

Decolonial Latin American Thought (Philosophy 407/507, Seminar, Winter 2015)
MW 14:00-15:50, 123 MCK- Professor Alejandro A. Vallega

One of the major developments in Latin American philosophy has been the movement of “decolonial” thought. The movement focuses on the undoing of the system of coloniality that situates Western instrumental-rationalism as the center and apogee of human progress, and that accompanies the development of world order from the 16th century and the colonization of the Americas to today’s neo-liberal globalization projects. This has influenced the resurfacing of Latin American philosophy of liberation, and has opened new paths for rethinking both Latin American philosophical traditions, and the Western tradition in its modern historical development. These thinkers have also opened a space towards the development of world philosophies that engage each other’s traditions not in light of the Western North American and European modern philosophy. In this course we will read the work of some of the figures that are shaping these new philosophical spaces. Among them Enrique Dussel, Jacques Derrida, Aníbal Quijano, Santiago Castro-Gómez, Walter D Mignolo, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, María Lugones, and Ramón Grosfoguel. The course will involve close reading and interpretation of texts, background lectures, and class discussion. Those who can will be encouraged to read the texts in the original language (when the original texts are in Spanish). Students will be expected to have some background in the history of Western philosophy, particularly Modern philosophy; some knowledge of Hegel, Marxism, critical theory, and post-structuralism will also be very helpful to them.

Texts Required (available at the University Book Store)

Enrique Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*

Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign II*

All other readings (on blackboard, Blb) must be printed out and brought to class.

Requirements

Undergraduates: 2 course reports 40% (20% each); Final Paper 50%;
Attendance and Participation 10% (see supplement for assignment details)

Graduate Students: 2 Presentations 40% (20% each); Final Paper 50%;
Attendance and Participation 10% (see supplement for assignment details)

Office Hours: R 1:00-3:00, or by appointment. 248 Susan Campbell Hall.

Email:avallega@uoregon.edu (please specify your name and course)

Course Requirements Breakdown

- 1. Final Paper** The papers should be double-space, font 12, with standard spacing and margins. All papers should be printed out and handed out in the day they are due; do not send papers by e-mail. Plagiarism will result in the automatic failure of the course (see Rules of Academic Honesty, below).

6-8 pages for **undergraduates** (number of pages does not include title page or bibliography); title page and bibliography; one secondary source from the articles discussed in class.

10-12 pages **graduate students** (number of pages does not include title page or bibliography). Besides title and bibl., graduate papers should include at least 2 secondary sources.

2. Undergraduates, Two class reports. For each week you will be expected to have one-page. The page will include: 1. A paragraph that identifies and defines the main ideas discussed in the lectures and discussion groups, 2. The main issues or questions raised about those concepts, 3. A brief paragraph explaining which was the most interesting issue for you and why. Each page should be well written, grammatically correct, and part three should have the form of an argument, that is, a conclusion followed or preceded by clear premises or reasons for your position. The class report should be typed, and written in your own words. All criteria of academic honesty apply to these as well as any other class assignments.

Graduate Students, Two Class Presentations. Graduate students will be responsible for making two class presentations. Each time they will be expected to introduce the reading material due for a specific class. Students will sign up for presentations, and will be responsible for presenting a clear and concise overview of the reading, highlighting the main ideas and issues, raising pertinent questions, and relating the reading to previous readings and discussions when necessary.

3. Course participation and attendance (10%)

You are expected to attend all lectures and to participate actively in completing assignments in class and in discussion sections. Keep in mind that this is a philosophy course, and this means that unlike other courses you must take the time to digest the ideas and themes of the course and to develop your understanding of them and your ability to think critically. This is accomplished through participation: both by offering your understanding of the material and issues in a clear manner, and by listening carefully to your fellow students. During discussion you will be expected to refer to and respond to your peers with respect.

Additional Requirements: Any short writing in class must be clearly legible. All assignments outside of class are to be typed and turned in when due, unless you have a documented excuse. All late assignments are to be turned in no later than a week after their original due date and with the permission of the professor.

Course Policies

1. Attendance

It is the student's responsibility to be in class and to make up missed class assignments. Make sure you have at least one person in class who can provide you with notes and assignment information. Once you have worked on the material you

missed, if you do not understand it or need clarification make sure you see the instructor. **Two consecutive unexcused absences will result in a "D" or lower grade for the course.** If you know that you will be absent from class or if you have an emergency, notify the instructor in person before class or as soon as you can. Only serious emergencies will be considered as sufficient reason for an excused absence. Those who must be absent from class for athletic activities or other responsibilities related to the university will be expected to make up all work and may be required to meet with the instructor in order to discuss in detail their understanding of the material covered in class. **Unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your grade.**

2. Computer, Cell Phone, and Electronic Equipment Policy

The use of computers, cell phones, or any other electronic equipment not specifically allowed by the instructor is **not permitted during class.**

3. Grade Breakdown

Undergraduates: 2 course reports 40% (20% each); Final Paper 50%; Attend. and Participation 10%

Graduates: 2 Presentations 40% (20% each); Final Paper 50%; Attend. and Participation 10%

Each of the three parts fulfills a different aspect of the course: **Therefore, failure to complete any one of them requirements will result in a "D" for the semester or failure of the course.**

Grade Rubric:

A = excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.

B = good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.

C = OK. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.

D = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.

F = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

Please note that the grades refer to the expected level of general performance, and to the understanding and articulation of the material covered in this course.

4. Rules of Academic Honesty

The following acts of academic honesty will result in course failure, i.e., an "F"

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. By placing one's name on work submitted for credit, one certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. Verbatim statements by others must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from the regular text as indented extracts.

Students will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever:

1) one quotes another person's actual words or replicates all or part of another's product; 2) one uses another person's ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one's own words; 3) one borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material—unless the information is common knowledge.

Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. If in doubt, consult the instructor or seek assistance from the staff of Academic Learning Services (68 PLC, 346-3226). In addition, it is plagiarism to submit as your own any academic exercise prepared totally or in part by another person, even if that person is acting as a tutor or editor (and ends up substantially producing part of the work).

Fabrication: Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when he or she states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive. Examples include, but are not limited to: 1) citing information not taken from the source indicated; 2) listing sources in a reference not used in the academic exercise; 3) inventing data or source information for research or other academic exercises.

Cheating: Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic exercise. Examples include but are not limited to: 1) copying from another student's work; 2) collaborating without authority or allowing another student to copy one's work in a test situation; 3) using the course textbook or other material not authorized for use during a test; 4) using unauthorized material during a test; for example, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, symbolic representations, and notes written on clothing; 5) resubmitting substantially the same work that was produced for another assignment without the knowledge and permission of the instructor; 6) taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.

5. Assistance/Resources:

If you need a **special learning assistance**, (for example, use of electronic devices, extended time in exams) please notify me right away and contact the *Accessible Education Center*.

Accessible Education Center (AEC): coordinates services, provides advocacy and support to students with documented physical, learning, and psychological disabilities and provides assistance to the general campus community in responding appropriately to requests for accommodations based on disability.

Location: 164 Oregon Hall Web page: <http://aec.uoregon.edu/> Phone: 541-346-1155
Email: uoaec@uoregon.edu

Teaching & Learning Center (TLC): TLC provides numerous resources (including courses, workshops, and tutoring) to help UO students succeed. They work with a diverse student body with a wide range of needs. If you are unsure which resources would work best, they are happy to answer questions and share suggestions.

Location: 68 PLC. Web page: <http://tlcuoregon.edu/> Phone: 541-346-3226.

University Counseling and Testing Center (UCTC): The UCTC provides

comprehensive mental health care and testing services to the University of Oregon campus. The primary mission of the UCTC is to provide quality clinical/therapeutic services, psychological testing and assessment, psychoeducational workshops and outreach as well as emergency services.

Location: 2nd floor, University Health, Counseling, and Testing Center Building

Web site: <http://counseling.uoregon.edu/dnn/>

24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 541-346-3227