German Idealist thinker G.W.F. Hegel's views of historical and cultural change have been tremendously influential. Hegel asks us to consider: is there a logic to historical development? Can human knowledge ever be complete? Is a past of domination required for a future of freedom? Hegel raises these questions, and more, in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. This course introduces students to this seminal work, exploring Hegel's ideas about the development of civilization, the nature of knowledge, the status of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution as projects of intellectual and political liberation, and the prospect of forgiveness for historical wrongs.

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


*Note: All texts have been ordered at the New York University bookstore. Students should use the editions cited above.

**Course Requirements:**

1) Attendance: Attendance is mandatory.

2) Papers: Your written work should be a genuine attempt to fulfill the paper topics. If I find your paper not to be a genuine attempt I will tell you. All papers must be handed in. No late papers are accepted. There are no extensions for papers. Papers must be typed and double-spaced. See paper requirement options below.

3) Class Participation: This class is a seminar so regular participation is required. A seminar class won’t work if you don’t participate in discussions. Each day of class students will come prepared to discuss the text assigned to be read by that day.

4) Being prepared to discuss the text entails bringing questions about the text to class. Students are required to bring two questions to class every day. These questions are to be written down and handed in at the beginning of class.

**Paper Requirement**

There are two options that fulfill the paper requirement. You can choose either one.
Paper requirement option A: one term paper
Requirement A is a 3000-word term paper on a topic of your choice relevant to the course. All papers must be handed in by 6pm on Friday, May 17th. Papers are due by email. A 300-word description of your topic is due no later than Friday, April 19th. Please send your topic descriptions to my email address.

Paper requirement option B: three papers
Requirement B is three papers each 1000-words in length.
Paper 1 is due on Friday, March 8th by 9 pm. Papers are due by email.
Paper 2 is due on Friday, April 12th by 9 pm. Papers are due by email.
Paper 3 is due on Friday, May 17th by 9 pm. Papers are due by email.

Topics for requirement B
Select one for each paper:
1. Why is the transition from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness made and does it make sense?
2. Argue why Hegel's critique of Kant's moral system is correct or not.
3. Discuss the difference between Hegel's and Kant's understanding of the Enlightenment.
4. Is Hegel correct to conjecture that forgiveness is the fulfillment of human history?
5. What is Hegel's critique of modern science?
6. Is Hegel analysis of religion cogent?
7. Discuss and provide examples of Hegel's dialectical method.
8. Contrast and discuss these two moments in the Phenomenology: Lordship and Bondage and Guilt and Destiny.
9. Argue why or why not Absolute Knowledge is self-knowledge.
10. Discuss the transition from Stoicism to the Unhappy Consciousness.

Note on plagiarism:
All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the dean. If you have any questions regarding what is considered plagiarism please ask me.

Schedule of Readings:
2/1: Hegel, pages 46 to 103
2/8: Hegel, pages 104 to 138
2/15: Hegel, pages 139 to 180
2/22: Hegel, pages 180 to 210
3/1: Hegel, pages 210 to 235
3/8: Hegel, pages 235 to 262
3/15: Hegel, pages 263 to 294; and Sophocles, Antigone
3/22: no class
3/29: Hegel, pages 294 to 328

4/5: Hegel, pages 328 to 363; and Kant, pages 41 to 48

4/12: Hegel, pages 364 to 409

4/19: Hegel, pages 410 to 453

4/26: Hegel, pages 453 to 478

5/3: Hegel, pages 479 to 493 and 1 to 45

5/10: Kant, pages 29 to 40 and 49 to 60