Required Texts:

Note: Dates in parentheses indicate the week of the class meetings

Week one (): What is Existentialism?
S: “Introduction” xi-xx
B: "The Present Age" 1-65
K: "Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre" 11-51

Week two (): What is Existentialism?
K: Sartre: "Existentialism is a Humanism"
B: The Sources of Existentialism in the Western Tradition 69-146

Week three (): S: Soren Kierkegaard, "from The Present Age"; "from The Journals"; “The Rotation Method”; “Is there such a thing as a Teleological Suspension of the Ethical?” & “Truth is Subjectivity”
B: Kierkegaard 149-176
K: Kierkegaard readings 83-110

Week four (): S: Friedrich Nietzsche, “from The Gay Science”; “from Thus Spoke Zarathustra”; “from Beyond Good and Evil”; “from The Genealogy of Morality”; “from Twilight of the Idols” “On Truth”; “On the Will to Power”; “On the Eternal Recurrence”
B: Nietzsche 177-205
K: Nietzsche readings 121-133

Week five (): K: Heidegger readings 233-279
B: Heidegger 206-238

Week six (): S: Martin Heidegger “from Being and Time”; Martin Heidegger “The Fundamental Question of Metaphysics”; "from Discourse on Thinking”
Week seven (): MIDTERM

Week eight (): B: Sartre 239-266
          K: Sartre, "Self-Deception"; "Portrait of the Antisemite"

Week nine (): S: Sartre “from Nausea”; “The Origin of Nothingness”; “Patterns of
          Bad Faith” “Freedom and Facticity”; “Being-for-Others”; “from No Exit”;
          “Freedom and Responsibility”

Week ten (): S: Camus, Albert Camus “from The Stranger”; “from The Myth of
          Sisyphus”; “from The Fall” & “Albert Camus by Sartre”
          S: Marcel, "What is a Free Man?"

Week eleven (): S: Merleau-Ponty “from ‘Merleau-Ponty’ by Sartre”; Prospectus”;
          “Freedom”
          S: Viktor Frankle “Mans’s Search for Meaning”; “Logotherapy”; “Tragic
          Optimism”

Week twelve (): B: Barrett, Integral vs. Rational Man; Appendices

Week thirteen (): L: The Divided Self 1 - 100

Week fourteen (): L: The Divided Self 100 - 202

Week fifteen (): FINAL EXAM:

Course Description: Survey of major themes and figures in existential philosophy.
Historical background will be provided, and the course will cover important existential
concepts, such as those regarding the self, authenticity, responsibility and choice, anxiety,
perspectivism, the meaning of death and of god—to name a few.

Learning Objectives:
Skill objectives:
1. Interpret primary source philosophical texts
2. Identify, evaluate and construct philosophical arguments
3. Write philosophical short essays and papers
Content objectives:
1. Explain major themes in existential philosophy
2. Evaluate various responses to the existential condition
3. Explain metaphysical and existential notions of the self

Graded Work:
Midterm- 20% of course grade
5-7 page paper- 25% of course grade  
Discussion Board responses- 25% total  
Final exam- 30% of course grade

**Plagiarism & Academic Misconduct:** Any form of plagiarism or academic misconduct will result in failure of the course and notification of the university. Claims of ignorance regarding the citation of sources are insufficient justification for academic misconduct. It is your responsibility to know the university’s policies on academic misconduct; you are also responsible for asking questions if you are not sure if you need to cite a source or not.

**Students with Special Needs and Disabilities:** If you have any special needs or require specific accommodations please let me know as soon as possible. I will make every effort to work with you to ensure your success in the course.

**Course Grading Criteria**

**The Grade of A:** The essence of A-level work is that it is excellent overall with no major weaknesses.  
The work at the end of the course is on the whole clear, precise, and well-reasoned. A-level work demonstrates an insightful mind beginning to take charge of its own ideas, assumptions, inferences, and intellectual processes. There is an original argument or interpretation and the work is at an advanced level.

The student can *regularly* analyze issues clearly, distinguish what is relevant from irrelevant, recognize questionable assumptions, clarify concepts effectively, identify competing points of view, show a general tendency to reason carefully from clearly stated premises, and has *excellent* reasoning and problem-solving skills.

**The Grade of B:** The essence of B-level work is that it demonstrates strengths but is less consistent in high-level performance than A-level work. Nonetheless, it has some distinctive weaknesses, though no major ones.  
The work at the end of the course is also on the whole clear, precise, and well-reasoned, but with occasional lapses into weak reasoning. The student charitably represents the views of other philosophers, but the work does not make an original contribution. The work is of high-quality.

The student can *often* analyze issues clearly, distinguish what is relevant from irrelevant, recognize questionable assumptions, clarify concepts effectively, identify competing points of view, show a general tendency to reason carefully from clearly stated premises, and has *good* reasoning and problem-solving skills.

**The Grade of C:** The essence of C-level work is that it demonstrates decent mastery of content but it is inconsistent with several weaknesses.  
The work at the end of the course shows some emerging skills but also shows some weaknesses in reasoning. While some assignments may be reasonably well done, others may be poorly done, or the assignments are all generally of average quality. The student does not charitably represent the views of other philosophers and/or does not understand the broader implications of the
positions he or she is discussing. Effort is made, but the work may lack organization, focus, and/or depth in argument.

The student can occasionally analyze issues clearly, distinguish what is relevant from irrelevant, recognize questionable assumptions, clarify concepts effectively, identify competing points of view, show a general tendency to reason carefully from clearly stated premises, and has fair reasoning and problem-solving skills.

**The Grade of D:** The essence of D-level work is that it demonstrates only a minimal level of understanding and skills in critical thinking.
The work at the end of the course demonstrates frequent uncritical thinking. Most assignments are poorly done. There is little evidence that the student is reasoning through the assignment. D-level thinking lacks discipline and clarity. The work is vague, confused, and/or irrelevant.

The student can rarely analyze issues clearly, distinguish what is relevant from irrelevant, recognize questionable assumptions, clarify concepts effectively, identify competing points of view, show a general tendency to reason carefully from clearly stated premises, and has poor reasoning and problem-solving skills.

**The Grade of F:** The essence of F-level work is that the student demonstrated a pattern of uncritical thinking and/or failed to do the required work of the course.
The work at the end of the course is as vague, imprecise, and as unreasoned as it was in the beginning of the course. There is little evidence that the student is genuinely engaged in the task of taking charge of his or her thinking. Many assignments appear to have been simply going through the motions without really putting any significant effort into thinking his or her way through them. The work is unacceptable and demonstrates little to no understanding.

Consequently, the student cannot analyze issues clearly, distinguish what is relevant from irrelevant, recognize questionable assumptions, clarify concepts effectively, identify competing points of view, show a general tendency to reason carefully from clearly stated premises, and has no reasoning and problem-solving skills.