penalized.

Class Presentation. Each student will give a brief intellectual biography of a philosopher not otherwise on the syllabus, and facilitate class discussion on a short text by that philosopher. In addition, each student will present the intellectual biography of one of the philosophers on the syllabus.

Essay Exams. There will be three take home essay exams, with a weekend for writing them.

Grading. The three in-class exams will each be worth 22% of the course grade; the group of exegetical essays is worth 24%; the class presentations are each worth 5%.
SCHEDULE OF DISCUSSION AND READING

Thu, Feb 5
Introduction to the Course
• Read: Jones, chs. 1-2 (as background).

G. E. Moore

• Read: Jones, ch. 3 + Moore, “The Refutation of Idealism” (1903).

Tue, Feb 10
Thu, Feb 12

Gottlob Frege

• Read: Jones, ch. 4 + Frege, “On Sense and Reference” (1892) + Frege, “The Thought” (1918/19).

Tue, Feb 17
Thu, Feb 19
Tue, Feb 24

Bertrand Russell

• Read: Jones, ch. 5 + Russell, Logic as the Essence of Philosophy” (1914).

Thu, Feb 26
Tue, Mar 3
Thu, Mar 5

Tue, Mar 10 1st Exam

Ludwig Wittgenstein: Tractatus

• Read: Jones, ch. 6 + Wittgenstein, Tractatus (1921)(selections).

Thu, Mar.12
Tue, Mar.17
Thu, Mar 19

— Spring Break —

Edmund Husserl

• Read: Jones, ch. 8 + Husserl, “Phenomenology” (1927).

Tue, Mar 31

Thu, Apr 2

Martin Heidegger

• Read: Jones, ch. 9 + GP, general introduction (“The Legacy of Existentialism”) + introduction to Heidegger selections + Heidegger, Being and Time (1927)(selections).

Tue, Apr 7

— Easter Break —

Tue, Apr 14
Thu, Apr 16

Tue, Apr 21 2nd Exam

Jean-Paul Sartre

• Read: Jones, ch. 10 + GP, introduction to Sartre selections + Sartre, “The Humanism of Existentialism” (1946) + Sartre, Being and Nothingness (1943) (selections)

Thu, Apr 23
Tue, Apr 28
Thu, Apr 30

Later Wittgenstein

• Read: Jones, ch. 11.

Thu, May 5
Thu, May 7

Ordinary Language Philosophy

• Read: Jones, ch. 12.

Tue, May 12

W. V. O. Quine

• Read: Jones, ch. 13.

Thu, May 14

 Finals Week 3rd Exam