

PHIL 28710 – Introduction to Nietzsche

Winter 2022

Mon & Weds 3:00-4:20PM

Campus North Residential Commons 158

Instructor: Dr. Lawrence Dallman

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Office Hours: By appointment, over Zoom.

Course Description

In this course, we will examine the philosophical writings of Friedrich Nietzsche, with the aim of arriving at a cursory overview of his thought. We will take as our guiding thread a paradox concerning the value of truth that arises in the course of Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morality*: when, as in scientific inquiry, we take it as a rule that we should always seek the truth, we presuppose that we are the kind of creatures to whom rules can apply (i.e. morally responsible persons); but scientific inquiry, in its tendency to disenchant the world and subvert our traditional self-understanding, threatens to undermine this idea. What if truth-seeking drives us to the conclusion that we are not, in fact, morally responsible persons? What then of truth?

Course Materials

It is required that you purchase the following book. All other materials will be distributed in PDF format on the course Canvas site. The text below should be available at both the Seminary Coop Bookstore (5571 S. Woodlawn Ave.) and the University of Chicago Bookstore (970 E. 58th St.).

- Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998).

Course Expectations

This is a course in philosophy for majors and non-majors. Some previous experience in philosophy—especially in the *Philosophical Perspectives* core—will be *very* helpful, but is not required. Students will be expected to **engage philosophically with the assigned texts and with each other**. This means (1) taking the texts seriously as attempts to get things right about human beings and the world we live in; (2) offering arguments for or against the views defended in those texts, both in class discussion and in written assignments; and (3) allowing that respectful disagreement, sometimes about sensitive matters like politics or religion, is an essential part of the process. However, philosophical discussion only works when everyone involved feels able to contribute their special insights. It is necessary, therefore, that we maintain a civil classroom environment, free of slurs, bullying, and disparagement.

Each meeting will be split between instructor-led discussion of assigned materials, and open student discussion. Students will be expected to **complete assigned readings** prior to each meeting. Readings will usually not exceed 35 pages per meeting. We will discuss any exceptions to this rule in class.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, **the first two weeks of this quarter will be conducted online** over Zoom. It is expected that we will return to in-person instruction beginning on Mon, Jan 24th (i.e. Meeting 3.1). However, this may change as the COVID situation continues to evolve. I will email everyone in the course with any updates to our meeting schedule. Even once we return to in-person instruction, **recordings will be made of each meeting**. Students who are unable to attend

class, especially due to illness, will have access to the recorded discussions for the meetings they miss. However, once we return to on-campus instruction, *Introduction to Nietzsche* will be considered an in-person course, and it will be expected that students attend in-person meetings whenever possible.

Assignment Structure

Students will be expected to **complete two reading reflections** during the quarter. These will be short (3-4 pages, double-spaced) written reflections on assigned readings. You will choose which meetings you would like to submit reflections for, according to your interests and schedule constraints, though at least one of your two reflections must cover a reading from *On the Genealogy of Morality*. You will be expected to **contact me by Sun, Jan 16th with your preferred dates for reading reflections**.

In these reflections, you will focus on one or two important themes or arguments from your chosen meetings' assigned readings. Your aim will be to reconstruct Nietzsche's views, as presented in the assigned readings, and especially to reconstruct his *reasons* for holding those views. Since some of you will not have extensive experience with philosophical writing, I will distribute a handout on Canvas outlining expectations for the assignment. Note: your reflections should focus on texts by Nietzsche, not texts by other authors – though you are welcome to mention other readings by way of contrast.

At the end of the quarter, each student will be expected to **write a final paper**. This will be a longer (10-12 pages, double-spaced) philosophical reconstruction of a theme in Nietzsche. I will distribute possible essay topics ahead of time. You are welcome to propose your own essay topic, but you must **confirm your proposed topic with me by Sun, Mar 5th**, either by email or in office hours. We will discuss expectations for the final paper in class, and you are welcome to reach out to me about it.

Grading Policy

Reading reflections must be completed in advance of the corresponding meeting. Their purpose is to force you to engage with the assigned readings *independently*. Accordingly, if you are unable to complete your reading reflection in advance of the corresponding meeting, you will generally not be allowed to submit your reflection late. Instead, you will be permitted to write a reflection for the next meeting, at the penalty of one third of a letter grade (e.g. A becomes A-). Each additional delay will incur an additional penalty. Thus, if you sign up to write a reading reflection for meeting 3.2, then delay to meeting 4.1, then delay once more to 4.2, the highest grade you will be eligible for is a B+.

In select circumstances, it will not be possible to postpone your reflection until the next meeting. If you choose to write your first reflection for meeting 5.2, which is the final discussion of *On the Genealogy of Morality*, you cannot shift to the next meeting, as you must write at least one reflection on the *Genealogy*. In such cases, you will be permitted to turn your reflection within a week of the lecture at the penalty of a full letter grade (e.g. A becomes B). This penalty is intended to offset the significant advantage you will enjoy having listened to the lecture and in-class discussion.

The final paper will be penalized one third of a letter grade for each day that it is late. Instances of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will result in an F for the class, as well as in disciplinary action, in accordance with the [University of Chicago Student Manual](#). Remember that *self-plagiarism*—reusing written material you produced for other classes or earlier assignments—can also qualify as academic dishonesty. Everything you write for this class should be new. Here is a breakdown of your final grade: 20% participation; 30% reading reflections (i.e. 15% for each); and 50% final paper. Your participation grade will be based on attendance, completion of readings, and responsiveness to instructor feedback.

Course Roadmap

Mon, Jan 10th	Meeting 1.1. Introduction to the Course	...
Weds, Jan 12th	Meeting 1.2. What is Genealogy?	(27 pgs.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rée, “The Origin of the Concepts ‘Good’ and ‘Evil’” (13 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, <i>On the Genealogy of Morality</i>, Preface (7 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Genealogical Method” (7 pgs.) 	
Mon, Jan 17th	Meeting 2.1. (No Class)	<i>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</i>
Weds, Jan 19th	Meeting 2.2. The Genealogy of Good and Evil I	(22 pgs.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, <i>On the Genealogy of Morality</i>, First Treatise, §§1-8 (10 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Moral Criticism” (5 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Jewishness and Antisemitism” (7 pgs.) 	
Sat, Jan 22nd	Reading Reflection Choices Due by 11:59PM	
Mon, Jan 24th	Meeting 3.1. The Genealogy of Good and Evil II	(38 pgs.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aristotle, Excerpt from the <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (3 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, <i>On the Genealogy of Morality</i>, First Treatise, §§9-17 (16 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Good and Evil” (17 pgs.) 	
Weds, Jan 26th	Meeting 3.2. Nietzsche’s Theory of Rank and Nobility	(26 pgs.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Rank and Nobility” (19 pgs.) ▪ Jefferson, “To John Adams” (7 pgs.) 	
Mon, Jan 31st	Meeting 4.1. The Genealogy of Punishment I	(31 pgs.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rée, “The Origin of Punishment and the Feeling of Justice” (13 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, <i>On the Genealogy of Morality</i>, Second Treatise, §§1-12 (18 pgs.) 	
Weds, Feb 2nd	Meeting 4.2. The Genealogy of Punishment II	(32 pgs.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, <i>On the Genealogy of Morality</i>, Second Treatise, §§13-25 (15 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Freedom and Responsibility” (17 pgs.) 	
Mon, Feb 7th	Meeting 5.1. The Genealogy of Asceticism I	(29 pgs.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, <i>On the Genealogy of Morality</i>, Third Treatise, §§1-14 (24 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Asceticism” (5 pgs.) 	

Weds, Feb 9th	Meeting 5.2. The Genealogy of Asceticism II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, <i>On the Genealogy of Morality</i>, Third Treatise, §§15-28 (29 pgs.) ▪ Büchner, “Christianity and Science” (5 pgs.) 	(34 pgs.)
Mon, Feb 14th	Meeting 6.1. The Early View on Truth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, “On Truth and Lying in a Non-moral Sense” (12 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Appearance and Reality” (4 pgs.) ▪ Plato, “Excerpt from Republic, Book VII” (4 pgs.) ▪ Kant, “Excerpt from Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics” (2 pgs.) ▪ Schopenhauer, “On the Antithesis of Thing in Itself and Appearance” (6 pgs.) 	(28 pgs.)
Weds, Feb 16th	Meeting 6.2. Knowledge and Perspective <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Knowledge and Perspective” (13 pgs.) 	(13 pgs.)
Mon, Feb 21st	Meeting 7.1. The Perennial Metaphysics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on the Perennial Metaphysics” (12 pgs.) 	(12 pgs.)
Weds, Feb 23rd	Meeting 7.2. The Nature and Limits of Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Science” (20 pgs.) 	(20 pgs.)
Mon, Feb 28th	Meeting 8.1. The Paradox of Nihilism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on the Paradox of Nihilism” (15 pgs.) 	(15 pgs.)
Weds, Mar 2nd	Meeting 8.2. The Value of Illusion I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on the Value of Illusion” (8 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life (Parts 1-5)” (29 pgs.) 	(37 pgs.)
Mon, Mar 7th	Meeting 9.1. The Value of Illusion II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nietzsche, “Selections on Art, Genius, and Culture” (16 pgs.) ▪ Nietzsche, “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life (Parts 6-10)” (36 pgs.) 	(52 pgs.)
Weds, Mar 9th	Meeting 9.2. Synthesis / An Alternative	...

Sat, Mar 12th

Final Paper Due by 11:59PM