The course in 20th Century Philosophy seeks to provide a perspective of the rise, fall, and transformation of major movements in philosophy from the turn of the century to the final decade of the 20th century. Thus, as noted below, the course is organized around five major philosophical movements, rather than around problems or areas of philosophy, great books or single philosophical thinkers. The focus of the course, however, involves the evaluation of the arguments, particularly in metaphysics and epistemology within each of these movements.

The requirement for grades in the course is voted upon by the class, but this procedure is dependent upon the guidelines provided by the instructor. In the past, this has meant that there is a midterm exam usually scheduled at the end of part I, and a cumulative final at the end of the term. In the class discussion, students are free to advance other options for grading and to vote on these options, subject, however, to the limits set by the instructor's guidelines.

Outline of Course Lectures

A. The Introductory Lecture

This aims to sketch the background for the emergence of five major philosophical movements of the twentieth century which are identified as Pragmatism, Logical Positivism, Linguistic Analysis, Phenomenology and Existentialism. A shared point of departure for these movements is the *fin-de-siecle* dilemma between Scientific "Materialism" and Hegelian "Idealism." The introductory lecture provides a justification for the study of the philosophy of the 20th Century through an account of the development these five movements.

Part I: The Origins of Five Philosophical Movements in the Twentieth Century (1900-1914)

A. The advent of Pragmatism

> 1. William James's Pragmatism as the resolution of the dilemma of Materialism and Idealism. The Reader contains two chapters from James's highly readable *Pragmatism* of 1907: "What Pragmatism Means" and "Pragmatism's Notion of Truth." The Reader also contains a background letter of William James to Henry James on the annunciation of *Pragmatism*. An additional background essay is suggested reading. It is George Santayana's "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," which locates the place of William James as a critic of the dominant nineteenth-century tradition in American philosophy.

> 2. The Pragmatic theory of truth. The primary formulation of the Pragmatic theory of truth antedated William James in the writings of Charles Peirce. James interpreted and popularized Peirce's thesis in a style which led Peirce to differentiate his thought from James by labeling himself as a "Pragmaticist," rather than a "Pragmatist." The only 19th-century text in the Reader is a selection from Charles Peirce's essay "How to Make Our Ideas Clear," in which Peirce developed his "seminal" views on Pragmatic theory of meaning, of truth, and of reality. One special feature is that the students are urged to

understand Peirce's essay as the source of the later development of the verifiability theory of meaning.

B. G.E. Moore's "Common Sense Analysis" as the precursor of the methodology of "Ordinary Language Analysis" in philosophy

3. The Reader contains Moore's celebrated essay "The Refutation of Idealism," which was hailed in 1903 as the classic dethronement of Idealism in Anglo-American philosophy. From the current vantage point, the original essay is extremely difficult to follow and to explicate since it seems to combine an original expression of "Horror Victorianorum" with an overly subtle analysis of the process of perception. The class lecture and discussion evades the challenge of reconstructing Moore's argument as written in 1903 in favor of a simpler formulation of Moore's "Realism" about the interpretation of ordinary experience of things, colors and sensations. Bertrand Russell's reaction to Moore's essay is worthy of note and is quoted in my own essay in the Reader "Pragmatism: Method, Metaphysics and Morals." The student is advised not to aim at mastery of the content of Moore's essay but to aim at an analysis of the underlying argument. As prefatory reading to the lecture on Moore the reader contains an illustration of Moore's influence on his Cambridge and Bloomsbury contemporaries in a selection from an essay titled "The Uses of the Philosophy of G.E. Moore in the works of E.M. Forster" as well as the opening pages of E.M. Forster's novel *The Longest Journey*.

C. Bertrand Russell and the origins of Logical Positivism: the logistic thesis of *Principia Mathematica*.

4. The significance for philosophy of Whitehead and Russell's *Principia Mathematica* is developed in two class lectures whose aim is to provide the students with an outline of the achievement of *Principia Mathematica*. There is no text in the reader which supports this class presentation. There are several secondary sources for reference for the interested student, including a readable account in Max Black: *The Nature of Mathematics*.

5. Russell's philosophy combined his logistic account of mathematics with an empiricist account of knowledge. The Reader contains Chapter Five of Russell's *Problems of Philosophy*, "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description," which is a paradigmatic source for his continuously maintained empiricism. It also contains an important sketch of Russell's attempt to construct a linguistic theory of the nature of reality: "Logical Atomism." This latter essay contains many technical discussions for which there is no class preparation so that it can be useful as a background reading, but is not assigned as required reading for the course. Thus only the selection titled "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description," is assigned as required reading from Russell.

D. Henri Bergson as a forerunner of the Existentialist movement in philosophy

6. The Reader contains Henri Bergson's "An Introduction to Metaphysics," which provides the Bergsonian formulation of two kinds of knowledge. This text is significant as an antecedent or precursor for some existentialist approaches to philosophy. It also provides a point of departure for the contrast between the analytic approach and the continental approach in twentieth-century philosophy.

E. Edmund Husserl and the foundations of the phenomenological movement

> 7. The founding text for this movement is Edmund Husserl's *Ideas*; a selection from the opening sections of this work is presented in the Reader. Despite the difficulty of reading Husserl, it is possible to sketch the ways in which Phenomenology provides a solution to the dilemma posed by Materialism and Idealism. The class lecture also develops Husserl's argument for phenomenology through an account of his *Cartesian Meditations* which does indicate Husserl's interpretation of his place in the history of philosophy even though it may not provide sufficient materials regarding his development of his position.

Part II: The Consolidation of Polar Philosophical Movements: Logical Positivism and Existentialism between the Two World Wars (1914-1950)

In Part II, for reasons of time and pedagogical clarity, some of the further developments in Pragmatism and Phenomenology are bypassed in order to focus upon the polar opposition that developed between the two major protagonists of the inter-war period: Logical Positivism and Existentialism.

A. The emergence of Logical Positivism

> A preliminary lecture provides a sketch of the background themes that antedated the rise of Logical Positivism. The four themes presented are: Kant's epistemic empiricism; Comte's sociological Positivism; Mach's Positivism; and Bertrand Russell's methodology of logical construction. There is no reading assigned for these background themes. The lecture proceeds to the formulation of Logical Positivism in its heyday.

> 8. Rudolf Carnap and the elimination of metaphysics: The Reader contains one classic exposition of Logical Positivism in Rudolf Carnap's essay "The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language." Of special interest in this essay is Carnap's confrontation with the Existentialist thought of Martin Heidegger.

> 9. The views of Logical Positivism gained a measure of popularity through their exposition in A.J. Ayer's short text *Language, Truth and Logic*. The Reader contains the first chapter of that book, which is Ayer's representation of Carnap's views on "The Elimination of Metaphysics," as well as Ayer's provocative statement of the corollary of Logical Positivism for ethics and theology in Chapter VI of that book, "Critique of Ethics and Theology." The Reader contains a retrospective view of Logical Positivism, as presented in the review of three late works by persons associated with the Vienna Circle, including a posthumous work of A.J. Ayer and W.V.O. Quine's *Pursuit of Truth*, in my own review essay "Beyond the Vienna Circle."

B. Continental Existentialism and the reinterpretation of "Being"

> 10. The Reader contains a later essay by Heidegger, "The Way Back into the Ground of Metaphysics." The student is warned that Heidegger's writing is notoriously considered to be obscure and difficult, but his many partisans believe that it is extremely rewarding philosophically. The lecture concentrates on some highlights of Existentialism as well as some "clearings" in the "forest" of the text, rather than on a complete explication of the challenging selection.

11. Heidegger's concept of Being (*Dasein*) or existence is primary in terms of his philosophical position, particularly with reference to the twentieth-century philosophical contest between philosophy as the analysis of Being as opposed to philosophy as the analysis of Language. Heidegger developed an Existentialist theory of truth that represents an interesting comparison and contrast to both the Bergsonian and the Pragmatic theories of truth. The Reader includes Heidegger's exposition of his own views in "Plato's Doctrine of Truth," and although it is not expected that this essay will be completely mastered by the student, Heidegger's own doctrine of truth can be gotten from this reading. This essay is included, however, primarily for background reading.

Part III: From Logical Positivism to Language Analysis in Post-War Anglo-American Philosophy

A. The linguistic approach to philosophy, which was introduced by the Vienna Circle and the Logical Positivist movement, was subverted by the protagonists of an alternative approach to philosophy as the analysis of "ordinary language." The Ordinary Language school dominated Anglo-American philosophy after the Second World War, and its influence in less aggressive and explicit ways remains an essential feature of the philosophy of the last third of the twentieth century. The philosophical vision embodied in ordinary language emerges in the readings and discussion of three of its primary protagonists: Ludwig Wittgenstein, Gilbert Ryle, and John Austin.

12. Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Subversive Reinterpretation of Language Analysis. Brief selections from *Philosophical Investigations* are contained in the Reader. In the interpretation of these selections, the lecture will contrast this presentation of the later philosophy of Wittgenstein with his earlier views in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Accordingly, a short selection from that work is provided in the Reader as background material, but not assigned as required reading for the course. Thus the student should note that the required reading from Wittgenstein is the selections from *Philosophical Investigations* and not the selections from the *Tractatus Logicus Philosophicus*.

13. The Reader contains "Descartes' Myth," a chapter from Gilbert Ryle's classic *The Concept of Mind*, as an application of Ordinary Language Analysis to a problem that was central for the history of philosophy.

14. The Reader contains selections from John Austin's *Sense and Sensibilia*, which are intended to demonstrate the approach of Austin to the unraveling or dissolving of philosophical problems. The student should pay particular attention to the way in which his analysis of Ayer's work is directed against the fundamental argument for the primacy of sense-data that was previously read in the selections from Bertrand Russell.

Note: With the conclusion of Part III, the survey of the five major movements that characterized philosophical activity during the first six decades of the twentieth century have been completed. Subsequently, these movements have been extended and developed in a variety of ways in both the analytic and the more speculative philosophical tendencies of the last four decades of the century. The Reader for Parts IV and V of the course contains selections that reflect these tendencies. The time available as the term nears its end does not allow for covering all of the selections that are contained in the Reader or listed in the syllabus below. Accordingly, based on

the exigencies of time and in part on student preference, some of these materials will be assigned and some will not be required reading.

Part IV: The Interpretation of Existentialism in Post-War France/ The Eruption of "Sixtyism" and Continental Philosophy from Deconstruction to Perspectivism

A. Jean-Paul Sartre on Existentialism and Marxism. Sartre's reinterpretation of Heidegger during the Second World War was presented in *Being and Nothingness*. French Existentialism, like Heideggerian Existentialism, was connected to European political movements, so that the last phase of Sartre's intellectual career involved his attempt to integrate Existentialism and Marxism.

> 15. A characteristic illustration of Sartre's views in *Being and Nothingness* is presented in the Reader in an excerpt from that work, "Being and Doing." The student should follow Sartre's reasoning through the eight steps he outlines in that selection. The class lecture extends the Sartrean conception of freedom to Existentialist ethical theory and to Sartre's attempt to reconcile existentialism with Marxism in his *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. The Reader contains a synoptic account developed by Ronald Aronson of Sartre's *Second Critique of Dialectical Reason*, his last book. This selection is not required reading for the course but is included as background for the lecture.

B. Tendencies in Continental philosophy: from Marxism to Structuralism and from Structuralism through Deconstruction to Perspectivism in post-war Continental philosophy

> 16. The lecture will outline the movement in post-war Continental philosophy from Existentialism and Marxism to Deconstruction in Derrida and Perspectivism in Foucault. This broad survey is not a subject of detailed examination in this course. One option for the study of this movement, which the Reader provides, is the challenging essay by Michel Foucault: "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History."

Part V: Eclecticism in Current Analytical Philosophy.

Many recent works in Anglo-American philosophy, in the analytical tradition, exhibit the eclectic tendencies which have dominated since the eclipse of the classic efforts of Pragmatism, Logical Positivism, and Ordinary Language Analysis to terminate or transform the nature of philosophy. One illustration of this eclecticism is the "neo-pragmatism" and "post-Carnapian positivism" of W.V.O. Quine, which is exemplified in his last book, *Pursuit of Truth*. A significant illustration of new issues that have emerged in analytical philosophy is Isaiah Berlin's attempt to defend pluralism without relativism in "The Pursuit of the Ideal."

> 17. The reader contains the first chapter of W.V.O. Quine's *The Pursuit of Truth*, titled, "Evidence." It also contains Isaiah Berlin's essay, "Pursuit of the Ideal," which is a critique of monism and a defense of pluralism and can also serve to indicate the difference between a pluralist and a relativist approach to philosophical issues in epistemology and morals.

There is a concluding class discussion that aims to compare pluralism without relativism with Foucault's Perspectivism, since Berlin has been interpreted as supporting the objectivity of norms and Foucault has been interpreted as supporting the arbitrariness of norms.