

Phenomenology [PRELIMINARY FALL 2025 VERSION]

APHI 442/542 Fall 2025
Class #9063/ #9064
3 cr. (442) or 4 cr. (542)

Humanities 027, MW 1:10-2:30
rmclamrock@albany.edu
OH: Mon 10:30 Wed @2:40 & by appt.

Prof. Ron McClamrock
Hum 314 – (518) 442-4237
Zoom: albany.zoom.us/my/rmclamrock

Readings:

Required readings are available on Brightspace in the “Readings” module 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 leave you to get them from online bookstores as you see fit. If you do get them, please get the indicated translations.

- 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 1000 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 442, each short paper is worth 15% of the final course grade. In 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 10% of the course grade, and the longer paper is worth 20%.

Exams: There will be three 80-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 442, a student’s two best exam scores are each worth 25% of the final course grade; in 542, the two best exam scores are each worth 20% 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 much of 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 (online) a “Thought of the Week” before each chat day; topics for each ToW will be posted. 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 15% for each of two short papers, 25% for each of their two best exam grades, and 20% for class/online participation/etc. In 542, final grades come from 10% for each of two short papers, 20% for the longer paper, 20% 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; weeks are crude approximations)

Part I: Husserl & Pure Phenomenology

Foundations/beginnings (wks 1-3)

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

Reduction & structures of intentionality (wks 4-6)

- Husserl, from *Ideas*, chs. 3-7
- Husserl, from *Cartesian Meditations*, First and Second Meditations
- Husserl, from *Ideas*, chs. 8-11

Part II: Existential Phenomenology

Rejecting immanence (wks 7-8)

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

Being in the world and in the body (wks 9-13)

- 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?

Phenomenology Syllabus Addenda (APHI 442/542 – Fall 2025 – McClamrock)

Paper Submission Guidelines:

- All papers must be submitted electronically, transmitted as documents attached to a piece of e-mail addressed to me at rmccclamrock@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 & quizzes are given only under conditions the conditions specified by UAlbany: see the rules for medical excuse and religious practice excuse rules at https://www.albany.edu/health_center/medicalexcuse.shtml and <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/224-A> for details. To be given a makeup exam/quiz in this course, you must give me a written (e-mail) request for a makeup exam along with copies of documentation showing it was impossible for you to take the scheduled exam. This request must be given to me no more than 24 hours after the end of the period for which your absence is to excused. Be forewarned that 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

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.

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.

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.

Disabilities and accommodation:

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, medical, cognitive, learning and mental health (psychiatric) disabilities. Contact the Disability Access and Inclusion Student Services (DAISS) at daiss@albany.edu or <https://www.albany.edu/dean-students/disability> for more information.

In-class technology use ban:

Use of laptops, phones, tablets, and other such technology during class is not allowed, except when directed. Repeated violation of this rule will result in a grade reduction.

Cheating:

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