

Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of Perception (PHIL 463/563)
TR 12:00 - 1:50, 102 Peterson Hall

CRN: 24202 / 24205
Winter 2008

Instructor: Dr. Ted Toadvine (toadvine@uoregon.edu)
Office Hours: TR 2:00 - 3:00 and by appointment, PLC 319
Phone: 346-5554 (office); 346-5547 (Philosophy Program Manager)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on a complete reading of Merleau-Ponty's classic work, *Phenomenology of Perception*. We will explore the place of this work in the wider context of Merleau-Ponty's oeuvre, his relationship with the phenomenological tradition and original appropriation of its method, and his treatment in this work of the following themes: embodiment and perception, expression and language, the experience of nature and other people, temporality, and freedom.

TEXTS

Students are expected to bring the assigned texts to every class. Those who have some facility in French are encouraged to consult the original texts as well as the available English translations.

- Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*. Routledge Classics, 2002.
Although this is the only printing currently available new, it contains many errors. The best printings are from Routledge & Kegan Paul or Humanities Press, 1981 or later, which are widely available used. These will, however, have different page numbers than those listed on the syllabus.
- Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Merleau-Ponty Reader*. Edited by Toadvine & Lawlor. Northwestern, 2007.
As we will only read selections from this collection, those who are not Merleau-Ponty aficionados may prefer to make photocopies rather than purchase the entire text
- Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*. Gallimard, 1964.
This text is recommended but not required. Some copies are available through the UO bookstore (also carried by amazon.fr for € 14,25). Although reading along in French is not required, the original text is indispensable for clarifying ambiguities and infelicities in the English translation.
- Translation of the analytical Table of Contents of *Phenomenology of Perception*, posted online at <http://www.uoregon.edu/~toadvine/PP Table of Contents.pdf>
For some mysterious reason, the English translations have never included Merleau-Ponty's paragraph-by-paragraph table of contents, which is a very handy guide for your reading.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	<u>Undergraduate</u>	<u>Graduate</u>
1. participation	10%	20%
2. three essays, 4-6 pages each	90 %	
3. term paper prospectus & annotated bibliography		20%
4. final term paper, 12-14 pages		60%

- **Participation/Attendance:** You are expected to participate actively in this class, which includes attending class, reading all assigned material prior to class, and participating productively and professionally in class discussions. Missing **three** classes *for any reason* will result in a full grade reduction. An additional full grade reduction will be made for each additional missed class after the third. You will be expected to document your presence in class by signing a daily roll sheet. Three late arrivals for class will count as one absence. The quality and quantity of your participation in the class discussion will be evaluated in assigning 10% (UG) or 20% (G) of your final grade. In addition to any penalties that you receive for failure to attend class, absences from class will also negatively affect your participation grade.
- **Three Essays (undergraduates only):** Three essays on assigned topics are due on the dates specified in the course outline. The last essay is due on the date assigned for the final examination. Essays should be 4-6 pages with

standard fonts and margins. Assignments for these essays will be posted on Blackboard at least one week in advance of the due date. All written work must be typed, stapled, double-spaced, and proof-read. Essays cannot be accepted by email. Essays are due *in class* on the day assigned and will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. Each essay is worth 30% of your final grade.

- **Term Paper Prospectus (graduate students only):** You will submit, in the 9th week, a prospectus of your final paper with two components: (1) a 2-3 page detailed description of the topic and outline of your proposed argument; and (2) an annotated bibliography of five peer-reviewed secondary texts you intend to consult. Each annotation should be around one double-spaced page and include a summary of the article as well as an indication of its relevance for your project. Your prospectus must receive my approval in order for your final term paper to be accepted. The prospectus will be worth 20% of your final course grade.
- **Final Term Paper (graduate students only):** Graduate students will complete a final 12-14 page term paper. Final papers will explore a specific independently-chosen topic or theme from the course in detail and must include (a) examination of at least five scholarly secondary sources in addition to primary texts, and (b) the development of your own original position or critical response. Term papers must be stapled, double-spaced, proof-read, and use a standard system of citation (APA or Chicago). Papers are due on the date scheduled for the final exam, and extensions will be granted only in the case of genuine, documented emergencies. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. Your term paper will count for 60% of your final course grade.

PLEASE NOTE

- **Inclement Weather:** It is generally expected that class will meet unless the University is officially closed for inclement weather. If, however, it becomes necessary to cancel class while the University remains open, this will be announced on Blackboard and through the Blackboard email system.
- **Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Please review the university policy available at <http://www.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm> for an explanation of what constitutes academic dishonesty and how it will be dealt with in this course.
- **Disability Accommodations:** If you have a documented disability, please inform me as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

TENTATIVE ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE (*any changes to these assignments will be announced in class*)

<p>Week 1: 1/8, 1/10</p>	<p><u>Tuesday:</u> Introduction to the course and Merleau-Ponty “An Unpublished Text by Merleau-Ponty” (MPR 283-290) Preface (vii-xxiv)</p> <p>Introduction</p> <p><u>Thursday:</u> The ‘Sensation’ as a Unit of Experience (3-14) ‘Association’ and the Projection of Memories (15-29)</p>
<p>Week 2: 1/15, 1/17</p>	<p><u>Tuesday:</u> ‘Attention’ and ‘Judgement’ (30-59)</p> <p><u>Thursday:</u> The Phenomenal Field (60-74)</p>
<p>Week 3: 1/22, 1/24</p>	<p>Part I: The Body</p> <p><u>Tuesday:</u> Experience and Objective Thought (77-83) The Body as Object and Mechanistic Physiology (84-102) The Experience of the Body and Classical Psychology (103-111)</p> <p><u>Thursday:</u> The Spatiality of One’s Own Body and Motility (112-170)</p>

<p>Week 4: 1/29, 1/31</p>	<p>Undergrads: First essay due Tuesday, 1/29</p> <p><u>Tuesday:</u> The Synthesis of One's own Body (171-177) The Body in its Sexual Being (178-201)</p> <p><u>Thursday:</u> The Body as Expression, and Speech (202-232)</p>
<p>Week 5: 2/5 2/7: class cancelled</p>	<p><i>Part II: The World as Perceived</i></p> <p><u>Tuesday:</u> The Theory of the Body is Already a Theory of Perception (235-239) Sense Experience (240-282)</p> <p><u>Thursday: Class Cancelled</u></p>
<p>Week 6: 2/12, 2/14</p>	<p><u>Tuesday:</u> Space (283-347)</p> <p><u>Thursday:</u> The Thing and the Natural World (348-402) "Cezanne's Doubt" (MPR 69-84)</p>
<p>Week 7: 2/19, 2/21</p>	<p><u>Tuesday:</u> Other Selves and the Human World (403-425) "The Child's Relations with Others: 1. The Theoretical Problem" (MPR 143-149)</p> <p><i>Part III: Being-for-Itself and Being-in-the-World</i></p> <p><u>Thursday:</u> The Cogito (429-475)</p>
<p>Week 8: 2/26, 2/28</p>	<p>Undergrads: Second essay due Tuesday, 2/26</p> <p><u>Tuesday:</u> "The Primacy of Perception and its Philosophical Consequences" (MPR 89-118)</p> <p><u>Thursday:</u> Temporality (476-503)</p>
<p>Week 9: 3/4, 3/6</p>	<p>Grads: Term paper prospectus due Tuesday, 3/4</p> <p><u>Tuesday:</u> Freedom (504-530)</p> <p><i>Politics and Ontology after Phenomenology of Perception</i></p> <p><u>Thursday:</u> Preface to Signs (MPR 329-337) Merleau-Ponty in Person (MPR 379-391)</p>
<p>Week 10: 3/11, 3/14</p>	<p><u>Tuesday:</u> "The Philosopher and his Shadow" (posted on blackboard) Guest Lecture: Beata Stawarska</p> <p><u>Thursday:</u> Graduate Student Mini-Conference (schedule TBA)</p>
<p>Tuesday, 3/18, 5 pm.</p>	<p>Final Essays/Term Papers Due, Philosophy office, 3rd floor of PLC</p>