**French Philosophy at mid-20th century Winter 2021**

4 credits, 8 ECTS credits: no pre-requisites, elective

Mondays 15:30-17:10, Thursday 15:30-17:10, room D107 or by zoom link

Instructor: David Weberman, room D407, Tuesdays, Thursdays 13:00-15:00 and by appt. mail: [webermand@ceu.edu](mailto:webermand@ceu.edu) Online office hours: whereby.com/weberman-ceu

CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS PLAN: The course focuses on two important French thinkers, both indebted to the phenomenological tradition of Husserl and Heidegger: (1908-1961) and Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) by examining a longer work of Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* (1961) and a long essay by Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics” which was written in response to Levinas’s book. Levinas’s speaks to intersubjectivity, ethics and religion in the wider sense. Given their difficulty, we will want to read them rather slowly. We will begin with an earlier essay by Levinas on Husserl’s phenomenology.

Learning outcomes – By the end of the course, participants should be able to explain and assess the various contributions by mid-20th century French philosophers on questions of metaphysics, mind, and ethics as well as their convergence with or divergence from other philosophical traditions. If time remains, we will read additional material by Levinas’s *Otherwise than Being* itself a response to Derrida.

Assessment - Regular attendance, preparation, and participation in discussion for all. For all students (except auditors): 1) One 15-minute class presentation (ungraded); 2) One 4,000-word term paper. 80% of final grade based on term paper, 20% on class participation. An A grade requires a clear, focused and somewhat original paper. [There is an optional mid-term take-home essay exam. It can count for 20% of your grade, and then the term paper for only 60%.]

Week 1 January 11, 14 Introduction; Levinas, “The Work of Husserl”

Week 2 January 18, 21 Levinas, “Husserl” continued; *Totality and Infinity*

Week 3 January 25, 29 Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*

Week 4 February 1, 4 Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*

Week 5 February 8, 11 Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*

Week 6 February 15, 18 Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*

Week 7 February 22, 25 Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*

Week 8 March 1, 4 Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*

Week 9 March 8, 11 Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics”

Week 10 March 15, 18 Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics”

Week 11 March 22, 25 to be determined

Week 12 March 29, April 1 to be determined