

Winter 2022 – Carleton University
PHIL 4005: Seminar in Modern Philosophy
PHIL 5600: Topics in the History of Philosophy
Tuesdays, 11:35 am – 2:25 pm

Instructor: Kyla Bruff
Email: kyla.bruff@carleton.ca
Office hours: Online by appointment

Course Delivery: This course is an in-person seminar. Due to covid-19, we will meet online until January 31. During this period, instruction will be synchronous. Participation is key for your success in the course and all classes must be attended in real time. Videos of the live lectures will not be posted at a later date.

I. Description:

Schelling's definition of freedom in 1809 as the capacity to decide for good or for evil introduced a ground-breaking existential dimension into the relationship of the individual to the universal in the German tradition. For Schelling, the individual ought to actively work to overcome her internal, deep-seeded, personal challenges to develop into a person who wills the good. In his most famous text, the Freedom Essay, Schelling responds to a number of his predecessors to develop this unique philosophy of freedom, which includes a testament to the real presence of evil in the world. But the text is admittedly difficult.

The Freedom Essay is a work in metaphysics, but also a work in ethics, which sees the person as higher than (but not antithetical to) reason. The Freedom Essay can thus be approached as a proto-existentialist text. Although the Freedom Essay it influenced by both Spinoza and Kant, Schelling here gives an account of freedom that challenges Spinoza's determinism and problematizes Kant's view of individual self-liberation through the moral law.

We will begin with some preparatory work for reading the Freedom Essay by working through excerpts from Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, Boehme, Fichte and Hegel. We will then be well-positioned to read Schelling's Freedom Essay together in depth. We will end the course by turning to Schelling's very last writings, the final lectures of the *Presentation of the Purely Rational Philosophy*, to assess whether a virtue ethics and political philosophy can be developed out of the Freedom Essay. We will end the course by exploring the resonances of Schelling's philosophy of freedom in 20th century existentialism.

II. Preclusions: Additional credit for the same course under either PHIL 4005 or PHIL 5600.

III. Prerequisite(s):

Undergraduate students must be enrolled as a Fourth Year Undergrad with a Major, Minor or Concentration in Philosophy or Phil. Ethics PubAff.

Graduate students must be enrolled in the Graduate Philosophy Program.

IV. Learning Outcomes:

- to understand the importance and position of Schelling's Freedom Essay in the history of European philosophy
- to discuss, and write a sustained work on, Schelling's philosophy of freedom

V. Course texts:

All required readings for this course will be made available to you online. You are not required to purchase any course texts.

If you do want to purchase a physical copy of the Freedom Essay, you can do so at either of the following links:

<https://www.sunypress.edu/p-4321-philosophical-investigations-in.aspx>

<https://www.amazon.ca/Philosophical-Investigations-Essence-Human-Freedom/dp/0791468747/>

Unit I: Situating the Freedom Essay in the History of Philosophy

Spinoza, *Ethics Proved in Geometrical Order*, trans. Michael Silverthorne and Matthew J. Kisner, published by Cambridge University Press, 2018.

"Letter from Spinoza to Schuller; October 1674" in *Spinoza – Letters to Friend and Foe*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes. published by Philosophical Library, New York, 1966.

Leibniz, *Theodicy*, trans. E.M. Huggard, published by BiblioBazaar, 2007.

Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Mary Gregor, published by Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, trans. Allen Wood and George di Giovanni, published by Cambridge University Press, 1998.

Boehme, "Mysterium Pansophicum Or Thorough Report on the Earthly and Heavenly Mysterium," in Schelling, *Philosophical Investigations on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt, published by SUNY Press, 2006.

Boehme, *On the Election of Grace* (1623), Chapter II: “Concerning the Origin of God's Eternal Speaking Word; and of the Manifestation or Revelation of the Divine Power, also concerning Nature and Property, or particular Individuality of Things”

<https://ocul->

[crl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_CRL/1gorbd6/alma991022689135605153](https://ocul-crl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_CRL/1gorbd6/alma991022689135605153)

Fichte, *Foundation of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre and Related Writings (1794-95)*, translated by Daniel Breazeale, published by Oxford University Press, 2021.

Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller, published by Oxford University Press, 1977.

Unit II: Schelling's Philosophy of Freedom

Schelling, *Philosophical Investigations on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt, published by SUNY Press, 2006.

Schelling, *Schelling's Late Political Philosophy: Lectures 22-24 of the Presentation of the Purely Rational Philosophy*, trans. Kyla Bruff, in *Kabiri: The Official Journal of the North American Schelling Society*, vol. 2, 2020.

<https://journals.library.mun.ca/ojs/index.php/kabiri/article/view/2226>

Unit III: Schelling's Resonances in Existentialism

Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, translated by Carol Macomber, published by Yale University Press, 2007.

VI. Calendar descriptions:

PHIL 4005 – Seminar in Modern Philosophy: Detailed study of selected philosophers or issues in modern philosophy. Prerequisite(s): eligibility for fourth-year standing in a Philosophy Honours program or permission of the Department.

Also offered at the graduate level, with different requirements, as PHIL 5600, for which additional credit is precluded.

PHIL 5600 – Topics in the History of Philosophy: A detailed study within the history of philosophy: a period, an issue or the work of selected philosophers. Topics may vary from year to year. Also offered at the undergraduate level, with different requirements, as PHIL 4003, PHIL 4004, PHIL 4005, or PHIL 4006, for which additional credit is precluded when topics are the same.

VII. Course calendar, readings, and overview:

| Date | Themes, Deadlines & Feedback | Readings |
|------------|---|---|
| Jan. 11 | Course Introduction | Recommended: Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt's "Introduction" to the Freedom Essay (pp. ix-xxx of the SUNY edition) |
| Jan. 18 | Spinoza's determinism and Leibniz on theodicy | Spinoza, <i>Ethics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part I: pp. 18-41 • Proposition 9 of Part III (pp. 102-103) • Part IV: Preface (pp. 157-160) Letter from Spinoza to Schuller, Oct. 1674 Leibniz, <i>Theodicy</i> , §21-25 (pp. 139-141); § 230 (pp. 273-274) |
| Jan. 25 | Kant on free will and radical evil | Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Section III, pp. 52-66 Kant, <i>Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason</i> , Part I: pp. 45-61 |
| Feb. 1 | Boehme on the non-ground and the election of grace Fichte's subjective idealism Hegel's absolute idealism | Boehme, "Mysterium Pansophicum Or Thorough Report on the Earthly and Heavenly Mysterium," pp. 85-88 (texts I-IV) in the Freedom Essay (SUNY edition) Boehme, <i>On the Election of Grace</i> , Chapter II Fichte, <i>Foundation of the Entire Wissenschaftslehre and Related Writings</i> , Part 3, § 5. Second Theorem, pp. 320-324 Hegel, <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> , "Preface," §§ 20-25 (pp. 11-15) |
| Feb. 8 | Schelling's Philosophy of Freedom | Schelling, <i>Freedom Essay</i> , Preface (pp. 3-6) and pp. 9-21 |
| Feb. 15 | | Schelling, <i>Freedom Essay</i> , pp. 21-40 |
| Feb. 22-24 | NO CLASSES – MIDTERM BREAK | |
| Mar. 1 | Schelling's Philosophy of Freedom | Schelling, <i>Freedom Essay</i> , pp. 40-51 |
| Mar. 8 | | Schelling, <i>Freedom Essay</i> , pp. 51-64 |
| Mar. 15 | | Schelling, <i>Freedom Essay</i> , pp. 64-77 |
| Mar. 22 | Schelling's virtue ethics and political philosophy | Lectures 23 & 24 of the <i>Presentation of the Purely Rational Philosophy</i> (pp. 109- 135) |
| Mar. 29 | Schelling's resonances in Existentialism through a study of Sartre | Sartre – Existentialism Is a Humanism, pp. 17-38 |
| Apr. 5 | | Sartre – Existentialism is a Humanism, pp. 38-54 |

VIII. Evaluation

The evaluation for this course is composed of two tests and one take-home essay.

- Short expository essay (1500 words) 30%
Due Friday, Feb. 4 (graded and returned Feb 11)
- Seminar presentation + handout 20%
- Term paper of 3000-3500 words (2000-2500 for undergraduates) 50%
Due on April 12

The two essays will be submitted on Brightspace. The first will be an expository essay of one of the texts in the history of philosophy we have read in the first month of the course. The term paper will be written on a topic of your choice in Schelling's Freedom Essay.

For the seminar presentation, you are required to produce a handout of 10-12 points of approximately two lines each (without quotations), summarizing the reading of the day for your classmates. You will present the reading and your handout in a presentation of approximately 20 minutes to the class. Your handout must be submitted by the Sunday before your presentation at 11:59 pm. I will approve the handout and make copies of it for the class. Presentation dates will be assigned on the first day of the course.

For your final assignment, please make sure all sources are cited in line with Carleton's Academic Integrity guidelines, listed here:

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

The final assignment is due on the last day of classes, according to the University calendar. **Late assignments will not be accepted.**

IX. Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2021-22):

Assignments:

Please follow your professor's instructions on how assignments will be handled electronically. There will be NO hard copies placed in the essay box this coming year.

Evaluation:

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Deferrals for Term Work:

If students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, they should contact their course instructor no later than *three working days* of the due date. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of the term. Term work cannot be deferred by the Registrar.

Deferrals for Final Exams:

Students are expected to be available for the duration of a course including the examination period. Occasionally, students encounter circumstances beyond their control where they may not be able to write a final examination or submit a take-home examination. Examples of this would be a serious illness or the death of a family member. If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a take-home examination by the due date, you may apply for a deferral no later than *three working days* after the original due date (as per the University Regulations in [Section 4.3 of the Undergraduate Calendar](#)). Visit the [Registrar's Office](#) for further information.

Plagiarism:

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. ([Section 10.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations](#))

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term:

- *Pregnancy or religious obligation:* write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the [EDC](#) website.
- *Academic accommodations for students with disabilities:* The [Paul Menton Centre](#) for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and

impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class test or exam requiring accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

- *Survivors of Sexual Violence:* As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per [Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy](#).
- *Accommodation for Student Activities:* Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Important Dates for the Winter Semester:

- Jan. 10: Classes begin.
- Jan. 24: Last day for registration and course changes in the winter term.
- Jan. 31: Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter term courses or from the winter portion of two-term courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
- Feb. 21: Statutory holiday. University closed.
- Feb. 22-25: Winter Break – no classes.
- Mar. 29: Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in winter term or fall/winter courses before the official examination period.
- Apr. 12: Last day of two-term and winter term classes.
Classes follow a Friday schedule.
Last day for academic withdrawal from fall/winter and winter courses.
Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for two-term and for winter term courses.
- Apr. 13: No classes or examinations take place.
- Apr. 14-28: Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
- Apr. 15: Statutory holiday. University closed.
- Apr. 28: All take-home examinations are due.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:
www.carleton.ca/philosophy
520-2110

Registrar's Office:
www.carleton.ca/registrar
520-3500

Academic Advising Centre:
www.carleton.ca/academicadvising
520-7850

Writing Services:
<http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>
520-3822

MacOdrum Library
<http://www.library.carleton.ca/>
520-2735