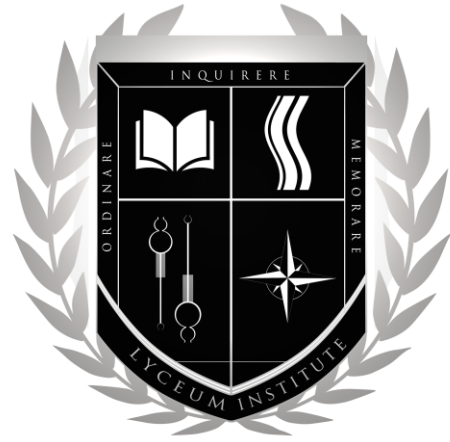


PHENOMENOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION

SEMINAR SYLLABUS



[SUMMER 2023]

DESCRIPTION

It is with the refined clarity of distance in time that we, a quarter through the 21st century, can look back at the turn of the 20th and say with no hesitation: modern philosophy and its consequences have been an unparalleled disaster for human beings. It was just then, against the backdrop maelstrom of the 19th century *fin de siècle*, that Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) grasped on to a lifeline tossed—somewhat carelessly woven—by Franz Brentano, namely, the notion of **intentionality**.

Wrapping his hands around this lifeline, Husserl pulled not only himself but whole generations of students out of the chaos. Yet, as the ensuing decades would prove, freedom from this chaos did not set out a clear direction for all to follow. Phenomenology was established as a decisively post-modern movement, but, lacking clarity about its foundations, led students to wander in diverse paths, most departing somehow or another from the intention and motivation of their rescuer.



In consequence, this course aims to treat the genuinely post-modern philosophical tradition of phenomenology with a primary focus on the work of that key figure, Edmund Husserl. The course begins by reviewing the classical sense-realist epistemology of the Aristotelian tradition, and idealism of Descartes, Hume, and Kant, which sets up the historical context necessary for understanding the phenomenological movement in general. Turning to the text of Husserl itself, the course gives special attention to the phenomenological method (*ἐποχή/epoche*), and the concepts of transcendence and immanence, intentionality, noetic-noematic analysis, and the phenomenon of empathy as a basis for philosophical realism. The work of the contemporary Husserlian phenomenologist, Robert Sokolowski, is then utilized as a *via* for interpreting and understanding the difficult text of Husserl by seeing it in concrete application. In conclusion, the continued unfolding of this phenomenological application is indicated by its integration into the movement of personalism.

METHOD

This is an **intermediate seminar**: anyone not familiar with the broad history of Western philosophy will need to undertake additional care in familiarizing him- or herself with that history in its major developments: the Grecian age of Antiquity, the Latin Age, the Modern, and the current contemporary philosophical climate.

Though readings have been carefully selected and curated, several do present a significant challenge to uninitiated readers.

The seminar consists in two distinct phases. The first the **active discussion** phase, which begins immediately with two preparatory weeks (beginning 16 May 2023), followed immediately by the 8 weeks of coursework: entailing a recorded lecture from the instructor, readings, and a live discussion session held every **Saturday** from 1:00–2:00pm ET (New York time).

READING

The primary texts for this seminar will **mostly** be provided in PDF by the instructors; the only text required for purchase is Robert Sokolowski's *Introduction to Phenomenology*, which can be purchased from [Amazon](#), directly from [Cambridge University Press](#), or through [used booksellers](#) (one may also find less-expensive new copies at the lattermost link). Digital editions of the assigned reading may be made available for those who have difficulty obtaining a physical copy in a timely manner. The instructors will also provide several secondary sources to aid in understanding of the primary text and the relevant issues. **Readings on the syllabus are subject to change.**

LECTURE

Each week there will also be at least one audio lecture posted to Teams at the beginning of the week. This lecture—which will vary in length—will be based upon the assigned reading, but will also stray into related topics, or may use the reading as a launching point for addressing some related issue (perhaps one more general, or perhaps one more specific). The primary (but not sole) purpose of these lectures is to help clarify some of the more difficult concepts and arguments contained within the reading, as well as to raise specific questions that should help structure and guide our discussion sessions.

There *may* be accompanying visual aids (not necessarily) in order to provide some clarity as to textual points, but one *should* be able, in most cases, to simply listen to the lecture (and perhaps consult the visual aids later). This should allow more flexibility: making the lectures suitable accompaniment for a commute, while doing chores, going for a run, etc.

DISCUSSION

The heart of the seminar is the discussion session (**Saturdays at 1:00–2:00pm ET**): where all the thoughts emergent and encountered throughout week—via the reading, lecture, and on-going conversations in the Teams channel—are brought into explicit conversation. This allows us to attempt a concerted effort at bringing resolution to our difficulties, and—failing such a resolution—to direct our inquiry further.

Each discussion session will begin with a brief synopsis of the week's material and a focusing on the questions that are thereby raised. Beyond the direction provided by the instructor, participants are encouraged to bring their own concerns explicitly into view and to engage with the instructor and one another in civil debate and collective inquiry.

AUDITS OR COMPLETES

All Lyceum Institute seminar participants will be able to either *audit* the seminar or *complete* the seminar. To complete the seminar, the participant **must** submit an essay of 2000+ words pertaining to the subject. This essay may be evaluated for publication in [Reality](#) and will be included in each Lyceum Institute member's profile, along with the mark of auditing or completing. Non-members are also welcome to submit and be considered for publication in *Reality*.

SESSION SCHEDULE

June 3	<p>Break with Reality: The Need for Phenomenology</p> <p>Lecture 1: Classical Sense-Realism and the Modern Break</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Required] “Key Texts on Sense-Realism in Aristotle & St. Thomas Aquinas” and “The Modern Break”.
June 10	<p>The History and Question of Phenomenology</p> <p>Lecture 2: Origins and Methodologies</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Required] Spiegelberg 1956: “Introduction” and “Part One: The Preparatory Phase, Chapter One: Franz Brentano” (1-52). • [Recommended] Moran 2000: <i>Introduction to Phenomenology</i>, 1-22.
June 17	<p>The Phenomenological Attitude</p> <p>Lecture 3: From Natural to Phenomenological Attitude via the Phenomenological Έποχή</p> <p>Readings (same for weeks 3 and 4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Required] Husserl 1907: <i>The Idea of Phenomenology</i>, 1914: <i>Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy</i>, 51-62 (§27-32). • [Recommended] Moran 2000: <i>Introduction to Phenomenology</i>, 124-163.
June 24	<p>First Fruits of the Phenomenological Reduction</p> <p>Lecture 4: Intentionality, Νοησίσ-Νοημα, and the End of Idealism</p> <p>Readings (same for weeks 3 and 4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Required] Husserl 1907: <i>The Idea of Phenomenology</i>, 1914: <i>Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy</i>, 51-62 (§27-32). • [Recommended] Moran 2000: <i>Introduction to Phenomenology</i>, 124-163.
July 1	BREAK
July 8	<p>The Self and the Other</p> <p>Lecture 5: Other Persons, Empathy, Intersubjectivity, and Objective Truth</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Required] Husserl 1931: <i>Cartesian Meditations</i>, Meditation V. • [Recommended] Stein 1916: <i>On the Problem of Empathy</i>.
July 15	<p>Structures of Experience</p> <p>Lecture 6: Perception, Memory, and Language</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Required] Sokolowski 2000: <i>Introduction to Phenomenology</i>, c.5-7. • [Recommended] Excerpts from various authors.

<p>July 22</p>	<p>Structures of the Lifeworld</p> <p>Lecture 7: Temporality, Science, and Meaning</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Required] Sokolowski 2000: <i>Introduction to Phenomenology</i>, c.9-11. • [Recommended] Moran 2000: <i>Introduction to Phenomenology</i>, 164-191.
<p>July 29</p>	<p>Phenomenology of Personhood</p> <p>Lecture 8: Reflections upon Intentional Consciousness</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Required] Spaemann 1996: <i>Persons</i>, 1-40. • [Recommended] Wojtyła c.1965: <i>Person and Act: The Introductory and Fundamental Reflections</i> (36-58).