PHILOSOPHY 463/563: DEWEY

Spring 2012—Course Syllabus

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Course Description
We will undertake a close reading of Dewey’s Experience and Nature, which is generally considered to be his seminal work on the nature of experience, mind, thought, language, knowledge, and philosophy. We will focus on roughly one chapter per week, with some use of supplementary reading of other short articles by Dewey or from articles or book chapters by commentators on Dewey’s philosophical project.

Schedule of Readings
The key text is John Dewey, Experience and Nature, vol. 1 of The Later Works, 1925-1953, edited by Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981). This is available in paperback at the UO Bookstore. There will also be a small packet of additional required readings available at the Copy Shop (539 E. 13th Ave.). The schedule of reading assignments below is tentative and may need to be adjusted as we assess our progress.

Week 1
April 3 Introduction: Dewey’s Reconstruction of Philosophy
   “From Absolutism to Experimentalism” (readings packet)
April 5 No class (Johnson away giving lecture)

Week 2
April 10 “Experience and Philosophic Method” (EN, Ch. 1)
April 12 “Experience and Philosophic Method” (EN, Ch. 1)
   “The Postulate of Immediate Empiricism” (packet)

Week 3
April 17 Ch. 2, “Existence as Precarious and as Stable
April 19 “Qualitative Thought” (packet)

Week 4
April 24 Rorty, “Dewey’s Metaphysics” (packet)
April 26 “Nature, Ends and Histories” (EN, Ch. 3)
   [First essay due]

Week 5
May 1 “Nature, Means and Knowledge” (EN, Ch. 4)
May 3 “Nature, Communication and Meaning” (EN, Ch. 5)
**Week 6**  
May 8 Pratt, “A Sailor in a Storm” (Packet)  
Johnson, “The Meaning of the Body” (packet)  
May 10 “Nature, Mind and the Subject” (*EN*, Ch. 6)  
[First short essay due in class]

**Week 7**  
May 15 “Nature, Life and Body-Mind” (*EN*, Ch. 7)  
May 17 “Nature, Life, and Body-Mind” (*EN*, Ch. 7)  
[Second essay due]

**Week 8**  
May 22 Damasio, “The Organism and the Object” (packet)  
“The Making of Core Consciousness” (packet)  
May 24 “Existence, Ideas and Communication” (*EN*, Ch. 8)

**Week 9**  
May 29 “Experience, Nature and Art” (*EN*, Ch. 9)  
May 31 Johnson, “Dewey’s Big Idea for Aesthetics” (packet)

**Week 10**  
June 5 “Existence, Value and Criticism” (*EN*, Ch. 10)  
June 7 “Existence, Value and Criticism” (*EN*, Ch. 10)

**Week 11**  
[Term paper due Tues., June 12, by 5:00 p.m.]

**Assignments/Grading**  
Students are required to write two short philosophical essays and one longer term paper.  
The first two short essay, on a topic assigned by the instructor, should be 4-5 double-spaced typewritten pages. The term paper (10-12 pages for undergraduates and 12-15 pages for graduate students) is on a topic of your choice, but approved by the instructor. The shorter essays count as 25% each, while the term paper counts for 50% of your grade.