PL208 Introduction to Existentialism

Module: Ethics and Moral Philosophy
Seminar Leader: Tracy Colony
Course Times: Monday 9:00-10:30, Wednesday 9:00-10:30
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Office Hours: TBA

Course Description
One of the most important philosophical movements of the 20th century is unquestionably Existentialism. The philosophy of existence developed by Jean-Paul Sartre can be seen as the clearest expression of this movement. In this course we will read selections from Sartre and other core representatives of French Existentialism. However, this reading will be prepared for by tracing through important philosophical lines of influence which the existentialists often acknowledged in the works of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger. All texts will be read in translation, however, parallel readings in the original French or German will be supported and encouraged.

Requirements
Attendance is required at all classes. Lateness can ruin a class and will therefore not be tolerated. Absences are registered in all classes, and lateness is registered as absence. More than two absences in a semester will significantly affect your grade.
Assessment and Writing Assignments: There will be specific reading assignments for each meeting. Everyone is expected to have done all assigned reading in advance. There will be one midterm essay of 2000 words due at 23:59 March 14th. There will be one final essay of 4000 words due at 23:59 on May 20th. Each person will be required to give one 15 minute in class presentation introducing the specific reading for that meeting.
Policy on Late Submission of Papers: All written work must be submitted electronically and on time. As the Student Handbook states, essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grade Breakdown
Midterm Essay 20%
Final Essay 30%
Presentation 20%
Participation 30%
Schedule

January 26  Introduction (no readings)


April 6  holiday (no class)


