Department of Religion/Religion and Modern Thought/Philosophy of Nothingness/902
Fall/2006

Instructor: Shigenori Nagatomo
Place: AB621
Days and times of course meetings: R 2:00-4:30
Office address: Anderson 626
Instructor’s office telephone: 204-1749
Instructor’s e-mail address and website: snagatom@temple.edu; http://astro.temple.edu/~snagatom.

Guidelines about contacting the instructor: I will try to respond to your email in a timely manner if you have any serious question and concern about the course, but I will encourage you to talk to me in person before and after the class, or during my office hours.
Instructor’s office hours: T, R 1:00 – 2:00, Anderson 626, or by appointment

Disability Statement: This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Course Description:
We will be reading in this course some of the major thinkers belonging to the Kyoto school, such as Nishida Kitarō, Nishitani Keiji, and Watsuji Tetsurō. The thematic focus of the course falls on the understanding of the meaning of nothingness (both relative and absolute) from a philosophical as well as depth-psychological viewpoint, while questioning the traditional formulation of ontology from an East-Asian perspective. Several questions central to this course include: how does the world appear once it is de-ontologized through the embodiment of nothingness? What is its epistemological structure? What are the depth-psychological processes conducive to achieving the transformation reflective of the de-ontologized perspective on the world? In responding to these questions, the course topically examines Nishida’s concepts of “pure experience,” “basho” (topos), “absolutely nothing,” Nishitani’s concept of “unyatza”, Watsuji’s concept of “betweenness,” etc. Since these philosophers were also trained in Western philosophy, we will assume a comparative method of investigation throughout the course. By employing this comparative method, you are encouraged to envision a philosophical position that goes beyond the Kyoto school.

Requirements:
You are expected 1) to give a class presentation (20 minutes of delivery and 20 minutes of discussion) and 2) to write a substantial paper (20 pages, doubled spaced, font 12).

• Before your presentation, please make sure to distribute an outline of your presentation to everyone in the class.
• You may choose the same topic for your presentation and paper reflecting your own interest, but please consult me before you make a final decision.
• Before you submit a final paper, please submit a draft first. You should plan to submit the first draft at least three weeks before the end of this semester.
• In addition to these major requirements, I will expect everyone to participate in class discussion.

Course Goals and Methods:
Upon completing this class, students should be able to:

- Analyze arguments in our discipline
- Recognize and understand ideological bias in these arguments
- Construct your own arguments, using data/evidence appropriately

In this course, students learn by reading and reflecting on the assigned texts, listening thoughtfully to the instructor's lectures, participating in class discussion, asking questions, and writing papers.

**Required Texts:**

**Suggested Readings:**
________, *The Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness*, (Indiana: Indiana Univ. Press. 1973.)
Henri Bergson, *Introduction to Metaphysics*,
________, *Time and Free Will*,
________, *Matter and Memory*,
Nishitani Keiji, *Nishida Kitaro*.

**Course Policies**

This class meets once a week. Students can expect at least 10 hours of preparation (reading, reflecting, preparing for a class presentation and a final paper, reviewing notes, etc.) per week.

- No incompletes will be given without a good reason.
- Late submission of paper will automatically mean a 10% reduction of its original value.
- Late arrival or early departure will be marked as equivalent to 1/3 of missing a class.
- Attendance will be taken at all classes.
- Bring the relevant reading material to class.
- You are expected to attend all classes fully prepared: complete the reading assignment for each class with written notes, and be ready to raise specific questions and discuss points about the assigned reading.
- If you encounter problem, don’t hesitate to discuss it with the instructor as soon as possible. Don't
wait too late!

- For other help: 1) with writing, make use of the Writing Center, 2) with personal confidence, go to Counseling Center (Sullivan Hall), 3) with complaints (fairness, grading, etc), see the instructor.

**Policy on Religious Holidays:** If you will be observing any religious holidays this semester which will prevent you from attending a regularly scheduled class or interfere with fulfilling any course requirement, your instructor will offer you an opportunity to make up the class or course requirement if you make arrangements by informing your instructor of the dates of your religious holidays **within two weeks** of the beginning of the semester (or **three days** before any holidays which fall within the first two weeks of class).

**Policy on Cell Phones:** Cell phones, pagers and beepers **must be turned off** during class except with special permission from your instructor.

**Attendance Policy:**
- If you miss three classes you will automatically fail the course. This policy is strictly observed.

**Policy on Academic Honesty:**
Temple University believes strongly in academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism and academic cheating are, therefore, prohibited. Essential to intellectual growth is the development of independent thought and a respect for the thoughts of others. The prohibition against plagiarism and cheating is intended to foster this independence and respect.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's labor, another person's ideas, another person's words, another person's assistance. Normally, all work done for courses -- papers, examinations, homework exercises, laboratory reports, oral presentations -- is expected to be the individual effort of the student presenting the work. Any assistance must be reported to the instructor. If the work has entailed consulting other resources -- journals, books, or other media -- these resources must be cited in a manner appropriate to the course. It is the instructor's responsibility to indicate the appropriate manner of citation. Everything used from other sources -- suggestions for organization of ideas, ideas themselves, or actual language -- must be cited. Failure to cite borrowed material constitutes plagiarism. Undocumented use of materials from the World Wide Web is plagiarism.

Academic cheating is, generally, the thwarting or breaking of the general rules of academic work or the specific rules of the individual courses. It includes falsifying data; submitting, without the instructor's approval, work in one course which was done for another; helping others to plagiarize or cheat from one's own or another's work; or actually doing the work of another person.

Students must assume that all requirements are to be completed individually unless otherwise noted in writing in this syllabus. I reserve the right to refer any cases of suspected plagiarism or cheating to the University Disciplinary Committee; I also reserve the right to assign a grade of "F" for the given paper, quiz or test.

**Course Grade**
The course grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

- Class Attendance/Participation 10%
- Class Presentation 30%
- Final Paper 60%
Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

- 92.5% and higher = A
- 90.0 – 92.49% = A-
- 87.5% - 89.99% = B+
- 82.5% - 87.49% = B
- 80% - 82.49% = B-
- 77.5% - 79.99% = C+
- 72.5% - 77.49% = C
- 70% - 72.49% = C-
- 67.5% - 69.99% = D+
- 62.5% - 67.49% = D
- 60% - 62.49% = D-
- 59.99% and lower = F

Exam: no exam.

The Final Examination: No Final.

Paper: There will be one writing assignment in this course, and they will count for a total of 60%.
- To learn how paper will be assessed, see Paper Evaluation Sheet.
- The student must be submitted his/her paper in hard copy in class on the due date indicated in the syllabus. Failure to submit by the deadline will constitute late submission.
- Late paper will be penalized 5 points for each day late.

Schedule of Class Assignments:

1st Week: Introduction
2nd Week: Nishida’s Inquiry, vii- p. 50.
3rd Week: Nishida’s Inquiry, pp.51-102.
4th Week: Nishida’s Inquiry, pp. 103-176.
5th Week: Nishitani’s Religion, pp. –45.
7th Week: Nishitani’s Religion, pp.119-167
9th Week: Watsuji’s Ethics, to be announced.
10th Week: Watsuji’s Ethics, to be announced.
11th Week: Class Presentation
12th Week: Class Presentation
13th Week: Class Presentation