



PHILOSOPHY 117—CSUS

EXISTENTIALISM, Units: 3.0, Section 1 (GE Area C2)

Professor: Dr. Mathias Warnes

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Office hour: Th 3:00pm-4:00pm in MND 3032

Fall 2016—Class Number 80773

Class Meets on T/Th from 1:30pm-2:45pm in MND 3009

Catalog Description: Study of the problem of the existing individual, or inner self—most especially the problem of choice in the context of radical freedom and finitude. Particular attention will be paid to the philosophical writings of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre, through some major literary works of these figures and others (Camus, Dostoevsky) will also be considered.

Prerequisite (Absolutely no exceptions!): GEAR certification before Fall 09; or WPJ score of 80+; or 3-unit placement in ENGL 109M/W; or 4-unit placement in ENGL 109M/W and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X; or WPJ score 70/71 and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X. **Units:** 3.0

This course fulfills G.E. Area C2 & Advanced Study Writing Intensive. *Students are required to write not less than 5,000 words of clear, logical, and insightful prose.*

Section Description: Existence is an inestimable gift; existence is an absurd futility. These poles of affirmation & nihilism caricature the philosophy known as *existentialism*. While Sartre is the originator of existentialism as a school, many thinkers and styles have been brought under this moniker. What makes an existentialist is highly debatable. In this course, we will find that existentialism is an umbrella term that coordinates a diversity of philosophical perspectives on issues of life & death, significance & insignificance, gender & class, action & revolution, madness & reason, etc. We will see how existentialist concerns are rooted in ambivalence concerning timeless undecidables as well as historical crises regarding the place of the individual in community, and the relation of freedom to responsibility. In this section, from Solomon's *Existentialism*, students will interpret excerpts from primary texts by Sartre, Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Nietzsche, Camus, Beauvoir, Buber, and Frankl. Course Supplements will also enable us to go into more depth with two key figures, Nietzsche and Heidegger, and to investigate existentialist themes in Pico, Rilke, Fink, Jung, Levinas, Fanon, Anzaldúa, & Derrida.

Student Learning Objectives: By the completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Develop competence in existential analysis, language and literature, including the historical origins and transformations of Existentialist philosophy.

This will be demonstrated through the student's ability to:

- Accurately *describe* and *distinguish* between a variety of key concepts, including: existence, being, authenticity, inauthenticity, bad faith, freedom;
- Apply* processes of critical analysis to key existential texts.
- Explicate* and *evaluate* the positions of major existentialist philosophers.
- Identify* and *analyse* the cultural values and historical developments which contribute to the development of existentialism.
- Develop* and *express* one's own critical judgments regarding existence and the human condition;
- Apply* existential conceptual tools to *analyse* specific social problems, both historical and

contemporary.

2. Develop written communication skills, especially as those are associated with expository and argumentative writing.

This will be demonstrated through the student's ability to:

1. *Write* competently, concisely, precisely, logically;
2. *Develop* and *express* a point of view through the formulation of a coherent and consistent argument;
3. *Explain* and *interpret* text in a coherent manner to an audience of peers.

GE AREA C2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who complete a GE Area C2 course should be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge of the conventions and methods of the study of the humanities;
2. investigate, describe, and analyze the roles of effects of human culture and understanding in the development of human societies;
3. compare and analyze various conceptions of humankind; and
4. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the historical development of cultures and civilizations, including their animating ideas and values.

Required Texts:

1. Solomon, Robert C. *Existentialism*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. ISBN: 9780195174632. Now Ex. **You are required to bring your textbook to every class!**

2. Course Supplements available under Course Materials at mathiaswarnes.com and SacCT.

Recommended Texts:

1. *Situating Existentialism: Key Texts in Context*. Eds. Judaken & Bernasconi. Columbia University Press, 2012. ISBN: 9780231147750.

2. Aho, Kevin. *Existentialism: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014. ISBN: 9780745651422.

3. Bakewell, Sarah. *At the Existentialist Café: Freedom, Being, and Apricot Cocktails*. New York: Other Press, 2016. ISBN: 978155590514887.

Grade Breakdown:

Reading Responses	30%	Final Paper	15%
Midterm Paper	15%	Final Exam	15%
Attendance/Participation	15%	Presentation	10%

Reading Responses:

Reading Responses (30%): Students are expected to read the assigned readings prior to each class. To make sure that you are doing the readings and thinking about them, I require that

you write a Reading Response response (**8 Reading Responses total**). Keep in mind that Reading Responses must cover the assigned readings for the current week, *or* preceding week. Reading Responses on material covered earlier are considered *late*. Late Reading Responses are accepted at any time for half credit. You can do extra Reading Responses to ensure that you get 100% on your Reading Response grade. Length requirements are **strict**. Reading Response must be between **2-3 pages, 1.5- or double-spaced typed, 12 pt. font**, with standard margins. Remember: Reading Responses are handed in at the start of class during our second weekly class session (Thursday). If you can't make a class, you may email me your Reading Response the same class day, *but you also need to bring a printed copy of your Reading Response entry to the next class meeting*. Although these are 'Reading Responses,' i.e. responses to primary readings in our course, formal content and quality requirements will be strictly enforced. ***A Reading Response rubric will be provided.*** Reading Responses will be graded out of 10. Reading Responses that get 6/10 or less may be resubmitted with suitable revisions for a higher grade. Between the reading & writing expect to spend 4-5 hours of work *per* Response.

Presentation (10%): Each student is expected to do a short (approx. 10 min.) presentation, and prepare an accompanying power-point presentation (7-10 slides). You should consider your presentation date as set in stone once decided, unless you have a really good reason for needing to reschedule. Group presentations are great so long as the following is observed. A group of 2-3 (3 max) should come together based on shared interests that can be presented together. Each presenter should present for a minimum of 10 minutes. It must also be clear which parts are your own work, and which are the work of co-presenters. How are presentations graded? **/10**. Fantastic presentations receive a 10/10. Most presentations receive a 7 (good, fulfills requirements), 8 (very good, it is effective/informative), or 9 (excellent, it contains great insights and is of a high educational value). A 6/10 or lower on the presentation indicates that you did not fulfill one or more basic requirements. In consultation with you and your interests, I will suggest presentation topics so as to maximum our *collaborative* course coverage. Please come to my office hours for help figuring out which figures, themes, concepts in the literature of existentialism that you would like to pursue further. Once your project is decided, expect to spend 2-3 hours immersing yourself in reading and research with no other goal than to familiarize yourself with your project. Lastly, spend 2-3 hours transposing and refining content into your power point. *Brainstorm* connections, *refine* links, *add* audio-visual content, and *formulate* questions. Altogether, a well-crafted presentation takes 6-8 hours to prepare, so budget time. How many sources do presentations need? This varies, but you need at least 2 sources, and 3-5 is average. At least 1 source must be a primary source in the literature on existentialism, and 1 must be a book or article that interprets your primary source *directly*. It has occurred that students have attempted to plagiarize presentations from online .ppt files. To prevent this I require all students to provide .ppt files by email or flash drive on the presentation day. You can take us anywhere that's fun/interesting with this. ☺

Attendance/ Active Participation (15%): "Participation" means not only showing up (10%), but showing an active interest in the course (5%), participating in discussions, asking questions, being alert and responsive to the material we're covering, and modeling due diligence. Students who fulfill all course requirements, have good attendance, and contribute positively can expect to receive the full 15%. Students who fail to meet requirements, have numerous unexcused absences or lates, or are visibly disinterested and/or disruptive to the learning environment, demonstrate a subpar level of commitment, and earn a lower grade.

Midterm Paper (15%): The midterm paper consists in a *Prospectus* and *First Draft* of your final essay. See the document: “How to Write a Philosophical Essay for This Class.”

Final Essay (15%): Because this is an upper-level GE and writing intensive course, the word requirement for the final essay is set at a minimum of 2500 words. There is no maximum limit. You are required to utilize 3-5 sources. To achieve an A or B grade this must break down into 1-2 primary sources (i.e. primary texts in the literature of existentialism), 1-2 secondary sources (i.e. scholarly readings of your primary texts and topics/themes within the discipline of philosophy), and 1-2 background sources (webpages such as wikis, etc.). Note: essays based only on the textbook readings or webpages—i.e. essays that do not engage and cite from primary texts & scholarly books or articles directly—earn a C at best. An essay assignment pack—including topic suggestions, rubric, formatting requirements, and writing and analysis guidelines—will be handed out in class. Requirements and grading practice for the midterm and final essay will conform to the following guidelines for writing and philosophical analysis:

1. Writing Guidelines: <http://www.csus.edu/phil/guidance/writing%20guidelines.html>
2. Philosophical Analysis: <http://www.csus.edu/phil/guidance/how-to-analyze.html>
3. Grading Standards: <http://www.csus.edu/phil/guidance/grading-standards.html>

TURNITIN ORIGINALITY VERIFICATION: Consistent with Sacramento State’s efforts to enhance student learning, foster honesty, and maintain integrity in our academic processes, this course will use a tool called Turnitin to compare a student’s work with an extensive database of prior publications and papers, providing links to possible matches and a ‘similarity score’. **Midterm Paper** and **Final Essay** and **Final Exam** must be submitted using this tool, and in hard copy. Questionable Reading Response submissions may be checked using this tool. ***Students should submit papers to Turnitin without identifying information included in the paper (e.g. name or student number)***, the system will automatically show this information to faculty in your course when viewing the submission, but the information will not be retained by Turnitin. Originality scores from Turnitin submissions will be definitive of a student’s compliance with University Academic Honesty requirements. If there is any variation between the essay submitted to Turnitin and that submitted to the instructor for grading, the Turnitin score is definitive. Be sure not to revise your essay after submission to Turnitin. Login to http://www.turnitin.com/en_us/home to create a student account.

Enroll in Course ID# 13101967. Enrollment Password: **Existenz.**

Final Exam (15%): The take-home Final Exam (100 points) will test your knowledge of core curricula, and will consist of short answer and short essay questions. It will be due in hard-copy in class on Thursday, December 15th, and provided in class on Thursday, December 8th.

PHIL 117 – Existentialism: Course Schedule

READING SCHEDULE: ***Please bring *all course materials to each class.*** Each student is expected to show up to class having done the readings, prepared to hand in homework, and ready to contribute to in-class discussions. Ignorance of assignments, readings, and/or due dates is no excuse. The following schedule is not absolute. The dates serve as markers for when readings will be lecture on and discussed in-class. I will spend a few minutes at the beginning and end of each class discussing where we are at and where you should be. The benefit of this approach is that we will not be too rushed. The cost of this benefit is that you are responsible for knowing where we are on the syllabus. Thus, if you are absent from class, please call a student or contact me to find out where we are.

Week One	Aug 30, Sep 1
<u>Unit 1: Introduction</u>	T, Introductions, Syllabi, Lecture: Why Study Existentialism?
1a. The Human Being as Self-Creating Anxiety	Th, "Introduction", <i>Ex</i> p. ix-xx; Pico, <i>Oration</i> , Course Supplements, p. 1-29; Kierkegaard, "The Concept of Anxiety", <i>Ex</i> p. 29-31
Week Two	Sep 6, 8
1b. Is Existentialism a Humanism or an Ontology?	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Sartre, "Existentialism is a Humanism", <i>Ex</i> p. 206-214 Th, Heidegger, <i>The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude, & "Own to Philosophy"</i> , & "Mind in Enowning", Course Supplements, p. 30-43
	Reading Response 1 Due
Week Three	Sep 13, 15
1c. Aesthetic, Ethical, Religious, & Metaphysical Themes	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Kierkegaard, "Is There Such a Thing as a Teleological Suspension of the Ethical?", <i>Ex</i> p. 15-17 Th, Heidegger, "Introduction to Metaphysics", Course Supplements, p. 44-57
	Reading Response 2 Due
Week Four	Sep 20, 22
<u>Unit 2: Nietzsche's Philosophy</u>	
2a. From the Death of God to Joyful Wisdom	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Nietzsche, "Fate and History", "Freedom of the Will and Fate", "On "Truth and Lies in the Extra-Moral Sense", Course Supplements, p. 58-72 Th, Nietzsche, <i>Gay Science</i> , Course Supplements, p. 72-83
	Reading Response 3 Due
Week Five	Sep 27, 29
2b. Zarathustra as a Teacher of the Meaning of Existence	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Nietzsche, <i>Gay Science</i> Cont'd, Course Supplements, p. 84-103 Th, Nietzsche, <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> , Course Supplements, p. 104-116
	Reading Response 4 Due

Week Six	Oct 3, 5
2c. Nietzsche's Philosophy in <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i>	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Nietzsche, "Notes from 1881" & <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> Cont'd, Course Supplements, p. 117-131 Th, Nietzsche, <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> Course Supplements Cont'd, p. 132-147
	Reading Response 5 Due
Week Seven	Oct 11, 13
2d. Nietzsche's Later Thinking of Dionysos, Will to Power, and Eternal Recurrence	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Heidegger, "Who is Nietzsche's Zarathustra?", Course Supplements, p. 148-173. Th, Nietzsche, <i>The Will to Power</i> , & Heidegger's "Nietzsche's Fundamental Position", Course Supplements, p. 174-203
	Student Presentations Begin
Week Eight	Oct 18, 20
<u>Unit 3: Futures of Existentialism</u> 3a. Ontology and Phenomenology: Introduction to Existential Hermeneutics	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Heidegger's <i>Being and Time</i> , Course Supplements, p. 204-228 Th, Heidegger, <i>Being and Time</i> , Ex p. 117-145
	Student Presentations Cont'd
Week Nine	Oct 25, 27
3b. Feminist Existentialism	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i> , Introduction, Ex p. 296-307 Th, Bergoffen, "Simone de Beauvoir...", Course Supplements, p. 229-242
	Student Presentations Cont'd
	<u>Midterm Paper Due</u>
Week Ten	Nov 1, 3
3c. Rilke as Existentialist Poet	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Heidegger, "What are Poets For?" & Rilke, Course Supplements, p. 243-304

	Th, “What are Poets For?” & Rilke Cont’d, Course Supplements, p. 232-304
	Reading Response 6 Due
	Student Presentations Cont’d
Week Eleven	Nov 8, 10
3d. The Play of Existence	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, “What are Poets For?” Cont’d & “Poverty”, Course Supplements, p. 305-308 Th, Fink’s Play Ontology, Course Supplements, p. 309-321
	Reading Response 7 Due
	Student Presentations Cont’d
Week Twelve	Nov 15, 17
<u>Unit 4: Various Existentialism(s) & Post-Existentialism</u>	
4.a The Myth of Sisyphus & Africana Existentialism	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Camus, <i>Ex</i> p. 184-205 Th, Sartre & Fanon, <i>The Wretched of the Earth</i> , Course Supplements, p. 322-365
	Student Presentations Cont’d
Week Thirteen	Nov 22, 24 (Nov 24th Class is Cancelled due to Thanksgiving)
4b. Jung’s <i>Red Book</i> as Existentialist Spirituality	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Jung, <i>The Red Book, Liber Primus</i> , Course Supplements, p. 366-393
	Student Presentations Cont’d
	Reading Response 8 Due
Week Fourteen	Nov 30, Dec 1
4c. Existential Psychotherapy & Ethics of Alterity	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Frankl, <i>Ex</i> p. 353-358; R.D. Laing, <i>The Divided Self</i> , Course Supplements, p. 394-422 Th, Buber, <i>I and Thou</i> , <i>Ex</i> p. 319-330; Levinas’s “The Trace of the Other”, Course Supplements, p. 423-431

	Last Day for Student Presentations
Week Fifteen	Dec 6, 8
4d. Latin American Feminist Post-Existentialism & Deconstructionism	<u>Assigned Readings:</u> T, Anzaldúa, <i>Light in the Dark</i> , Course Supplements, p. 431-455 Th, Derrida, "The Ends of Man", Course Supplements, p. 456-469
	Final Essays Due
Finals Week	Dec 13, 15
	Course Wrap-Up, Potluck and Film TBA based on Class Vote, Final Exam Due

Administrative Matters

Grading Policy: A student's grade for this course **must** be based upon mastery of course content. A student's grade cannot be based upon extraneous extra-credit, scholarship or financial aid needs, or other special pleading. It is important that students examine the syllabus carefully and often, and plan appropriately to achieve the grade they desire. I will be happy to meet with you during office hours to discuss how best to achieve your target grade.

Grading Scale: *Proficient, Very Well Done:* A= 100%-93%, A-=92-90%
Good, or Well done: B+= 89%=87% B= 86%-83% B-= 82%-80%
Satisfactory, or adequate: C+= 79%-77% C= 76%-73% C-= 72%-70%
Serious Weakness, or unsatisfactory: D= 69%-60% *Unacceptable:* F= 59% and below.

Attendance: Roll is taken at the beginning of each class. After the drop date students who exceed six hours of class absence are subject to adverse consequences: 1. Excessively absent or tardy students will receive a lower grade for attendance and participation; 2. Late Reading Responses will not be accepted from excessively absent students. Remember, it is your responsibility to drop the class if you stop attending. If you are late to class, it is your responsibility to inform me of your presence. No corrections to the attendance will be made on subsequent days.

Classroom Behavior: All students are expected to maintain professional and courteous conduct in the classroom. Disruptive behavior will initially receive a reprimand but can result in a student's dismissal from the classroom. Students may, in some cases, only be re-admitted after talking with an academic advisor. Excessive talking, with the exception of classroom discussion contributions, counts as disruptive behavior. Leaving and re-entering the classroom for reasons other than unavoidable bathroom breaks, eating loudly, sleeping, reading outside materials or using devices like phones, computers, or tablets, or having private conversations, count as disruptive behavior. In addition, and most importantly, I expect an atmosphere of

respect for other students' opinions, and an objective & empathic response to material we study together. Observing these guidelines will ensure a better learning experience for all.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Equipment: Although I recognize that this is becoming increasingly difficult, texting or using any electronic communication devices during class is not permitted. Please put your electronic equipment away prior to the start of class so as to remove temptation. It is always annoying for a professor and embarrassing for a student to have to stop the class, address a student and ask him/her to put the electronic equipment away. Continuing to use electronic equipment during class constitutes disruptive behavior.

Plagiarism and Honesty in Academic Work: You are all also responsible for familiarizing yourselves with the CSUS policy regarding academic honesty, which can be found at: <http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-0100.htm>. It is important to know that Plagiarism and cheating are ethical violations and have serious consequences. Violations of standards of academic conduct include but are not limited to the following: 1. Receiving or providing assistance on an examination or assignment unless the instructor authorizes such assistance; 2. Using materials other than those permitted by the instructor during an examination; 3. Plagiarizing: failure to indicate the source of borrowed words and ideas. Plagiarism defined: Simply stated, plagiarism is "the taking of others' words or thoughts without due acknowledgment."¹ This definition applies to both printed, online, and unpublished material. That is, students must acknowledge, through the appropriate forms of citations, any borrowed ideas or phrases, and all direct quotations if more than three or four words. They also must not submit work that has been written, revised, or edited, in part or in whole, by another. I return all plagiarized work ungraded; you may, at my discretion, be allowed to resubmit the plagiarized assignment. However, in cases of clear and deliberate plagiarism, you will receive a 0 for the assignment, and will not be allowed to resubmit. Repeated instances of plagiarism will result in a failing grade in the course. Plagiarism rules are the same for all work for my course: Reading Responses, presentation, exams, and final essays.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e.: Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible to arrange accommodations. It is your responsibility to provide documentation of disability to SSWD and meet with a SSWD counselor to request special accommodation before classes start. SSWD is located in Lassen Hall 1008 and can be contacted by phone at (916) 278-6955 (Voice); (916) 278-7239 (TDD only); or via email at sswd@csus.edu. Here is the link explaining services available to students with disabilities: <http://www.csus.edu/sswd/index.html>

Other Free Help: For free, one-on-one help with writing in any class, please visit the University Reading and Writing Center in Calaveras 128. The Writing Center can help you at any stage of your reading/writing processes: coming up with a topic, developing, or organizing a draft, understanding difficult texts, or developing strategies to become a better editor. To make an appointment visit the Reading and Writing Center in CLV 128. For current Writing Center hours and more information, visit the website at www.csus.edu/writingcenter.

¹ Frederick Crewes, *The Random House Handbook*, 3rd ed. New York: Random House, 1980 (p. 405).