

Instructor: Dr. Ted Toadvine (toadvine@uoregon.edu)
Office Hours: UH 3:00 - 4:00 and by appointment, PLC 319
Phone: 346-5554 (office); 346-5547 (Philosophy Program Manager)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Through a close reading of two of Henri Bergson's major texts, *Matter and Memory* and *Creative Evolution*, this class will explore his solution to the mind-body problem and his account of natural evolution as a process of creative differentiation. Specific topics will include the nature of perception, memory, intellect, and intuition; the ontology of "images" as an alternative to realism and idealism; the critique of mechanist and finalist accounts of evolution; the nature of the "vital impetus" that drives the creative evolutionary process; and the relation between humanity and the natural world. We will conclude with a brief examination of the appropriation of Bergson's work by Gilles Deleuze.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Bergson, *Time & Free Will*, Chapter 2, pp. 75-139

(available at online course reserves: http://libweb.uoregon.edu/acs_svc/reserve-index.html)

Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N. M. Paul and W. S. Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1991).

Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 1998).

Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	<u>Undergraduate</u>	<u>Graduate</u>
1. participation & attendance	10%	10%
2. two-page reading responses, due each Tuesday	30 %	30%
3. midterm and final essays, 1200 - 1800 words	60 %	
4. term paper prospectus, 2 pages & bibliography		10%
5. final term paper, 4000 - 6000 words		50%

- **Class Participation/Attendance:** You are expected to participate actively in this class, which includes attending class, reading all assigned material prior to class, and participating productively and professionally in class discussions. Missing **three** classes *for any reason* will result in a full grade reduction. An additional full grade reduction will be made for each additional missed class after the third. Three late arrivals for class will count as one absence. Discussion is crucial to this class, and I will do my best to make you feel at ease and welcome to contribute to the class conversation. Please feel free to contribute any question, objection, or other thought about the topic at hand when such occurs to you. Although no relevant remark is out of bounds in this class, you will be expected to treat all members of the class respectfully. The quality and quantity of your participation in the class discussion will be evaluated in assigning 10% of your final grade. Obviously, failure to attend class will negatively affect your participation grade.
- **Reading Responses:** Each Tuesday after the first week, you will be expected to provide a two-page *typed* summary and response to the reading assigned for that week. The first half of your response should summarize the key claims and concepts from the reading. The second half should offer your response, which may include questions of interpretation, evaluations, comparisons with other authors, etc. Reading responses will be graded on the quality and completeness of your summary and the depth and originality of your response. Late reading responses will not be accepted. The evaluation of your responses will be the basis for 30% of your final grade.
- **Midterm and Final Essays (undergraduates only):** The midterm essay is due by Thursday of Week 6, and the final essay on the date assigned for the final examination. Topics for the essay will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard at least one week in advance of the due date (accessible from the UO homepage or at <https://blackboard.uoregon.edu/>). Essays should be 1200-1800 words (roughly 4-6 pages), and must be typed, stapled, double-spaced, proof-read, and include a word-count on the first page. Essays will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. Each essay will be worth 30% of the final course grade.

- **Final Term Paper (graduate students only):** Graduate students will complete a final term paper of 4000-6000 words (roughly 12-18 pages). Final papers will explore a specific independently-chosen topic or theme from the course in detail and must include (a) examination of at least five scholarly secondary sources in addition to primary texts, and (b) the development of your own original position or critical response. A prospectus of your final paper, including a two-page description of the topic and a bibliography of texts to be consulted, must be submitted for my approval by the start of week 8. This prospectus will be worth 10% of your final course grade. Final papers must be stapled, double-spaced, proof-read, and include a word-count on the first page. Papers are due on the date scheduled for the final exam, and extensions will be granted only in the case of genuine, documented emergencies. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. Final papers will be worth 50% of the final course grade.

PLEASE NOTE

- **Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Please review the university policy available at <http://www.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm> for an explanation of what constitutes academic dishonesty and how it will be dealt with in this course.
- **Disability Accommodations:** If you have a documented disability, please let me know as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

TENTATIVE ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE (*changes and specific assignments will be announced in class*)

Week 1: 3/29, 3/31	Introduction to the course and Bergson <i>Time & Free Will</i> , chapter 2 (library online course reserves)
Week 2: 4/5, 4/7	<i>Matter & Memory</i> , Introduction and Chapter I (9-76)
Week 3: 4/12, 4/14	<i>Matter & Memory</i> , Chapter II (77-131)
Week 4: 4/19, 4/21	<i>Matter & Memory</i> , Chapter III (133-177)
Week 5: 4/26, 4/28	<i>Matter & Memory</i> , Chapter IV, Summary & Conclusion (179-249)
Week 6: 5/3, 5/5	<i>Creative Evolution</i> , Introduction & Chapter 1 (ix-xv, 1-97) Undergrads: MIDTERM ESSAY DUE THURSDAY, 5/5
Week 7: 5/10, 5/12	<i>Creative Evolution</i> , Chapter 2 (98-185)
Week 8: 5/17, 5/19	<i>Creative Evolution</i> , Chapter 3 (186-271) Grads: TERM PAPER PROSPECTUS DUE THURSDAY, 5/19
Week 9: 5/24, 5/26	<i>Creative Evolution</i> , Chapter 4 (272-370)
Week 10: 5/31, 6/2	<i>Bergsonism</i> (13-118)
Tues., 6/7, 7 pm	FINAL ESSAYS/TERM PAPERS DUE