HISTORY 389: MODERN EUROPEAN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

Semester: Fall 2014
Time: MWF 10:30 – 11:20
Place: Main 206

Professor: Dr. Clayton Whisnant
Office: Main 105
Email: whisnantcj@wofford.edu
Phone: x4550
Office Hours: MWF 2:00-2:50
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http://webs.wofford.edu/whisnantcj

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this reading seminar, we will examine the most important themes in intellectual history since the end of the nineteenth century. The focus of the course will be such important bodies of thought as logical positivism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, existentialism, and poststructuralism. This course serves as a core course of the gender studies program, and so special attention is paid to feminist thought and gender analysis.

Course Goals

In the course of discussing major bodies of thought, we will pay special attention to several reoccurring themes within twentieth-century thought:

- the significance of language for human life;
- the legacy of Marxism;
- the encounter with "the Other";
- the reevaluation of the significance of sexuality and gender for human life;
- the claims to objectivity made by science; and, finally,
- the role of the media and consumer culture in shaping our lives.
We will try to trace out how these concerns shaped debate, while at the same time explore how twentieth-century thought reflected powerful social, cultural, and political trends and events of the century.

**Course Objectives**

To meet the goals of the course, students will write weekly responses to the readings that demonstrate that they have both read and thought about the texts for that week. They will also write three papers that will demand that they have mastered the key concepts of several bodies of thought and are capable of relating these bodies of thought to one another. This course is a writing-intensive course, and so students will be expected to work on their writing skills through both frequent writing assignments and through several intensive writing assignments that will require editing, revisions, and editing sessions with the professor.

**Courses Relationship to Department Goals**

This course helps the history department reach its goals by covering the following dimensions of history widely perceived as crucial for a well-rounded view of the world:

- significant intellectual movements and debates;
- socio-cultural issues of class;
- and gender.

Students will also gain some exposure to how history is practiced by

- examining primary sources.

**Technology Skills**

All papers, including the weekly responses, will need to be written on a computer word-processor. Students will also need some basic knowledge of web browsers in order to be able to find and utilize material on the on-line version of this syllabus.

**Instructional Format**

This course will be taught in a seminar style, which will emphasize above all discussion of the weekly readings. There will be some small amount of lecture material presented each week to act as a supplemental or introductory framework for discussion.
**TEXTS**

- Other readings, made available through the library's on-line reserve system.

The readings listed under each day should be done **before the assigned day.**

**GRADING**

Attendance and Participation
(including pop quizzes, if necessary) 10%

Daily Responses 15%

2 short (5-6 pages long) papers: 20% each

1 long (13-15 pages long) paper 35%

The daily responses will consist of a one-paragraph short response to the readings, which will be graded on a scale of 1 to 5. I also reserve the right to give pop quizzes, which would also then be integrated into the daily response grade.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Absences will be penalized by taking 10 points off the attendance grade. This means that you can safely skip class once and still have an A- for the attendance grade. After that, though, this portion of the grade will quickly decline. I reserve the right to forcibly withdraw someone who does not attend regularly.

Excused absences, of course, will not count against the grade. Excused are those due to approved college-related activities (e.g. sporting events), documented illness, and family emergencies. Students have the responsibility to make up missed work.
**LATE POLICY**

Short responses may be handed in late, but for a penalty.

Papers should be handed in on time; if you know that you need a little more time on a paper, you may ask for an extension, but this request must come before the day the paper is due. Otherwise, there will be a late penalty of a letter grade per day that the paper is late.

**OTHER REMARKS**

Electronic devices (iphones, laptops, ipads, etc.) are not to be used during class. All cell phones must be turned off at the beginning of class. Do not, of course, take phone calls during class. Please be on time. If you must arrive late or leave early, do so as quietly and unobtrusively as possible.

Of course, all work must be yours. Cases of suspected plagiarism and cheating will be handed over to Wofford’s honor court. Plagiarism, we should note, is defined in the following way according to Wofford College's Honor Code:

1. The verbatim repetition, without acknowledgement, of the writings of another author.
2. Borrowing without acknowledging the source.
3. Paraphrasing the thoughts of another writer without acknowledgement.
4. Allowing any other person or organization to prepare work which one then submits as his or her own.

You should pay close attention to the third definition, especially when referring to ideas borrowing from a website. If you have any questions, refer to my handout "Living by Wofford’s Honor Code."

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>Introduction to Intellectual History</td>
<td>No Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>Background: Immanuel Kant</td>
<td>Start Hegel reading.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 7</td>
<td>Background: Georg W. F. Hegel</td>
<td>e-reserve reading:</td>
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<td>George W. F. Hegel, <em>Phenomenology of Spirit</em>, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford and</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
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<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Hegel, continued</td>
<td>e-reserve reading:</td>
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<td>G. W. Hegel, <em>The Philosophy of History</em>, trans. J. Sibree (Amherst, New</td>
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<td>Feb 12</td>
<td>Snow Day!</td>
<td>No reading</td>
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<td>Feb 14</td>
<td>The Nineteenth-Century Legacy: Friedrich</td>
<td>e-reserve reading:</td>
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<td>338-340.</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>Nietzsche, continued</td>
<td>Friedman Nietzsche, <em>Beyond Good and Evil</em>, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New</td>
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<td>Feb 19</td>
<td>Phenomenology</td>
<td>e-reserve:</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Feb 21</td>
<td>Phenomenology, cont</td>
<td>Catch-Up if necessary</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
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| Feb 24 |                               | e-reserve:  
| Feb 26 |                               | e-reserve:  
**Get Paper Topic #1** |
| Week 5 |                               |                                              | **Psychoanalysis, cont**                                                                  |
| Mar 3  | Sick Day                      |                                              |                                              | ** Logical Positivism**                                                                   |
| Mar 5  |                               |                                             | e-reserve reading:  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Mar 10</th>
<th>Logical Positivism, cont</th>
<th>Finish Wittgenstein’s <em>Poker</em>, 165-316</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Mar 12</td>
<td>Background: Karl Marx</td>
<td>e-reserve reading:</td>
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<td>Mar 14</td>
<td>The Frankfurt School &amp; Critical Theory</td>
<td>e-reserve:</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>Critical Theory, cont</td>
<td><strong>First paper due</strong></td>
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<td>No reading</td>
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<td>Mar 19</td>
<td>The Critique of Consumer Culture</td>
<td>e-reserve:</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Mar 24</td>
<td>Beauvoir, cont</td>
<td>Beauvoir, <em>The Second Sex</em>, XVI, XVII, Conclusion</td>
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<td>Mar 26</td>
<td>The Revival of Feminism</td>
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<td>Kate Millet, <em>Sexual Politics</em> (New York and London:</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading/Notes</td>
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<td>Mar 28</td>
<td>Ferdinand Saussure</td>
<td>Touchstone Books, 1990), 3-58</td>
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<td>e-reserve:</td>
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<td>Kaja Silverman, <em>The Subject of Semiotics</em> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 4-14</td>
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<td><strong>Get Second Paper Topic</strong></td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
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<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>Structuralism &amp; Claude Levi-Strauss</td>
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<td>e-reserve:</td>
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<td>Apr 2</td>
<td>Roland Barthes</td>
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<td>e-reserve:</td>
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<td>Apr 4</td>
<td>Barthes, cont.</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>No reading</td>
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<td>Apr 9</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>No reading</td>
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<td>Apr 11</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<td>No reading</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
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<td>Apr 14</td>
<td>Postmodernism/ Poststructuralism</td>
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<td>Reading:</td>
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<td>Handout on Postmodernism</td>
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<td><strong>Structuralism vs. Poststruct.</strong></td>
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| Apr 16 | Deconstruction | e-reserve:  
|---|---|---
|   |   | **Second Paper Topic Due**  
|   |   | **Final Paper Topics**  |
| Week 12 |   |   |
| Apr 21 | Michel Foucault | Foucault, *A History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, 1-73  
| Apr 23 | Foucault, cont. | Finish Foucault, *A History of Sexuality*  
| Apr 25 | Gender Theory | e-reserve:  
| Week 13 |   |   |
| Apr 28 | Gender Theory, cont. | e-reserve:  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 30</td>
<td>Gay and Lesbian Studies</td>
<td>e-reserve:</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td>Queer Theory</td>
<td>e-reserve:</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
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<td>May 5</td>
<td>Media &amp; Cultural Studies</td>
<td>John Fiske, <em>Television Culture</em>, Chs. 5, 6</td>
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<td>Images: <em>Charlie's Angels</em>; <em>A-Team</em>; <em>Miami Vice</em></td>
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<td>May 7</td>
<td>Media &amp; Cultural Studies, cont.</td>
<td>Fiske, <em>Television Culture</em>, Chs. 10, 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>Masculinity Studies</td>
<td>e-reserve:</td>
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**Final Paper Due: Wednesday, May 14, at noon**

Note: This syllabus is tentative and subject to change upon notice.