Syllabus: PHIL 350 ~ Metaphysics (CRN 27123)
Winter 2014, MW 14:00-15:50, 121 MCK
Professor: Peter Warnek warnek@uoregon.edu
Office Hours (246 SCH): Thursdays 13:30-15:30, and by appointment.

Course Description:
What does it mean to speak of metaphysics? Is metaphysics one philosophical subject among others? Does metaphysics have a certain set of questions that it seeks to answer? Or is all philosophy in some way metaphysical? Why do philosophers talk about the end of metaphysics? Why is metaphysics (and philosophy) something that we consider historically, such we might talk about it coming to an end? The course considers these and other questions by reading three philosophers, each of whom in different ways concern themselves with metaphysics. We will begin with Hannah Arendt, who asks about the ways in which our philosophical tradition understands the activity of “thinking.” In what way is thinking different from acting? Does thinking have a distinctly ethical importance? We then look at lectures by the 19th century philosopher F. W. J. Schelling on “positive philosophy.” Schelling will give us another opportunity to consider the history of metaphysics both before and after Kant. We will consider how his understanding of positive philosophy moves metaphysics into a new area of questioning. And finally we will read a number of essays by the 20th century philosopher Martin Heidegger. We will consider how Heidegger accounts for the history of Western philosophy according to a peculiar conception of metaphysics.

Required Texts:

These books are available to be purchased at “Black Sun Books” (2455 Hilyard, 484-3777), just south of 24th and Hilyard, behind Sundance Grocery, next to Allan Brothers Coffee.

Please note: I will also post additional reading material on the Blackboard website, as supplemental background to our primary readings.

Course Requirements:
- Participation in classroom discussion.
- Reading the assigned texts and coming to class prepared for discussion.
- Three short papers (3 pages each) on assigned topics. See schedule.
- Take-home final. Due March 19.

Explanation of Grading Standards:
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 = Okay. 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 not real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.
Late Policies and Attendance:

Late papers will be accepted only with an extension. If you are having problems meeting a deadline, or cannot attend a discussion section, please speak with me. (Please don’t wait until the last minute to make your request.) Please note: Attendance is expected. Students who miss more than 4 unexcused class meetings, will not receive a grade better than a C.

Disability Accommodations:

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course please make arrangements to meet with me within the first two weeks of the course. Please request a letter from Disability Services verifying your disability and stating your needed accommodations.
### Class Schedule: PHIL350 ~ Metaphysics

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winter Term</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Pages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week One</strong></td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Arendt, Nietzsche</td>
<td>Life of the Mind, Gay Science*, Twilight of Idols*</td>
<td>3-16 (BB)** (BB)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>Arendt, Kant</td>
<td>Life of the Mind, Prefaces to the Critique of Pure Reason*</td>
<td>19-45 (BB)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week Two</strong></td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>Arendt, Kant</td>
<td>Life of the Mind, Canon of Pure Reason*</td>
<td>45-65 (BB)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>Arendt</td>
<td>Life of the Mind</td>
<td>69-92</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week Three</strong></td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td>MLK Jr Day</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>Arendt</td>
<td>Life of the Mind</td>
<td>92-125</td>
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<td><strong>Week Four</strong></td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>Arendt</td>
<td>Life of the Mind</td>
<td>129-166</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>Arendt</td>
<td>Life of the Mind</td>
<td>166-192</td>
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<td><strong>Week Five</strong></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Arendt</td>
<td>Life of the Mind</td>
<td>197-216</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Schelling, Matthews</td>
<td>Positive Philosophy, Translator's Introduction</td>
<td>91-126 (1-87)</td>
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<td><strong>Week Six</strong></td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Schelling, Lawrence</td>
<td>Positive Philosophy, Philosophical Religion and the Quest for Authenticity* (BB)</td>
<td>127-154</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>Schelling, Lawrence</td>
<td>Positive Philosophy, Schelling's Metaphysics of Evil* (BB)</td>
<td>155-191</td>
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<td><strong>Week Seven</strong></td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>Schelling</td>
<td>Positive Philosophy</td>
<td>193-212</td>
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<td>2.19</td>
<td>Heidegger, Sheehan</td>
<td>What is Metaphysics?, Nihilism and its Discontents*</td>
<td>82-96 (BB)</td>
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*Paper #1 Due*
**Week Eight**

2.24  Heidegger  Postscript to What is Metaphysics?  231-238
      Introduction to What is Metaphysics?  277-290

2.26  Heidegger  On the Essence of Ground  97-135

**Week Nine**

3.3   Heidegger  On the Essence of Truth  136-148
      Sallis  Deformities: Essentially Other Than Truth*  (BB)

3.5   Heidegger  On the Essence of Truth  148-154
      Sallis  Free Thinking*  (BB)

**Week Ten**

3.10  Heidegger  Letter on Humanism  239-260
      Dastur  The Call of Conscience: The Most Intimate Alterity*  (BB)

3.12  Heidegger  Letter on Humanism  260-276
      Heidegger  The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking  (BB)

3.19  Take-home Exam Due

* Recommended Supplemental Reading

** BB = Posted on Blackboard