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Office: Bowden Hall TBA  
Office Hours: TBA  
and by appointment

TTh, 1:00-2:15pm, Bowden Hall TBA

## **Course Description**

What is time? Augustine famously said that, as long as no one asks him about time, he knows what it is; but as soon as someone asks him, he no longer knows. Time has been a riddle for philosophy from its very inception. The enigma is all the greater because time is not simply an object which can be described by an outside observer; rather, it *envelops* the observer. The subject who asks about time is itself within time. To ask ‘What is time?’ is thus equal to asking ‘Who is the subject that exists in time?’

In this course, we will study the history of time as a philosophical concept, from antiquity to the present. We will begin with the Ancient Greek concept of cosmic time, as a field within which we exist as biological organisms. Then, we will see that time is progressively interiorized in modernity, becoming part of the structure of subjectivity. Finally, time is understood in the 20th-century as the condition for inter-subjectivity, as the distance that allows for a relation with the other person, with what is different.

Among the concepts for the course, we will cover Zeno’s paradoxes of motion, Plato’s vision of time as the moving image of eternity, Aristotle’s definition of time as the measure of motion, Plotinus’s and Augustine’s views of time as the soul’s activity, Kant’s understanding of time as part of the structure of subjectivity, Bergson’s idea of lived time as *duration*, and Levinas’s conception of time as interpersonal interruption.

## **Course Objectives**

Students will:

1. understand how the concept of time drastically changes its meaning across the history of philosophy—from antiquity to modernity to contemporary times;
2. be able to explain complex philosophical concepts in their own words;
3. be able to develop critiques of, and objections to, those concepts;
4. be able to apply their understanding of philosophical ideas to literary texts; and conversely, to appreciate the philosophical import of certain literary texts.

*N.B.:* Some background or previous training in philosophy is recommended but not strictly required. This can take the form of a 100-level PHIL course or above.

## Readings

All texts will be electronically available on Library Course Reserves. Please refer to our Canvas website for all the relevant PDFs.

## Assignments

### 20% Attendance and Participation

I will take attendance each day at the start of class. You are allowed two unexcused absences; each additional unexcused absence will lead to a grade reduction of half a letter grade (5%). However, these absences may be excused by obtaining the appropriate documentation from the Dean of Students Office. Please let me know at the beginning of the semester if there are special circumstances that we need to address. Arriving ten minutes late to class more than once will also constitute an absence. If there is a particular reason why you cannot arrive on time, let me know!

I will grade participation based on contribution to the class and active listening. This means that participation does not simply entail speaking up in class, but also listening to others, paying attention to the lectures, and contributing to discussions with relevant questions and comments.

### 30% Ten Reading Responses

By midnight every Thursday, you will be required to submit via Canvas a short reflection of approximately 200 words. You may choose to critique, expand on, compare or otherwise react to the week's texts. These entries provide an opportunity for students to check in with themselves and the professor as they encounter the themes and authors of the course. They can also serve as a space for students to develop ideas over the course of the semester that could then become the foundation for final papers.

These responses will be graded on a scale of 1 to 3 based on the quality of the writing (grammar and overall clarity) and the level of engagement with the week's texts. I will evaluate this engagement according to three criteria: *depth*, *accuracy*, and *originality*. A response should not stay at the surface but discuss something central to the text; it should present the text's ideas accurately; and if it criticizes an idea from the text, it should do so with originality—albeit without losing sight of accuracy and depth.

Notice that, on five different Thursdays, no reading response will be due. This is either because of a holiday (such as Spring Break) or else because of another assignment due that same week. Since we have fifteen weeks in the term, we are left with a total of ten weeks when responses are due.

20% Two Exegetical Papers

By midnight on Feb. 16th and Mar. 22nd, an exegetical paper of 800-1000 words will be due. These papers are narrow in scope and meant for close reading of primary texts. A list of prompts will be distributed in advance.

30% Final Paper

By the end of the exam period (May 10th, 5pm), a final paper of 1700-2500 words will be due. A list of possible prompts will be made available, but you are encouraged to develop your own theme in consultation with me.

## **Policies and Resources**

**Readings:** come to class prepared. You should have read the assigned text for each week at least once before you come to class. As you read, mark passages that you find particularly difficult to understand and write down questions you want to ask during class. Every student should have a copy of the text in class.

**Email:** please use your Emory email account when corresponding with me. Feel free to reach out with questions; I am typically able to respond within 48 hours.

**Submission of Assignments:** every assignment must be submitted online in the designated section of Canvas. A late assignment will result in the reduction of half a letter grade (5%) for each day that it is late. However, I am happy to give short extensions if you reach out to me *prior* to the due date—just let me know!

**Electronics:** laptops or other devices are allowed only for note-taking purposes. However, with the use of laptops there is a temptation to also use the internet. I am willing to allow laptops only if participation is not compromised; if these devices seem to be causing distraction, they will no longer be allowed in class.

**Plagiarism:** students cannot copy the ideas or words of another person without appropriate citation and credit. I will refer any act of plagiarism to the relevant university office. A completely or partially plagiarized assignment will lead the student not only to fail that assignment but also the whole course. If you are unsure whether you need to cite something, send me an email, and/or simply cite, even if it might not have been necessary. Always err on the side of caution.

**Accommodations:** please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any kind of accommodation. You may also need to reach out to Access, Disability Services, and Resources (ADSR) at [adsrstudent@emory.edu](mailto:adsrstudent@emory.edu) to get the proper document.

**Writing Center:** this is an invaluable resource for polishing your papers and for improving your writing in general. Tutors are available to support students as they work on papers, reading responses, and other projects. Several tutors can attend to the needs of English Language Learners and have received additional training to do so. To schedule an appointment, access [writingcenter.emory.edu](http://writingcenter.emory.edu).

## Class Schedule

### Time as the Measure of Movement

1/18	Introduction: The Riddle of Time in Antiquity *no reading response	
1/23-1/25	Zeno's Paradoxes Parmenides, Fragment 8 Barbour, 'Life Without Time' *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 1/25	p. 47-51 p. 43-5 p. 329-35
1/30-2/1	Plato, <i>Timaeus</i> 27c-40c Aristotle, <i>Physics</i> IV.10-14 *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 2/1	p. 652-63 p. 102-17
2/6-8	Plotinus, <i>Ennead</i> III.7 *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 2/8	p. 293-355

### Time as the Structure of Experience

2/13-15	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> , Book XI *no reading response * <u>first paper</u> due midnight on Friday, 2/16	p. 344-83
2/20-22	Kant, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> , 'Transcendental Aesthetic' *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 2/22	p. 153-62
2/27-29	Kant, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> , 'Transcendental Aesthetic' *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 2/29	p. 162-71
3/5-7	Mary Ann Doane, <i>The Emergence of Cinematic Time</i> *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 3/7	p. 172-205
3/12-14	Spring Break	

### Time as Lived

3/19-21	Nietzsche, <i>History for Life</i> , sections 1-6 *no reading response * <u>second paper</u> due midnight on Friday, 3/22	p. 7-38
3/26-28	Bergson, <i>Time and Free Will</i> , Chapter Two *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 3/28	p. 90-115
4/2-4	Bergson, <i>Time and Free Will</i> , Chapter Two *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 4/4	p. 115-28

4/9-11	Proust, <i>In Search of Lost Time</i> , selections *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 4/11	TBA
4/16-18	Levinas, <i>Time and the Other</i> , Part I *reading response due midnight on Thursday, 4/18	p. 39-57
4/23-25	Levinas, <i>Time and the Other</i> , Parts III-IV *no reading response * <u>final paper</u> due at the end of exam period—5/10, 5pm	p. 71-94