



BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY UNIT OUTLINE

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN THEOLOGY

UNIT TITLE	CONTEMPORARY CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY
UNIT CODE	H74064
UNIT STATUS	Elective
HOST FIELD	C
PREREQUISITE	H51060 or H73060 Introduction to Philosophy
INCOMPATIBLES	H52064 is incompatible with H74064
CREDIT POINTS	10cp
REQUIREMENTS	3 hours per week contact and 7 hours per week study over a 13-week semester, plus participation in 3 postgraduate colloquiums spread across the semester. Separate tutorials for undergraduate and postgraduate students.
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Even Years
PREPARED BY	Mr Richard Colledge
UNIT COORDINATOR	Dr Richard Colledge
TEACHING STAFF	Revd Dr Richard Colledge
DATE PREPARED	10 February 2004

Rationale

The Hegelian system in many respects represents the zenith of realist metaphysics in western thought, and the reaction he provoked in several key 19th century heirs and opponents with whom this unit begins (Kierkegaard, Marx and Nietzsche), laid many of the foundational themes for key movements in 20th century philosophy in continental Europe. These movements have been of enormous methodological significance for the ways in which Christian theology has been approached and articulated. This unit gives undergraduate and postgraduate students in theology the opportunity to study some of the major debates in contemporary continental philosophy, both in their own right and in the context of their significance for recent and contemporary Christian theology. Particularly for *postgraduate students*, the emphasis is on direct encounter with key primary texts in translation. The units also give students important background for further systematic work in philosophy and philosophical theology.

Relation to Course

The unit plays a valuable role within the courses of the BCT in providing opportunities for graduate students to explore at some depth, the recent European intellectual tradition from which recent Christian theology has taken so much inspiration in its development of new ways of conceptualising and articulating the Gospel. To this extent, it provides a useful companion to a range of units in other fields, including: Introduction to Moral Theology, (Theology of the Sacraments, Doctrine and Truth after Modernity, Catholic Social Teaching, Introduction to Feminist Studies in Theology, and Contemporary Christian Spirituality. The unit also forms the third unit in a stream of units dealing with the history of philosophy: Ancient and Medieval Philosophy, Contemporary Continental Philosophy, and Modern Western Philosophy.

Aims

The unit aims to provide an opportunity for students in theology to delve into a range of debates in contemporary continental philosophy concerning metaphysics, ethics, anthropology, politics and philosophical theology, thereby informing their understanding of present debates in philosophy and theology. Postgraduate students are further enabled to recognise the distinctive voices of major figures in 19th-20th century continental philosophy, along with the schools and traditions of thought they founded, through sustained direct encounter with key primary texts and with a focus on two issues in particular. In this way, the units seek to both enrich students' studies in theology, as well as to prepare them for further work in philosophy and philosophical theology, should they wish to continue.

Learning Outcomes

On the successful completion of this unit, the postgraduate student will be able to:

1. demonstrate a developed understanding and appreciation of the significance of two major issues in contemporary continental philosophy.
2. critically discuss and evaluate the differing arguments of philosophers concerning such issues, and in this way demonstrate a developed understanding and appreciation of the distinctive responses to these issues developed by key figures and schools of thought in 19th-20th century continental philosophy.
3. demonstrate a proficiency in dealing with both the primary texts themselves, as well as major secondary works dealing with these authors.
4. apply a range of independent research skills.

Content

After a brief methodological introduction on the hermeneutics of studying the history of philosophy, the units are divided into five sections, as outlined below. The following list gives a *sample* of topics addressed, and the figures from whom the primary texts will be drawn:

Part 1: The Nineteenth century background: The Reaction to Hegel

- Søren Kierkegaard
- Friedrich Nietzsche
- Karl Marx

Part 2: Phenomenology and Existentialism

- Edmund Husserl
- Martin Heidegger
- Jean-Paul Sartre
- Maurice Merleau-Ponty

Part 3: Structuralism, Hermeneutics and Critical Theory

- Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes
- Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricœur
- Jürgen Habermas

Part 4: Beyond Phenomenology and Structuralism: Philosophical Postmodernism

- Emmanuel Levinas
- Michel Foucault
- Jean-François Lyotard
- Jacques Derrida

Part 5: Other Movements in 20th c. Continental Philosophy

- *Political Philosophy*: Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno (Frankfurt School)
- *Philosophy of Science*: Karl Popper
- *French Feminism*: Luce Irigaray
- *Philosophical Theism*: Jean-Luc Marion and/or William Desmond

Additional primary source readings for *postgraduates* are drawn from each of the five sections of the unit, though with a particular emphasis on parts 2, 4 and the latter part of section 5.

Assessment

	Type of assessment	No of words	Weighting %	Due date	Learning Outcomes covered
1	<p>Comparative Essay</p> <p>The comparative essay is designed to stretch the postgraduate student's grasp of one major issue in contemporary continental philosophy with reference to at least one of the tutorial readings. The author and topic chosen should be clearly distinct from the major essay. The essay should: (a) provide an outline of the problem being wrestled with by the authors, and why it was/is considered an important issue; (b) introduce the two readings (one of which might be chosen by the student in consultation with the lecturer) in historical perspective, readings which touch on similar issues while providing differing perspectives on the issue; (c) highlight and critically analyse the main steps in the case being put by the respective authors, and the main conclusions they respectively reach; (d) incorporate, where appropriate, allusions to the context of the debate in the history of western philosophy; and (e) state where the student currently sits in terms of the issues raised by the readings.</p>	3000	40%	The essay is written in the student's own time during the semester, and is to be submitted before or on the final night of lectures.	1, 2 and 3
2.	<p>Major essay</p> <p>The student is to research more deeply and then critically discuss one clearly defined philosophical problem at issue in contemporary continental philosophy, and present his/her work in a well-structured and coherent essay. The issue chosen must be clearly distinct from that considered in the comparative essay. An extensive list of research topics is provided. Students are encouraged, in consultation with the lecturer, to frame a research question of their own which emerges out of their reading. The higher standards of scholarship expected of postgraduate students are indicated in the wording of the objectives</p>	4500	60%	The essay is written in the student's own time, and is submitted during or before the exam block.	2, 3 and 4

Organisation and Teaching Strategies

Each week a 2 hour (2x 50 min) lecture is given to the postgraduate and undergraduate students concurrently. These lectures introduce the major figures or schools of thought under consideration and flesh out some of the more important debates involved. While these lectures are fairly introductory in nature, frequent asides (of a content and bibliographical nature) are made for the benefit of postgraduate students which indicate directions for possible further research. Lecture notes, distributed each week, contain sections dealing specifically with postgraduate content concerns.

During the third hour, postgraduates meet separately for the tutorial in which set readings that deal with the *previous* week's topic, are discussed. The lecturer typically provokes discussion of the main issues stemming from the reading, makes points of clarification where required concerning the lecture material, directs students to suitable further reading, and opens discussion to current research issues arising. The lecturer also extends the lecture material where appropriate. In addition to tutorial readings shared with undergraduates, postgraduate students typically have 4-6 additional tutorial readings (compiled as a separate collection), which are discussed in conjunction with the shared material. These additional readings are generally of a more advanced nature, and typically deal with primary contemporary continental philosophical texts in

translation. Three times a semester, postgraduate students also participate in a postgraduate colloquium in which students discuss current research, and are given guidance on suitable further reading.

In addition to the 3 hour face-to-face mode, all students are encouraged to make use of electronic means of communication with the lecturer and with other enrolled students. From 2005, it is envisaged that the unit web page will incorporate a link to either a closed list serve facility or a weekly chat room facility for students wishing to discuss the readings or current research.

Generic Skills

- Advanced skills in research using primary and secondary texts, and in the integration of this material in submitted work.
- Advanced skills in use of electronic catalogues, databases and search engines, as well as hard copy.
- Advanced writing skills: clear expression and technical proficiency; clearly discernible purpose; logical structuring of ideas; and conciseness.
- Thorough grasp and practice of philosophical reasoning techniques.

Textbooks

Required

Nil. A “Book of Readings” is supplied at the first class.

Recommended

Sim, Stuart. *Contemporary Continental Philosophy: The New Scepticism, Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Philosophy*. Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2000.

West, David. *An Introduction to Continental Philosophy*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1996.

Academic & General Resource Requirements

References – Secondary source books

(PG) – indicates an advanced text, more suited for postgraduates.

Barker, Philip. *Michel Foucault: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998.

Bernasconi, Robert, and Simon Critchley. *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

———. *Re-Reading Levinas, Studies in Continental Thought*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Carrette, Jeremy R. *Foucault and Religion: Spiritual Corporality and Political Spirituality*. New York: Routledge, 1999. (PG)

Carver, Terrell. *The Cambridge Companion to Marx*. Cambridge England; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Davis, Colin. *Levinas: An Introduction*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996.

Derrida, Jacques, and John D. Caputo. *Deconstruction in a Nutshell : A Conversation with Jacques Derrida, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy, 1089-3938*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1997.

Dews, Peter. *Habermas: A Critical Reader*. Oxford, UK ; Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1999.

Dreyfuss, Hubert L., and Harrison Hall. *Heidegger: A Critical Reader*. Oxford, UK; Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1992. (PG)

Fricker, Miranda, and Jennifer Hornsby. *The Cambridge Companion to Feminism in Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Gare, Arran. *Postmodernism and the Environmental Crisis*. London; New York: Routledge, 1994.

Glynn, Simon. *Sartre: An Investigation of Some Major Themes*. Aldershot, Hants. Brookfield: Avebury Gower, 1987.

Guignon, Charles B. *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*. Cambridge England; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Gutting, Gary. *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*. Cambridge England; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Hanks, J. Craig. *Refiguring Critical Theory: Jürgen Habermas and the Possibilities of Political Change*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002. (PG)

Hannay, Alastair, and Gordon Daniel Marino. *The Cambridge Companion to Kierkegaard*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

- Howells, Christina. *Cambridge Companion to Sartre*. Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- . *Derrida: Deconstruction from Phenomenology to Ethics*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 1998, 1999.
- Kourany, Janet A. *Philosophy in a Feminist Voice: Critiques and Reconstructions*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Kovacs, George. *The Question of God in Heidegger's Phenomenology, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1990. **(PG)**
- Leiter, Brian. *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Nietzsche on Morality, Routledge Philosophy Guidebooks*. London; New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Lévinas, Emmanuel, and Seán Hand. *The Levinas Reader*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
- Llewelyn, John. *Emmanuel Levinas: The Genealogy of Ethics, Warwick Studies in European Philosophy*. London; New York: Routledge, 1995. **(PG)**
- Lorraine, Tamsin E. *Irigaray & Deleuze: Experiments in Visceral Philosophy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999. **(PG)**
- Magnus, Bernd, and Kathleen Marie Higgins. *The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- McHoul, A. W., and Wendy Grace. *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject* Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1993.
- Outhwaite, William. *Habermas : A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994.
- Pattison, George. *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to the Later Heidegger, Routledge Philosophy Guidebooks*. London; New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Patton, Paul. *Deleuze: A Critical Reader, Blackwell Critical Readers*. Oxford, UK; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996. **(PG)**
- Peperzak, Adriaan Theodoor. *Ethics as First Philosophy: The Significance of Emmanuel Levinas for Philosophy, Literature, and Religion*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Powell, Jim, and Jacques Derrida. *Derrida: For Beginners*. New York: Writers and Readers Publishing, 1997.
- Sedgwick, Peter R. *Nietzsche: A Critical Reader, Blackwell Critical Readers*. Oxford, UK; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995.
- Smith, A. D. *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Husserl and the Cartesian Meditations, Routledge Philosophy Guidebooks*. London; New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Tanner, Michael. *Nietzsche, Past Masters*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Vasseleu, Cathryn. *Textures of Light: Vision and Touch in Irigaray, Levinas, and Merleau-Ponty, Warwick Studies in European Philosophy*. London; New York: Routledge, 1998. **(PG)**
- Watkin, Julia. *Kierkegaard*. London: G. Chapman, 1997.
- White, Stephen K. *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Whitford, Margaret. *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine*. London; New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Williams, James. *Liotard: Towards a Postmodern Philosophy*. Cambridge, U.K.; Malden, Mass.: Polity Press, 1998.
- Zeitlin, Irving M. *Nietzsche: A Re-Examination*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1994.

References – Journal Articles

Some recent journal articles of interest:

- Alweiss, Lilian. "Heidegger and 'the Concept of Time'". *History of the Human-Sciences*. Aug 2002; 15(3): 117-132. **(PG)**
- Borradori, Giovanna. "Two Versions of Continental Holism: Derrida and Structuralism". *Philosophy and Social Criticism*. July 2000; 26(4): 1-22. **(PG)**
- Brown, Jeffrey W. "What Ethics Demands of Intersubjectivity: Levinas and Deleuze on Husserl". *International Studies in Philosophy*. 2002; 34(1): 23-37. **(PG)**
- Caputo, John D. "Looking the Impossible in the Eye: Kierkegaard, Derrida, and the Repetition of Religion". *Kierkegaard Studies*. 2002; 1-25. **(PG)**
- De Lacoste, Guillermine. "A Lacanian Elucidation of Sartre". *Sartre Studies International*. 2002; 8(1): 18-44. **(PG)**
- Garitta, Mario. "Heidegger on the Nature of Truth". *Auslegung*. Wint-Spr 2003; 26(1): 1-22. **(PG)**
- Golomb, Jacob. "Buber's 'I and Thou' vis-a-vis Nietzsche and Kierkegaard". *Existentialia*. 2002; 12(3-4): 413-427. **(PG)**

- Hintikka, Jaakko. "The Notion of Intuition in Husserl". *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*. June 2003; 57(224): 169-191. **(PG)**
- Hutcheson, Peter. "Sartre on Freedom in Being and Nothingness". *Southwest Philosophy Review*. July 2002; 18(2): 137-140.
- Morrison, Glenn. "A Critical Review of Michael Purcell's Theological Development of Levinas's Philosophy". *Heythrop Journal*. Apr 2003; 44(2): 147-166. **(PG)**
- Nola, Robert; Irzik, Gurol. "Incredulity Towards Lyotard: A Critique of a Postmodernist Account of Science and Knowledge". *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*. June 2003; 34A(2): 391-421. **(PG)**
- Quist, Wenche-Marit, "When Your Past Lies Ahead of You: Kierkegaard and Heidegger on the Concept of Repetition". *Kierkegaard Studies*. 2002; 78-92. **(PG)**
- Tauber, Alfred I. "Outside the Subject: Levinas's Jewish Perspective on Time". *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*. 1998; 20/21(1/2): 439-459.

References – Online and Other IT Resources

- Dictionary of Philosophical Terms and Names. http://www3.baylor.edu/~Scott_Moore/Continental.html
- Derrida and Deconstruction. http://130.179.92.25/Arnason_DE/Derrida.html
- Existentialism: An Introduction. <http://www.tameri.com/csw/exist/>
- Foucault. <http://www.foucault.info/>
- Habermas. <http://www.helsinki.fi/~amkauppi/hablinks.html#texts>
- Heidegger. <http://www.webcom.com/%7Eepaf/ereignis.html>
- Husserl. <http://www.husserlpage.com/>
- Irigaray. <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/feminism/irigaray.html>
- Kierkegaard. <http://www.utas.edu.au/docs/humsoc/kierkegaard/>
- Levinas. <http://home.pacbell.net/atterton/levinas/>
- Lyotard. <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/fr/lyotard.htm>
- Popper. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/popper/#Life>
- Sartre. <http://members.aol.com/DonJohnR/Philosophy/Sartre.html>