

PH 203 – Topics in Philosophy

FRENCH PHILOSOPHY IN CONTEXT: EXISTENTIALISM TO GLOBALIZATION

(Block 2, in Paris)

Jonathan Lee & Dennis McEnnerney

Course Description

This course explores the development of French philosophy from the interwar period to the present. Using the city of Paris as its context, the course examines how dramatic social and political challenges influenced the paths of French philosophical reflection, moving thinkers to question the foundations of knowledge, morals, and politics, leading ultimately to what might be called a “decentered” cosmopolitanism.

Topics covered include existentialism and the dramatic events of the interwar and Second World War periods; feminist and postcolonial theories and the liberation struggles of colonial Indochina, Algeria, and the “Third World” more generally; structuralism and the ideological and practical battles of the Cold War; poststructuralism and the 1968 student and worker uprisings; and contemporary multicultural and cosmopolitan philosophies and the developments associated globalization and postcolonial immigration.

Taking full advantage of all that Paris has to offer—countless museums, a diverse cultural life, streets marked by historical events, and an ongoing intellectual tradition in which philosophy is expected to have a direct impact on how people live and in which philosophers themselves often become cultural “stars”—this course will survey the intertwining of 20th and 21st century French philosophy with the recent social, political, and cultural history of Paris.

Consent of instructors (taught in Paris). Program fee. J. Lee, McEnnerney – 1 unit. Limited to 20 students.

What’s the Program Fee and What’s Included (or Not)? Is Financial Aid Available?

The Dean’s Office will only allow us to estimate a program fee based on the costs of a course with 15 students. That fee would be about \$4500. The Dean’s Office says that it may be able to offer support “to offset at least part of the program fee,” but it will not finalize the cost of the course until sometime before the end of Block 8. Financial aid will be available, with priority given to students with high financial need and little prior experience studying abroad. The program fee (whatever it is!) covers the following expenses: airport transportation in Paris, housing, a Paris Metro and bus pass, all meals, and all fees for class trips to museums, concerts, and the like. Airfare to and from Paris is not included.

Where Will Students Live?

Students will lodge in the Pension Résidence du Palais, located directly across the street from the Luxembourg Gardens in the Latin Quarter of Paris, the traditional hub of student and intellectual life in Paris, and one of the most beautiful parts of the city. The pension’s rooms are simple, but functional. Most meals will be served at the pension, which has wifi. See:

<http://www.hotelresidencedupalais.com/>