

**Course Title:** Democracy and its Discontents

**Course Code:** PHI 118

**Instructor Name:** Frederick M. Dolan

### **Class Sessions and Recording**

Meeting days and times: Thursdays, 7-8:50pm (PT)

Meeting location: Zoom, link will be shared with enrolled students closer to start date.

The class sessions will be recorded.

### **Course Features:**

- Lecture, discussions, Q&A.
- Discussion forum available on Canvas.
- Individual conferences available by request.
- Instructor feedback on assignments.

### **Grade Options and Requirements**

- No Grade Requested (NGR): No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC): Students must attend at least 8 class sessions.
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass): Students must attend at least 8 class sessions and submit a 1000-word memorandum on a relevant topic *or* contribute 100-word comments each week to the Canvas discussion forum.

### **Textbooks**

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* ed. Walter Kauffman.

Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings* ed. David Farrell Krell.

Max Horkheimer & Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

Michel Foucault, *The Michel Foucault Reader* ed. Paul Rabinow.

### **Tentative Weekly Outline**

*Basic Writings of Nietzsche* = BWN.

*Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings* = HBW.

*Dialectic of Enlightenment* = DE.

*Foucault Reader* = FR.

*On Canvas* = C.

Week 1: Alt-Right, Alt-Left, and the Counter-Enlightenment Tradition.

Immanuel Kant. "What is Enlightenment?" C. [Not required.]

Søren Kierkegaard. *The Present Age*. C. [Not required.]  
 Isaiah Berlin. "The Counter-Enlightenment." C. [Not required.]

Week 2: The Disappointments of Modernity.

Friedrich Nietzsche. *The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche's Preface and Essays 1 & 2, BWN.  
 —. *Beyond Good and Evil*, §§ 26, 29, 30, 43-4, 190, 197, 200, 211-12, 225, 230, 260, 265, 270, 287, BWN.

Week 3: Beyond Good and Evil.

Nietzsche. *The Genealogy of Morals*, Essay 3, BWN.  
 —. "The Natural History of Morals," in *Beyond Good and Evil*, BWN.

Week 4: Nietzsche's "Grand Politics."

Nietzsche. "The Free Spirit" and "What is Noble," in *Beyond Good and Evil*, BWN.  
 —. "Why I Am a Destiny," in *Ecce Homo*, BWN.  
 Selections from *Twilight of the Idols*, *The Anti-Christ*, and Nietzsche's notebooks. C.

Week 5: Nihilism and the History of Being.

Martin Heidegger. Selections from *Being and Time*. C.  
 Heidegger. "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," HBW.

Week 6: The Oblivion of Being.

Heidegger. "Letter on Humanism," HBW.

Week 7: Art, Truth, and History.

Heidegger. "The Origin of the Work of Art," HBW.

Week 8: Technology and the Second Beginning.

Heidegger. "The Question Concerning Technology," HBW  
 —. "'Only a God Can Save Us': The *Speigel* Interview." C.

Week 9: Reason, Domination, and the Administered Society.

Max Horkheimer & Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, "The Concept of Enlightenment," "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception," and pp. 183-84, 192-97.  
 Herbert Marcuse, "Remarks on a Redefinition of Culture." C. [Not required.]  
 —. "Repressive Tolerance." C. [Not required.]

Week 10: Knowledge, Power, and the Future of Liberal Democracy.

Michel Foucault. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," FR.  
 —. Selections from "Disciplines and Sciences of the Individual," FR, 169-226.  
 —. "Truth and Power," FR. [Not required.]  
 —. "Politics and Ethics: An Interview," FR. [Not required.]