

Phenomenology [OLD VERSION FROM 2019]

PHI 442/542 Spring 2019

Catalog #9611/#9612

HUM 113, MWF 1:40-2:35pm

Course page: <https://profron.net/phi542>

Prof. Ron McClamrock

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OH: Mon & Wed 2:45-3:15pm, Fri 10-11am

Readings:

Required readings are available on EReserves as PDFs, and are largely selections from the books listed below. Optional further readings are in these books. As the class is small and the books are optional, I have not ordered them, but will leave you to get them from online bookstores in whatever way you prefer (links are on the web page).

- Edmund Husserl: *The Idea of Phenomenology* (translated by Alston & Nakhnikian), and *Ideas* (translated by Boyce-Gibson)
- Jean-Paul Sartre: *The Transcendence of the Ego* (translated by Williams and Kirkpatrick), and *Being and Nothingness* (translated by Barnes)
- Martin Heidegger: *Being and Time* (translated by McQuarrie & Robinson), and *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (translated by Hofstadter)
- Maurice Merleau-Ponty: *Phenomenology of Perception* (translated by Smith)

Requirements:

Papers: Topics for short (about 1500 words) papers will be handed out three times during the semester, and will be due about a week after being assigned. You must do two of these, including the first one. (See the *Addenda* page for the rules on late papers.) For PHI 442, each short paper is worth 20% of the final course grade. In PHI 542, students will rewrite one of their two short papers into a longer (about 3000-4000 words) paper; for them, the two short papers are each worth 15% of the course grade, and the longer paper is worth 20%.

Exams: There will be three 55-minute in class closed-book tests, spaced relatively equally throughout the semester. Tests are mostly short-answer format, and will be non-comprehensive. (See the *Addenda* page for the rules on makeup exams.) In PHI 442, a student's two best exam scores are each worth 20% of the final course grade; in PHI 542, the two best exam scores are each worth 15% of the final course grade.

Participation, etc.: Class and online participation will total 20% of your course grade. This will include the following, and perhaps more: Every few classes, I will hold a "Chat Day", in which we devote a class to a discussion (and Q&A) period; you'll be expected to come prepared, and to participate. I will normally ask you to submit (electronically) "Thought of the Week" before each chat day; topics for each ToW will be given out in class. Note that if you don't attend class or don't do the ToWs, that's clearly non-participation, and will be graded accordingly.

Grading Summary: In 442, final grades come from 20% for each of two short papers, 20% for each of their two best exam grades, and 20% for class/online participation/etc. In 542, final grades come from 15% for each of two short papers, 20% for the longer paper, 15% for each for their two best exam grades, and 20% for class/online participation. **To pass the course, you must also get a passing grade on at least one paper and one exam.**

Course outline: (Tentative; there may be changes)

Part I: Husserl & Pure Phenomenology

Foundations/beginnings

- Kockelmans, "What is Phenomenology?"
- Gallagher & Zahavi, "What is Phenomenology?"
- Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*

Phenomenological reduction

- Husserl, from *Ideas*, chs. 3-7
- Husserl, from *Cartesian Meditations*, First and Second Meditations

Intentionality and reflection

- Husserl, from *Ideas*, chs. 8-11
- Solomon, "Husserl's Concept of the Noema"

Part II: Existential Phenomenology

Rejecting immanence

- Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*
- Sartre, Intro to *Being and Nothingness*

Being in the world and in the body

- Heidegger, Introduction to *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*
- Heidegger, excerpts from *Being and Time*
- Merleau-Ponty, Preface to *Phenomenology of Perception*
- Merleau-Ponty, excerpts from *Phenomenology of Perception*, Parts I and III

More? Science & Phenomenology? Application?

Paper Submission Guidelines:

- All papers must be submitted electronically, transmitted as documents attached to a piece of e-mail addressed to me at rmclamrock@albany.edu. Please attach a file to the email; don't send me a cloud link.
- These should be formatted as .docx files if possible (the native format in recent Microsoft Word); if you can't use .docx, use .rtf ("Rich Text Format"). You need to use one of those formats. No PDFs or other formats.
- Please format papers simply, single-spaced, with your name, the assignment and question number, and any title you might give to the paper at the top of the first page (don't use a separate title page). The text font should be 12pt Times-Roman or similar; the left margin should be 1" and the right margin 2.5".
- Name the file *Q1A1_Lastname_Firstname_PHI442.docx*, substituting your name, and the assignment and question numbers in place of "Q1" and "A1" (and "542" for "442" if you are registered for PHI 542). So, e.g., the file for assignment #2 written on question 3 from undergrad student Eric Cartman should be named *Q3A2_Cartman_Eric_PHI442.docx*. The subject line of the email likewise be *Q3A2_Cartman_Eric_PHI442*. The message body should not be left empty; include a line saying "Here is Eric Cartman's assignment #2 on question #3 for PHI 361" (substituting as above with your own details.) You may also include a joke in the message body. No extra credit, but good brownie points.
- When you send papers to me, please cc: yourself to make sure everything worked OK.

Missed Exams:

Makeup exams are given only when extreme circumstances make it *impossible* for you to take the test when given; e.g., when you are hospitalized on that day. If you miss an exam for some other kind of reason, just take the other two, and the missed exam will be dropped.

In these extreme circumstances, in order to be given a makeup exam, undergraduates must do all of the following.

1. You must obtain a letter of excuse from the Office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Studies; all inquiries about such letters and the documentation required for them should be directed to the Dean's office (LC-30). This request (with documentation) is to be made to the Vice-Provost's office no more than two weekdays after the end of the period for which you are asking to be excused. (Graduate students should come to me directly concerning documentation.)
2. Give me a written (e-mail is best, paper is OK) request for a makeup exam. This request should be given to me no more than two weekdays after the end of the period for which your absence has been excused.
3. Talk to me in person at the end of the first class after your excused absence in order to schedule a makeup.

You must do all of these in order to be given a makeup. But even if you do, I reserve the right to judge that the excuse is inadequate, in which case I may decline to give the makeup.

Cheating:

Cheating, including but not confined to plagiarizing (i.e. using the words or content of others as your own), will result in being *failed for the course* and reported to the appropriate UAlbany authorities.

Late papers:

Late papers are marked down by one grade notch (e.g. B to B or B- to C+) for every hour or portion thereof I receive them after the due date and time. The only exception is the one noted under "Missed exams", in which case you may get an extension until the first day not covered by the excused absence. In such a case, the paper is due on that day, at the same time of day it was originally due.

Grade Calculation Rules:

1. Every graded piece of work (exam, paper, whatever) is given a letter grade. These letter grades range from A+ (the best) to F (the worst).
2. Each of these letter grades has a numerical equivalent. Here are the possible letter grades and numerical equivalents:

A+=15	B =11	C-=7	E+=3
A =14	B-=10	D+=6	E =2
A-=13	C+=9	D =5	E-=1
B+=12	C =8	D-=4	F =0

(Note: "Slash" grades like "A-/B+" are equivalent to the midpoint between the grades; e.g., a grade of A-/B+ is calculated as a 12.5.)

3. Once this assignment of letter grades is made for, say, a given exam, nothing else matters. In calculating your final grade, all that matters is (the numerical equivalents of) your various letter grades for the various graded pieces of work.
4. I use the numerical equivalents of the letter grades to calculate a composite numerical grade using whatever procedure I've specified for the particular class.
5. I round the composite numerical grade to the nearest integer (.5 and above go up, below go down).
6. I convert back to letter grades using the chart above. You get the letter grade determined by the chart, except if (i) you got an A+, in which case your official grade is an A (the University doesn't use A+), or (ii) you got lower than a D- (or passed no exams or passed no papers), in which case your official grade is E.

On getting a grade of "I":

For undergraduates, a grade of "I" (Incomplete) will be given only if and excused absence of the sort described under "Missed Exams" prevents you from either taking the last of the exams or turning in the last of the papers. In addition to following the procedures describe under "Missed Exams", you must also ask me in writing (email is best) to assign you an "I" for the course. For graduate students, the same rules apply, except that one might also be able to get an "I" if all work is done for the course except for the long final paper.