

Willi Goetschel  
German Department  
313 Odette Hall

Office hours: R 3-4 or by appt.  
w.goetschel@utoronto.ca  
(416) 926 23 20

**GER 411 / PHL323H1F – SOCIAL AND CULTURAL THEORY:  
Introduction to Critical Theory**

Prof. Willi Goetschel Wednesdays 3:00-6:00

*An Introduction to Critical Theory: The Frankfurt School.* This course is an introduction to the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School. As approach or praxis to critical thought, Critical Theory suggests a way of thinking about the interrelations between critique as a philosophical praxis, and society, culture and politics. The study of key texts includes readings by Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, Benjamin, Kracauer, and Fromm. The course will inquire into the meaning of concepts such as critique, history, freedom, individuality, emancipation, culture industry, and aesthetic experience.

- 16 Sep Introduction: Critical Theory and the Frankfurt School
- 23 Sep **Modern Condition and its Problems**  
No class: Yom Kippur  
Readings for this week will be discussed in next week's lecture:  
Erich Fromm, "The Two Aspects of Freedom for Modern Man" in *The Fear of Freedom* (1942), 89-116; Max Horkheimer, "Rise and Decline of the Individual" in *Eclipse of Reason* (1947), 128-161; Herbert Marcuse, "The Catastrophe of Liberation" and "Conclusion" in *One-Dimensional Man* (1964), 225-257.
- 30 Sep **Modern Conditions and Philosophy's Critical Resistance**  
Critique, Dissonance, and Disenchantment  
Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, introduction; "Marginalia" and "Why Still Philosophy," "Notes on Philosophical Thinking," "Critique", and "Resignation"
- 7 Oct no class (make up class 10 Dec)
- 14 Oct **History**  
Georg Simmel, "The Problem of Historical Time"; Walter Benjamin, "Theses on History" (and from *The Arcade Project*, section N)  
**First Assignment Due 16 Oct!**
- 21 Oct **Myth, Enlightenment, and the Genesis of the Modern Subject**  
Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 1-62

- 28 Oct           **Culture Industry**  
 Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 94-136  
 Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, chapter on “Repressive Desublimation”,  
 56-83; Adorno, “Free Time”, “Prologue to Television”,
- 4 Nov            **Every Day Life in Exile: Adorno, *Minima Moralia***  
 Especially: §§ 1-33, 40-47, 59, 64, 71, 72, 75, 77, 82, 92, 98-99, 117, 127-  
 132, 136, 140-142, 149, 151-153.  
**Second Assignment due 6 Nov!**
- 11 Nov           **Concept and Language**  
 Adorno, *Negative Dialectic* (selection from “Concepts and Categories”);  
 “Words form Abroad”
- 18 Nov           **Metaphysics After Auschwitz**  
 Adorno, *Negative Dialectic*, “Meditations on Metaphysics”
- 25 Nov           **Aesthetic Theory 1**  
 Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, London and New York:  
 Continuum, 2000. Chapter 1: “Art, Society, Aesthetics”, pp. 1-16,  
 “Toward A Reappraisal of Heine”, “Heine the Wound”; Heine, “The God  
 Apollo”
- 2 Dec            **Aesthetic Theory 2**  
 Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, London and New York:  
 Continuum, 2000. Chapter 12: “Society”, pp. 225-261. – Herbert  
 Marcuse,            “Art and Revolution”, in: *Art and Liberation. Collected Papers*,  
 Vol. 4,                London: Routledge, 2006, pp. 166-177.  
**Third Assignment due 4 Dec!**
- 10 Dec           **Review**

**MARKING SCHEME:**

3 Take-Home Exams	45%
Final Examination	45%
Attendance and participation	10%

**TEXTS:**

Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, Verso, ISBN 1-84467-051-1

----- *Negative Dialectics*, Bloomsbury Academic; ISBN 978-0826401328  
Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Stanford UP,  
ISBN 978-0804736336.

Books available at Bob Miller Book Room, 180 Bloor Street West, 416-922-3557  
Toronto, ON M5S 2V6

**All other readings are posted on the course website on Blackboard**

**Papers due by electronic submission:**

You must submit the exams by uploading the files as Word file via the assignments link on the course Blackboard site, **with your name as the name of the file attached**, and your e-mail address (together with your name and student number) on the first page of the paper by noon on the day they are due.

**Late submission policy for papers:**

5% penalty for the first 24 hours after the deadline, and then for each additional day 3% up to a max. of 5 days.

**Logging in to your Blackboard Course Website**

Like many other courses, this course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access the course website, or any other Blackboard-based course website, go to the UofT portal login page at <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and log in using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the course website along with the link to all your other Blackboard-based courses.

**Activating your UTORid and Password**

If you need information on how to activate your UTORid and set your password for the first time, please go to [www.utorid.utoronto.ca](http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca). Under the "First Time Users" area, click on "activate your UTORid" (if you are new to the university) or "create your UTORid" (if you are a returning student), then follow the instructions. New students who use the link to "activate your UTORid" will find reference to a "Secret Activation Key". This was originally issued to you when you picked up your Tcard at the library. If you have lost your Secret Activation Key you can call 416-978-HELP or visit the Help Desk at the Information Commons on the ground floor of Robarts Library to be issued a new one.

**The course instructor will not be able to help you with this.** 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can also answer any other questions you may have about your UTORid and password.

**Email Communication with the Course Instructor**

At times, the course Instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all UofT students are required to have a valid UofT email address. You are responsible for ensuring that your UofT email address is set up AND properly entered in the ROSI system. You can do that by using the following instructions:

To submit the information to activate your UTORid and password (see above), you will need to click the “Validate” button. Follow the instructions on the subsequent screens to receive your utoronto.ca address. Once you have your UofT email address, go to the ROSI system ([www.rosi.utoronto.ca](http://www.rosi.utoronto.ca)), log in and update the system with your new UofT email address.

**Accessibility Needs:**

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible:

[disability.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:disability.services@utoronto.ca) or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>