

Syllabus for PHIL 385, Winter 2020, Term 1

EXISTENTIALISM

Instructor: Dr Anders Kraal

1. Course Description

In this course we study three major texts of Søren Kierkegaard, the father of the existentialist movement in modern philosophy.

In *Either/Or*, he contrasts the life of fun and pleasure with the life of duty and commitment, and raises questions about whether there is an ultimate justification of one of these lives over the other.

In *Fear and Trembling*, he moves on to contrast the life of duty with the life of religious faith, and argues that these lives are dissimilar in crucial ways.

In *The Sickness unto Death*, he offers a pioneering and celebrated analysis of despair, which, he argues, provides the underlying framework of human life.

Throughout the course we will make occasional digressions into the work of other existentialist writers, including Dostoyevski and Sartre. We will compare what they have said with what Kierkegaard has said.

2. Lectures

Tues/Thurs: 14:00-15:30 in DMP 301

3. Instructor

Dr. Anders Kraal (anders.kraal@ubc.ca)

4. Instructor Office Hours

There will be no in-person office hours due to COVID-19 social distancing rules.

5. Instructor Email Policy

Instructor will reply to emails on weekdays only.

Email correspondence is intended chiefly for clarification of specific course content and presupposes attendance at the lectures that dealt with this content.

6. Teaching Assistant

TBA

The TA will be marking exams and papers, will hold so-called Review Sessions for you to view marked work, and will answer questions about marked work via email.

7. Required Texts

Kierkegaard, S: *Either/Or*, trans. Hannay (Penguin edition). (Or any other edition.)

Kierkegaard, S: *Fear and Trembling*, trans. Hannay (Penguin edition). (Or any other edition.)

Kierkegaard, S: *Sickness unto Death*, trans. Hannay (Penguin edition). (Or any other edition.)

**The above books will be available in the UBC bookstore at very affordable prices.*

8. Course Requirements

Assignment	Percentage Worth
In-Class Exam (x2)	20% (x2)
Take-Home Paper	20%
Final Exam	40%

For dates, see the Schedule at the end of this document.

In the in-class exams you will be asked to provide answers to questions dealing with matters brought up in class prior to the date of the exam. If you miss the in-class exam you will automatically be assigned 0 points unless you provide the TA with an UBC Academic Calendar approved rationale for doing a make-up exam (this is to be provided within 1 week of the day of the exam).

In the take-home paper, you will be asked to write a 3-4 page text in response to one or more questions about material covered in class. The prompt for this paper will be posted on Canvas 1 week before the due date, and is to be submitted on Canvas. A missed assignment will automatically receive 0 points. Late assignments will not be accepted, unless you provide the TA with a UBC Academic Calendar approved rationale for an extended deadline (this is to be provided within 1 week of the day of the fixed deadline).

The final exam will be held during UBC's final examinations period. A missed final exam will be assigned a grade point of 0 unless an explanation is provided that is acceptable by the standards of the UBC Academic Calendar (in which case there will be opportunity for a make-up exam).

9. Lecture Recording

If the course is given online, lectures will be recorded and uploaded to Canvas or YouTube. Links will be available on Canvas. You do not need to attend lectures live, but can watch the recordings afterwards.

10. Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course the student will be expected to be familiar with some main ideas in Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*, *Fear and Trembling* and *Sickness unto Death*, and be able to provide critical reflection on the aforementioned ideas.

11. Marking Parameters

Your mark in this course will be a function of three main factors: 1) your performance on the examinable momenta *relative to your peers*, 2) your comprehension of the course material, 3) demonstration of skill in assessing and evaluating philosophical ideas.

12. Marking Scale

A+ 90-100%	B+ 76-79%	C+ 64-67%	D 50-54%
A 85-89%	B 72-75%	C 60-63%	F 0-49%
A- 80-84%	B- 68-71%	C- 55-59%	

The degree of difficulty on the examinable momenta will be set so as to *aim* at a class average outcome that by and large conforms to the department average for this course down the years, which is in the range 68%-75%, i.e., in the B/B- range. Upwards scaling may be used to this effect.

13. Policy on Review of Marked Work

Marks on exams and papers will be posted on canvas. Marked exams and papers will be retained by the Department. Opportunity to view marked exams and papers will be provided by the marker (typically the TA) in so-called Review Sessions (note that these sessions are not intended for feedback, but only for the viewing of marked work). Feedback on expected outcomes of exams and papers will be provided (typically by the Instructor) in so-called Feedback Sessions. Any concerns about the marking of a paper or exam should be submitted to the marker (typically the TA) *via email*, and will be responded to (typically by the TA) *via email*.

14. Plagiarism (from the UBC Academic Calendar)

Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments. See also <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>

15. UBC Values and Policies (from the UBC Academic Calendar)

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to

uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (<https://senate.ubc.ca/policiesresources-support-student-success>).

16. The Nature of this Syllabus

This syllabus sets out the policies according to which this course will proceed. Enrollment in the course involves an acceptance of these policies.

16. Schedule

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
<i>Week 1</i>	January 5 (T)	Introductory Remarks on Epistemology
	January 7 (Th)	Overview of Kierkegaard's Writings
<i>Week 2</i>	January 12 (T)	Overview of Kierkegaard's Writings
	January 14 (Th)	Either/Or
<i>Week 3</i>	January 19 (T)	<i>*specific readings for each week TBD</i>
	January 21 (Th)	
<i>Week 4</i>	January 26 (T)	
	January 28 (Th)	<i>IN-CLASS EXAM #1</i>
<i>Week 5</i>	February 2 (T)	
	February 4 (Th)	
<i>Week 6</i>	February 9 (T)	
	February 11 (Th)	
	February 15-19	READING WEEK- NO CLASS
<i>Week 7</i>	February 23 (T)	<i>IN-CLASS EXAM #2</i>
	February 25 (Th)	Fear and Trembling
<i>Week 8</i>	March 2 (T)	<i>*specific readings for each week TBD</i>
	March 4 (Th)	
<i>Week 9</i>	March 9 (T)	<i>ESSAY PROMPT AVAILABLE (CANVAS)</i>
	March 11 (Th)	
<i>Week 10</i>	March 16 (T)	<i>TAKE-HOME ESSAY DUE MIDNIGHT</i>
	March 18 (Th)	The Sickness Unto Death

<i>Week 11</i>	March 23 (T)	<i>*specific readings for each week TBD</i>
	March 25 (Th)	
<i>Week 12</i>	March 30 (T)	
	April 1 (Th)	
<i>Week 13</i>	April 6 (T)	
	April 8 (Th)	Concluding Remarks