On October 11, 1998, Pope John Paul II canonized Edith Stein, also known as Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, and less than a year later, declared her co-patroness of Europe. Edith Stein’s extraordinary life—her work under Edmund Husserl, the father of phenomenology, as his first assistant, her conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1922, her entrance into the Carmel of Cologne in 1933, and her subsequent deportation to Auschwitz and death in the gas chamber in 1942—has tended to overshadow her highly original contributions to philosophy and theology. During her relatively short lifetime, Edith Stein published a number of ground-breaking essays in phenomenology, including her dissertation on empathy and three important essays for Husserl’s Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung. After her conversion, she would go on to develop her own unique synthesis between phenomenology and scholastic metaphysics, culminating in her magnum opus, Finite and Eternal Being. Stein also translated Blessed John Henry Newman’s The Idea of a University and St. Thomas Aquinas’ De Veritate, and was a popular speaker for Catholic audiences. Yet, despite a number of recent translations into English, much of Stein’s Gesamtausgabe remains untranslated and neglected.

In this course, we will examine some of Edith Stein’s most important philosophical and theological writings, seeking to appreciate her unique insights into individual consciousness, forms of communal life, gender and sexual difference, metaphysics, natural theology, and religious experience. A careful reading of Stein’s texts will give students a sense of the richness of her philosophical analyses and an appreciation of her original approach to understanding the
human person in his or her full intellectual, spiritual, and embodied existence. This course, an advanced seminar for M.A. and Ph.D. students, will begin with a review of phenomenology and foundational phenomenological concepts before proceeding to the proper theme of the course. Thus, while a certain familiarity with the history of philosophy on the part of the student is presumed, no prior coursework in phenomenology is required.

By the end of the semester, students will have gained a deeper understanding of the phenomenological method as utilized and developed by Edith Stein, and be familiar with a number of the central conceptions Stein developed to articulate key aspects of individual conscious life, communal experience, gender, and personal uniqueness. Students will also be able to articulate important features of Stein’s later philosophy of being, including her fundamental metaphysical distinctions, her “phenomenological” proof for the existence of God, her understanding of analogy, and her account of individual forms.

**Course Requirements:**

As an advanced seminar course, this class will focus primarily on the discussion of assigned texts, although the instructor will provide background material in lecture form from time to time. Students will be expected to carefully prepare assigned readings in order to actively participate in the conversation and raise thoughtful questions in class. Each week one student will be asked to lead the class discussion by introducing a particular text and raising several substantive questions for discussion. Because this class is structured as a seminar, attendance and participation in the discussion is essential. Absences will significantly affect a student’s final grade. Students with disabilities or whose first language is not English are encouraged to speak with the instructor about any special needs they might have.

Students will be evaluated based on the quality of their class participation and leadership of class discussions, and a final research paper of 15-20 pages. These assignments are designed to help students develop their own critical thinking on issues and themes central to the thought of Edith Stein, and articulate their understanding of these, both orally and in writing. They also offer students the opportunity to show their growth in the DSPT’s institutional goals of integrative thinking, self-direction, collaborative learning, and leadership. All sources in the
final research paper should be cited using proper “Turabian” format (see Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Eighth Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013). Students should conscientiously avoid plagiarism, and are asked to consult the DSPT Student Handbook for the DSPT’s policies regarding academic honesty. A paper proposal consisting of a short paragraph describing a student’s chosen topic, along with a preliminary bibliography of a minimum of 10 sources, should be submitted by November 11. The final research paper is due no later than December 16, 2016. Late papers will be accepted, but will be penalized for each day past the date due.

Grading: Weekly Class Participation: 25%
Class Presentations and Discussion Leadership: 25%
Final Research Paper: 50%

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**Assigned Texts:**


Weekly reading assignments will be taken from these assigned texts, as well as from readings posted on Moodle ([http://moodle.gtu.edu](http://moodle.gtu.edu)).

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### Course Schedule:

**9/9:** Introduction to the Course

*Introduction to Phenomenology: An Overview*

- Dan Zahavi, “Phenomenology”
- Robert Sokolowski, selections from *Introduction to Phenomenology*

**9/16:** Edith Stein’s Approach to Phenomenology and the Problem of Empathy

- Stein, “What is Phenomenology?”
- Stein, *On the Problem of Empathy*, Chapter 2

**9/23:** Edith Stein on Empathy

- Stein, *On the Problem of Empathy*, Chapters 3-5

  Optional: Dan Zahavi, “Empathy, Embodiment, and Interpersonal Understanding: From Lipps to Schutz”

**9/23:** Edith Stein on Individual Consciousness: Causality, Motivation, and Willing

- Stein, *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, First Essay

**9/30:** Edith Stein on Communal Experiences

- Stein, *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, Second Essay, I
10/7: Edith Stein on Person and Community

Stein, *Phenomenology of Psychology and the Humanities*: Second Essay, II and

*An Investigation Concerning the State*, I, §1

10/14: Edith Stein on the Individual and the State

Edith Stein, *An Investigation Concerning the State*, I. §§2-4

Optional: Anthony Calcagno, “Thinking Community and the State from Within”

10/21: Edith Stein: On Woman

Edith Stein, *Essays on Woman*, Chapters 1-2, 4, 6-8

Optional: Sarah Borden, “Edith Stein’s Understanding of Woman”

10/28: No Class (Reading Week)

11/4: From Phenomenology to Metaphysics: Edith Stein on Being

Stein, *Finite and Eternal Being*, I-III

Optional: Karl Schudt, “Edith Stein’s Proof for the Existence of God from

Consciousness”

11/11: Types of Being and Essential Structures

Stein, *Finite and Eternal Being*, selections from IV

Optional: Sarah Borden Sharkey, *Thine Own Self*, Chapters 3-4

11/18: Edith Stein on God and Creation

Stein, *Finite and Eternal Being*, VI-VII

Optional: Anthony Calcagno, “Die Fülle oder das Nichts? Edith Stein and Martin

Heidegger on the Question of Being”

11/25: Thanksgiving (No Class)
12/2: Edith Stein on Individuation and the Uniqueness of the Human Person
   Stein, *Finite and Eternal Being*, VII-VIII

12/9: Edith Stein on Prayer and Religious Experience
   Stein, selections from *The Science of the Cross* and *The Hidden Life*

12/16: Final Research Paper Due by 5 PM

N.B.: The instructor reserves the right to revise the course syllabus as the need arises.