Existentialism
Philosophy 135A, Spring 2010.
Tuesdays and Fridays, 3:10pm-4:30pm, TBD.
Instructor: Berislav Marušić
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Office Hours: TBD.

Course Description
In this course we will study French Existentialism and its reception. We will first undertake a reading of Jean-Paul Sartre’s works Nausea, Existentialism Is a Humanism, and selections from Being and Nothingness, and we will study the development of existentialist thought by Simone de Beavoir in her seminal The Second Sex. Finally, we will read Iris Murdoch’s Platonist critique of existentialism as presented in her The Sovereignty of Good.

Readings
The required texts for the course are:
Additional readings will be made available on LATTE.

Requirements
- Short paper, 3-4 pages (20%).
- Final Exam (20%).
- Final paper, 10-12 pages (40%).
- Participation (20%).

Course attendance is required. To pass the course, students must complete all written assignments. Late papers will be penalized one third of a letter grade per day. Students must request extensions by e-mail in advance of the due date of the assignment.

Participation is essential to learning philosophy. Contribution in class and in the online discussion forum on LATTE will be considered. Attendance and in-class exercises are included in the participation grade.

Note: If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis and need to have special accommodations for this class, please see me immediately.

Academic Dishonesty will be reported to the Department of Student Development and Conduct with a recommendation that the student fail the course. Students are responsible to inform themselves about what constitutes dishonesty. If in doubt, please ask me! Information can be found here: http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/rr/html/rr_section4.html
Schedule of Readings and Assignments

1/19 -- Introduction

1/22 -- Nagel, “The Absurd.”
   Descartes, “The First Meditation.”

1/26, 1/29 -- Sartre, Nausea.

2/2, 2/5 -- Sartre, Existentialism is a Humanism.

2/9, 2/12 -- Sartre, BN, Part One, Chapter One: “The Origin of Negation”, sect. II, V (pp. 36-44, 56-85).

2/23, 2/26 -- BN, Chapter Two: “Bad Faith” (pp. 86-116).
   Wood, “Self-Deception and Bad Faith.”


3/9 -- Short Paper Due

3/9, 3/12 -- BN, Part Three, Chapter Three: “Concrete Relations with Others,” parts I and II (pp. 471-484, 504-527).

   Taylor, “Responsibility for Self.”

   Bauer, “Must We Read Simone de Beauvoir?”


4/30 -- Marušić, “Epistemic Evasion.”

5/4 Review and Conclusion.

5/4 -- 5/10, 9am Take Home Final
5/7 -- Final Paper Due