**Phil 215 - Kierkegaard**

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Phil 106 D9, 9:30-10:50, A250

Office hours T/TH 11:00-12:30, L222

**Course Description**

In this course we will examine the thought and works of Soren Kierkegaard. We will be reading only pseudonymous works in this class, focusing on his philosophical writings and not his religious writings. We will seek to understand his overall goal for his works and recognize how each different pseudonymous approach fit into that goal. We will strive to read Kierkegaard’s works not only as good philosophers, but also to keep in mind how Kierkegaard expected them to be read by lay persons.

**Course Objectives**

* Develop the ability to read primary philosophical texts and to understand them by identifying the key ideas and arguments contained therein.
* Develop the ability to write concise, accurate essays about ideas, using proper citation and a logical structure.
* Develop the ability to talk in class about readings, expressing yourself cogently and articulately.
* Be able to describe Kierkegaard’s philosophical approach and the differences between the pseudonyms.
* Be able to outline the structure of Kierkegaard’s works and recognize how they interlink with one another.

**Required Texts**

Kierkegaard, *Either/Or Part 1* ISBN: 978-0691020419

Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* ISBN: 978-0691020266

Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* ISBN: 978-0691020365

Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* ISBN: 978-0691020815

**Requirements**

1 research paper worth 50% of your grade

1 short paper worth 20% of your grade.

1 presentation worth 20% of your grade.

Participation is worth 10% of your grade.

**Grading Scale**

100-90=A, 89-80=B, 79-70=C, 69-60=D, 59 and below=F

**Policy on Late Work**

I do not accept late work for any credit whatsoever. As a general rule of thumb, the old adage “It’s easier to ask for forgiveness than to get permission” is never going to be true in my classes. If you can foresee a difficulty, let me know and we can work something out. If you come to me after the fact, I am likely to be much less amenable.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and any assignment or exam on which cheating or plagiarism occurred will be minimally given an F, maximally you will get an F for the course and reported to the university. Ignorance of what counts as plagiarism is not an excuse. If you are unsure as to what counts as cheating, dishonesty, or plagiarism you may consult the Student Policy Manual at http://www.ccc.edu/menu/Documents/studentpolicymanual.pdf

**Special Needs**

I encourage students with disabilities, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injuries and ADD/ADHD, to discuss with me, after class or by email, appropriate accommodations that might be helpful. Students with documented disabilities should visit the Disability Access Center who can then provide me the proper accommodation guidelines.

**Assignments**

Students have two papers to write throughout the semester as well as a presentation to give. The first paper will be a shorter paper 3-4 pages in length, Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, that will focus on a short section from our readings. Students will sign up for different sections from the readings and the papers will be due on the day that we cover those sections. Thus, everyone will have different topics for these papers, and the topics are open to students as long as they relate to the reading that they signed up for. Students will also have to prepare a presentation that will be due on the same day that their paper is due. These presentations should be on the same topic as their papers and will be 5-10 minutes in length plus some time for questions. After the first few weeks, each class period will begin with these presentations. The second paper will be a longer 8-10 page paper due at the end of the semester. These papers will be on the topic of the students choosing, though all students will be required to receive approval for their topic. These papers should engage the primary texts, but should also bring secondary sources to bear on the topic.

**Participation**

In class we will often have discussion over the ideas that are presented in our readings. Participation in this discussion is part of your grade. However, I realize that not all students are comfortable presenting their own thoughts in class. To that end, any form of participation that I can access will count towards this. For instance, emailing me with questions related to the readings (and not just questions about assignments), stopping by my office hours to chat, talking to me before or after class, etc, will all count towards your participation grade. Amongst all participation you are to respect your classmates. You will most likely disagree with others on different topics, and I encourage you to voice your disagreement. However, you must always be respectful of others. No disrespectful or hateful language will be tolerated.

**Tardiness and Attendance**

I do not have an attendance policy for this class. Sometimes students are unable to attend class due to other obligations and I understand that. Students are always responsible for all of the material that was covered in class, regardless of attendance record. However, if a student is excessively late to class and disruptive in doing so on multiple occasions, I will withdraw the student from the class. An example of this kind of behavior would be showing up to class 30 minutes late and proceeding to ask questions about the material that was covered in the first 30 minutes. This kind of behavior is disruptive to the class and harmful to the learning environment of the other students.

**Electronic Devices**

The use of cell phones is prohibited in the classroom. The use of laptops is also prohibited unless there is some important reason that requires such use and all such situations must be discussed with me first.

**Schedule**

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| Date | Topic | Reading |
| August 29 | Introduction |  |
| August 31 | Kierkegaard’s Goals | Point of View PDF |
| Sept 5 | The Aesthetic | Either/Or – 19-43 |
| Sept 7 |  | Either/Or – 47-75 |
| Sept 12 |  | Either/Or – 139-164 |
| Sept 14 | Happiness for the Aesthete | Either/Or – 219-230 |
| Sept 19 | Boredom | Either/Or – 285-300 |
| Sept 21 | The Ethical | Either/Or part 2 PDF |
| Sept 26 | Abraham’s Struggle | Fear and Trembling – 5-23 |
| Sept 28 | Tragic Hero and Knight of Resignation | Fear and Trembling – 27-46 |
| Oct 3 | Knight of Faith | Fear and Trembling – 47-53 |
| Oct 5 | Teleological Suspension of the Ethical | Fear and Trembling – 54-67 |
| Oct 10 | What is our duty to God? | Fear and Trembling – 68-81 |
| Oct 12 | Silence, Agnes, and Faith | Fear and Trembling – 82-99 |
| Oct 17 | Can Truth be Learned? | Philosophical Fragments – 5-13 |
| Oct 19 | The Teacher | Philosophical Fragments – 13-18 |
| Oct 24 | The Learner | Philosophical Fragments – 18-22 |
| Oct 26 | The Occasion of Learning | Philosophical Fragments – 23-36 |
| Oct 31 | The Paradox of Belief | Philosophical Fragments – 37-48 |
| Nov 2 | Becoming a Follower of Truth | Philosophical Fragments – 55-71 |
| Nov 7 | Becoming | Philosophical Fragments – 72-88 |
| Nov 9 | Would Knowing Jesus help us Believe? | Philosophical Fragments – 89-110 |
| Nov 14 | Objectivity and Christianity | Postscript – 23-50 |
| Nov 16 | Religious Communication | Postscript – 72-80 |
| Nov 21 | The Leap | Postscript – 93-106 |
| Nov 23 | THANKSGIVING | THANKSGIVING |
| Nov 28 | Becoming Subjective | Postscript – 157-173 |
| Nov 30 | Subjectivity is Truth | Postscript – 189-203 |
| Dec 5 |  | Postscript – 204-218 |
| Dec 7 | Religiousness A | Postscript – 361-384 |
| Dec 12 | Religiousness B | Postscript – 555-570 |
| Dec 14 | FINAL DAY | PAPERS DUE |

If you have any questions about the schedule of readings or the syllabus, please feel free to ask.