Syllabus

Must We Mean What We Say? - 30415

Last update 02-07-2015

HU Credits: 1

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: The School of Philosophy and Religions

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Hent de Vries

Coordinator Email: hentdevries@jhu.edu

Coordinator Office Hours: Wednesday 15:00-16:00

Teaching Staff:
Course/Module description:
Starting out from Stanley Cavell’s programmatic title, Must We Mean What We Say?, this seminar will revisit his discussion of J.L. Austin, John Searle, Jacques Derrida, and Shoshana Felman, with special emphasis on these authors’ theories of intentionality and agency, seriousness and sincerity, and with reference to the ancient and modern concepts of tragedy on which they partly rely. In addition to the aforementioned thinkers’ relevant writings, readings will include brief selections from Euripides, Isaiah Berlin, Jean-Luc Marion, and Marianne Constable.

Course/Module aims:
To analyze various theories of intentionality and agency, seriousness and sincerity, with reference to ancient and modern concepts of tragedy.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
To analyze and critically assess the philosophical assumptions of modern theorists.

Attendance requirements(%):
The course consists of 3 double meetings, and attendance is required.

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The course consists of 3 double meetings. This text- and discussion-based seminar depends up on student participation at every meeting. Each meeting will focus on the discussion of the assigned readings.

Course/Module Content:
Wednesday, December 24, 4.30 – 8 pm
General Introduction
Discussion Readings:
Stanley Cavell, "Counter-Philosophy and the Pawn of Voice";
Jacques Derrida, "Signature Event Context";
John Searle, "Reiterating the Differences: A Reply to Derrida"

Wednesday, December 31, 4.30 – 8 pm
Tragedy and Necessity
Discussion Readings:
J.L. Austin and Cavell on Euripides' Hyppolytus,
Berlin on Austin
Wednesday, January 7, 4.30 – 8 pm
“My Word is My Bond”
Discussed Readings:
Shoshana Felman, The Scandal of the Speaking Body;
Marianne Constable, Our Word Is Our Bond: How Legal Speech Acts

**Required Reading:**
Wednesday, December 24, 4.30 – 8 pm
General Introduction
Discussed Readings:
Stanley Cavell, “Counter-Philosophy and the Pawn of Voice”;
Jacques Derrida, “Signature Event Context”;
John Searle, “Reiterating the Differences: A Reply to Derrida”

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“My Word is My Bond”
Discussed Readings:
Shoshana Felman, The Scandal of the Speaking Body;
Marianne Constable, Our Word Is Our Bond: How Legal Speech Acts

**Additional Reading Material:**
*Stanley Cavell, “Foreword,” in Shoshana Felman, The Scandal of the Speaking Body: Don Juan with J.L. Austin or Seduction in Two Languages, trans. Catherine
Idem, "The Wittgensteinian Event," in idem, Philosophy the Day After Tomorrow, 192-212.


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Idem, "Cavell on Skepticism," in: idem, Consequences of Pragmatism (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 176-190.
Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 100 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information: