

# PHENOMENOLOGY: HEIDEGGER'S METHOD PART I

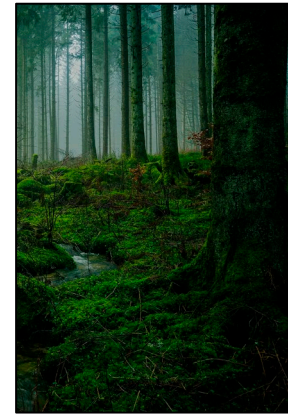
SEMINAR SYLLABUS

[FALL 2023]



## DESCRIPTION

The term “phenomenology” has received a multitude of meanings over the past several centuries but today refers primarily to the loose collection of approaches initiated by Edmund Husserl with his 1900 (and revised in 1913) *Logische Untersuchungen*, or *Logical Investigations*. Yet these approaches, while all see in phenomenology something foundational about how it is that human beings know, vary widely in their conduct. Prominent among them, and very frequently misunderstood, is the phenomenological approach advocated by Martin Heidegger—who, although perhaps the best-known of Husserl’s students, also perhaps departs the most radically among all the phenomenologists from his one-time teacher.



In this seminar, we will examine the structure and practice of phenomenological method according to Heidegger: first, and as a prelude, by contrast with the background against which he developed it; second, and as an introduction, in his own descriptions of the method, and third, in the main body of our study, in his application of it across the first half of his *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*). We will conclude with a consideration of his essay “On the Essence of Truth” (*Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*), in which we will see both the value and the limitations of the method.

Progressing through these eight weeks will engage us with the “question of being” (*die Seinsfrage*), the meaning of “world” (*Welt*), the meaning of meaning (*Sinn* and *Bedeutung*), the intentional life of the human being (*Dasein*) and the nature of truth. This engagement will be a struggle: Heidegger’s language, often, is opaque (not only in English translation but even in its original German) and his thinking winds along dark and mysterious paths. But traveling the mysterious routes with him rewards us with a better sense, indeed, for why Being—*Sein, das Sein des Seienden*, the Being of beings—cannot but be mysterious; and, despite that, that it is something *most human* that we seek this Being.

## METHOD

The seminar is 8 weeks long, with one recorded lecture and one discussion session each week. Each discussion session is structured around a reading from Martin Heidegger. Participants are expected to have read the assigned reading and listened to the lecture prior to the session, so that they may engage in a semi-structured discussion directed and moderated by the instructor. ***This is an advanced seminar that requires broad familiarity with the Western philosophical tradition. It is recommended that students have several years’ study of philosophy. Heidegger’s work is not for the novice!***

It is expected that **participation in this seminar will require up to 8 hours per week** (reading + listening to lecture + participating in the discussion session).

## READING

The primary text for this seminar is Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*. We will use the translation by Macquarrie and Robinson. Additional readings, taken from Heidegger's *Concept of the History of Time*, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, and his essay "On the Essence of Truth" will all be provided by the instructor in PDF. There will also be additional secondary sources in PDF provided throughout the seminar. **Readings are subject to change.**

## LECTURE

Each week there will also be a 40-60+ minute audio lecture, posted to Teams at the beginning of the week. This lecture 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. As Heidegger is a difficult author to follow, it is recommended to have the text with oneself while listening to the lecture, so that key passages may be read as they are discussed.

## DISCUSSION

The heart of the seminar is the discussion session (**Saturdays at 3:00-4:00pm ET**): where all the thoughts emergent and encountered throughout the 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. It is worth noting that **discussion sessions often run longer than the allotted time**. Participants are not obliged to stay beyond the hour.

Each discussion session will begin with a brief synopsis of the week's material and a focusing on whichever aspects of that material seem most pressing. 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. These discussions are recorded **primarily** for the purpose of revisiting our conversations and recalling statements—and only, in a distant second, for the sake of allowing missed sessions to be viewed asynchronously.

## 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—5000 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.

## SESSION SCHEDULE

September 23	The Phenomenological Background Lecture: Distinction and Methodological Outline Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Required: Selections from Heidegger.</li><li>• Kempel, "Heidegger's Roots".</li></ul>
September 30	The Concept of Being Lecture: The <i>Seinsfrage</i>

	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required: <i>Being and Time</i>, Introduction (21-64).</li> <li>• Supplement: Sheehan, "Phenomenology and the Formulation of the Question".</li> </ul>
October 7	<p>Being Re-Situated</p> <p>Lecture: Dasein</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required: <i>Being and Time</i>, 67-90.</li> <li>• Supplement: Kemple, "Phenomenology as Fundamental Ontology".</li> </ul>
October 14	<p>Constitution of the World</p> <p>Lecture: Welt</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required: <i>Being and Time</i>, 91-148.</li> <li>• Supplement: Kemple, "Phenomenology as Fundamental Ontology".</li> </ul>
October 21	BREAK
October 28	<p>The <i>Da</i> of Dasein</p> <p>Lecture: Being-With and Being-In</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required: <i>Being and Time</i>, 149-179.</li> <li>• Supplement: Kemple, "Phenomenology as Fundamental Ontology".</li> </ul>
November 4	<p>Cognitive Unfolding of Dasein</p> <p>Lecture: The Hermeneutic Circle</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required: <i>Being and Time</i>, 179-224.</li> <li>• Supplement: Kemple, "<i>Sein</i> and Knowledge".</li> </ul>
November 11	<p>The <i>Sein</i> of Dasein</p> <p>Lecture: Reality and the Reference to Care</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required: <i>Being and Time</i>, 225-278.</li> <li>• Supplement: Kemple, "<i>Sein</i> and Knowledge".</li> </ul>
November 18	<p>Fundament of the Truth Relation</p> <p>Lecture: Truth as Unconcealment</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required: "On the Essence of Truth".</li> <li>• Supplement: Capobianco, "Reaffirming the 'Truth of Being'".</li> </ul>