

Philosophy 452: Nietzsche
University of Maryland Baltimore County
Spring 2016

Email: ecampbel@umbc.edu

Course Location: PAH 107

Office Hours: MW 3:50 – 4:50

or by appointment in **PAH 460**

Course Description

A close study of Nietzsche's central ideas, especially with a view toward their relevance for contemporary philosophy and culture. Topics may include: naturalism; nihilism; the will to truth and the will to power; drive psychology; perspectivism; the nature of philosophy and its relationship to art; Nietzsche's critique of morality and re-evaluation of values. Readings will be drawn from key texts such as *Beyond Good and Evil*, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, *The Genealogy of Morals*, *Daybreak*, *The Gay Science*.

Functional Competency Satisfied by this Course: Critical Analysis and Reasoning

Texts

Daybreak (Cambridge)

The Gay Science (Vintage)

Beyond Good and Evil (Penguin)

On the Genealogy of Morality (Hackett)

The Portable Nietzsche (Viking)

Nietzsche on Morality (Routledge)

Course Goals and Expectations

- ✓ Read, confront, engage, struggle with, think and talk about one of the most interesting, challenging, controversial and influential figures of at least the past two centuries.
- ✓ Gain insight into the nature of and relationships between Nietzsche's major themes, including naturalism, nihilism, the death of god, critique of morality, reevaluation of values, will to power and perspectivism.
- ✓ Develop and argue for interpretations of one or more of these themes in a medium-length (10 – 12 pages) paper.
- ✓ Develop the ability to approach philosophical problems, as well as socio-cultural questions and phenomena, from a broadly Nietzschean perspective.

Methods of Evaluation (dates subject to change)

Midterm Exam: 30%

Paper proposal: 20%

Final paper: 40%

Class Attendance and Participation: 10%

Unless you have a very good excuse (serious illness, death in the family, etc.) and you notify me before the assignment is due, late exams/papers will be graded down 1/3 of a letter grade for each day late. For example, if your work earns an A-, but you take the exam 1 day late, you will receive a B+.

Paper proposal

Rather than having you write one short paper and one longer final paper, I have decided to have you write a carefully constructed proposal for your final paper. You may begin doing this at any point, but I recommend you start to think seriously about it by the time we are going through the *Genealogy* at the latest. I will want you to identify one question that interests you most in the works we've read. You will then think about how you want to approach and answer that question, and ultimately lay out your plan, including at least some references to the texts, in about 2 pages. The idea will be for you to get as clear as possible, and to communicate to me as clearly as possible, what your final paper will be about and how you plan to write it. This is the most important part of writing a good paper—the thinking and planning beforehand. I will give you feedback on the proposal (in writing and perhaps also in person) so your final paper can be as good as possible when you turn it in. You will not be bound to write the paper that you present in your proposal; you might make substantial changes based on my feedback or for another reason. But in my experience these proposals help students write much better papers than they would otherwise. This is good for you and for me.

Lectures and Participation

You are expected to come to class each day prepared to discuss the readings intelligently. If you can't attend class, let me know ahead of time, whether the absence is excused or not. Classes will generally involve lectures and discussion. You must attend regularly to get full credit. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in less than full credit for participation, and your grade will continue to drop as you miss more classes, no matter how much you participate when you are there. You are encouraged to participate in class, but if you cannot get yourself to speak in public, you may receive full participation credit by discussing the material with me in office hours. You are encouraged to come to office hours in general, but doing so can boost your participation grade only if you regularly attend class.

Electronics Policy

No laptops or other electronic gadgetry whatever are allowed in class (unless for a documented disability). Seriously. Even for those noble and disciplined few who would really only take notes on them if I allowed them, research indicates that taking notes by hand facilitates understanding and recall. More important, most people cannot or do not resist using them in naughty ways (social media, sports, movies) and this distracts that student and other students as well. Also, I think it's very easy to get too focused on taking notes. I want you to come to class *having done the readings carefully* and ready to listen, think about what I'm saying, ask questions and discuss. You should take notes when reading, and I am perfectly happy for you to take notes when I'm talking, but what is most important in lecture is that you're paying attention, thinking and engaging.

Email Policy

- Please do not email me any question the answer to which can easily be found on this syllabus. Any such emails will either be ignored or I will respond 'see syllabus'.
- Substantive questions about course content that cannot be answered with a Yes or No should not be emailed, but rather bring those questions to office hours. I'm there anyway and you will get much more out of the course if you come talk to me in office hours.
- In general, please avoid emailing me unless necessary. Check whether the answer to your question is on the syllabus or blackboard, whether it can wait until the next lecture, and whether it can likely be answered much more quickly and easily by me than by you.

Student Integrity

UMBC Statement of Values for Academic Integrity

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the [UMBC Student Handbook](#), or the [Office of Undergraduate Education](#).

Learning Disabilities

Your success in this course is important to me. If you require special accommodations of any sort, please let me know as soon as possible. To request academic accommodations for a disability, please contact Student Support Services in the Math & Psychology Building, room 213. You can reach them at (410) 455-2459.

Schedule of Readings

This schedule is subject to change. I will announce any changes in class and via email.

Week 1

Feb. 1 Introduction

Feb. 3: *Daybreak*, Intro and Book I (Focus on the Preface and sections 1 – 18 and 42 in Book I).

Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, chs. 1 and 2

Week 2:

Feb. 8: *Daybreak*, Book II (Focus on sections 103 – 109; 115, 116, 119, 124, 127 – 139; 146 – 148)

Feb. 10: *The Gay Science*, Preface, bk. I

Week 3

Feb. 15: *The Gay Science*, bk. II

Feb. 17: *The Gay Science*, bk. III

Week 4

Feb. 22: *The Gay Science*, bk. IV

Feb. 24: *The Gay Science*, bk. V

Week 5

Feb. 29: Flex day

Mar. 2: *Beyond Good and Evil*, bks. I-II (Focus on Book I)

Week 6

Mar. 7: *Beyond Good and Evil*, bks. III – IV

Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 3

Mar. 9: *Beyond Good and Evil*, bks. V – VI (Focus on Book V)

Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 4

Week 7: Spring Break

Week 8

Mar. 21: *Beyond Good and Evil*, VII-VIII

Mar. 23: *Beyond Good and Evil*, IX

Week 9:

Mar. 28: Flex day

Mar. 30: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Introduction and Part I

Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 5

Week 10:

Apr. 4: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Part I continued

Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 6

Apr. 6: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Part II

Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 7

Week 11:

Apr. 11: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Part II continued

Apr. 13: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Part III

Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 8

Week 12:

Apr. 18: *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Part III continued

Apr. 20: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part I (In *The Portable Nietzsche*)

Week 13:

Apr. 25: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part II

Apr. 27: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part III

Week 14:

May 2: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* Part IV

May 4: Flex day

Week 15:

May 9: Wrapping up

Final Paper Due May 15 at 11:59 pm