Course Description and Objectives:

In its attentiveness to subjectivity and the methodological importance of the first-person perspective, phenomenology would seem to have neglected the essential role of intersubjectivity, the importance of the “we,” and the inescapable and irreducible role of other persons for self-identity and the disclosure of the world. Such an interpretation of phenomenology, however, fails to appreciate the actual work done by phenomenologists in relating self and other: Phenomenological analyses from Husserl to Marion have emphasized that only through the contribution of the other can a fully objective world, and even the constitution and identity of the self, be explained. In this course, we will examine key texts in the phenomenological tradition exploring intersubjectivity, empathy, and the encounter with the other. A careful reading of the writings of Max Scheler, Edith Stein, Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida, Paul Ricoeur, and Jean-Luc Marion will give students a sense of the rich variety and manifold approaches to the topic of the other within the phenomenological tradition. 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 ways the phenomenological method developed by Edmund Husserl has been utilized and developed, in
order to come to terms with the unique experiences in which the other and the constitutive role that the other plays in the formation of the objective world, self-identity, and ethical life of the subject comes to light. Students should be able to articulate both the phenomenological constants—what sets phenomenology apart, generally speaking, from other approaches to the question of intersubjectivity and other minds—and the unique contributions of each major phenomenological thinker examined in the course, seeking to critically evaluate descriptions, arguments, and the significance of various accounts for understanding the human person in his or her full ethical, political, and social context.

**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 a student will be asked to lead the class discussion by introducing a particular text and raising several substantive questions for discussion. Presentations and the careful preparation of assigned readings are meant to foster student capacities for self-direction and collaborative learning (DSPT Institutional Goals A3 and B1). 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 according to 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 surrounding the phenomenological treatment of empathy, intersubjectivity, and the other, and articulate their understanding of these topics 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 (Institutional Goals A1-3 and B1). 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 description of the student’s thesis, the methodology to be used, and the significance of the project, along with a preliminary bibliography of a minimum of 10 sources in Turabian format, should be submitted by **April 24**, and will be factored into the final grade for the research paper. The **final research paper** is due no later than **May 24, 2018**. Late papers will be accepted, but will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g., from an A to A-) 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)).
Course Schedule:

2/6: Introduction to the Course
    What is Phenomenology?
    Dan Zahavi, “Phenomenology”
    Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Preface
    Selections from Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*

2/13: Phenomenological Method: An Overview
    Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, §§1–15
    Selections from Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*
    Optional: Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, §§1–11; *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, §§4–5
    Optional: Patricio A. Perkins, “A Critical Taxonomy of the Theories About the Paths into the Reduction”

2/20: Scheler on Empathy
    Selections from Max Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*
    Optional: Dan Zahavi, “Max Scheler”

2/27: Empathy and the Lived Body in Husserl and Stein
    Selections from Edith Stein, *The Problem of Empathy*
    Edmund Husserl, *Ideas* II, §§35–47
    Optional: Dan Zahavi, “Empathy, Embodiment and Interpersonal Understanding: From Lipps to Schutz”

3/6: Husserl and the Constitution of Intersubjectivity
    Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, §§42–56
    Søren Overgaard, “Epoché and Solipsistic Reduction”
3/13: Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty on Being-with-Others

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Part II, Chapter 4
Maurice Merleau-Ponty, “A Child’s Relation with Others” in *The Primacy of Perception*

3/20: No Class (Fr. Justin Away)

3/27: No Class (Reading Week)

4/3: Sartre: Being-for-Others and “the Look”

Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, Part III, Chapter 1
Optional: Dan Zahavi, “Beyond Empathy: Phenomenological Approaches to Intersubjectivity”

4/10: Levinas on the Other and the Reduction to the Same

Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, Preface, I (A-D)

4/17: Levinas on the Transcendence of the Other

Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, II (A-E)
Optional: Søren Overgaard, “On Levinas’s Critique of Husserl”

4/24: Levinas on the Face of the Other

Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, III-IV
Optional: Françoise Dastur, “The Question of the Other in French Phenomenology”

5/1: Responses to Levinas I: Derrida

Jacques Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics”
5/8: Responses to Levinas II: Ricoeur

Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, Chapters 7 and 10

Optional: Richard A. Cohen, "Moral Selfhood: A Levinasian Response to Ricoeur on Levinas"

5/15: Marion: Rethinking Intentionality and the Ego

Jean-Luc Marion, “Does the Ego Alter the Other? The Solitude of the Cogito and the Absence of Alter Ego,” “The Originary Otherness of the Ego: A Rereading of Descartes’ Second Meditation,” and “The Intentionality of Love”

5/24: Final Research Paper Due by 5 PM

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

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**Additional Resources**

The following is a list of supplemental and suggested readings. They are by no means required reading for the course, but may be of some interest to students wishing to do additional research centered on phenomenological approaches to self and other.

*Primary Sources*

I. Jacques Derrida


II. Martin Heidegger

Heidegger, Martin. *Gesamtausgabe* (102 volumes). Frankfurt am Main, DE: Vittorio Klostermann, [1910-76].


III. Edmund Husserl


IV. Emmanuel Levinas


V. Jean-Luc Marion


N.B.: The second English edition contains a new preface and includes the essay "Saint Thomas Aquinas and Onto-theo-logy."


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VI. Maurice Merleau-Ponty


VII. Paul Ricoeur


VIII. Jean-Paul Sartre


IX. Scheler, Max


X. Schutz, Alfred


XI. Edith Stein


*Secondary Sources*


-----. *To the Other: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas.* West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1993.


----. "You, Me and We: The Sharing of Emotional Experiences." *Journal of Consciousness Studies.*


