Phenomenology is an important way of doing philosophy developed in the last one hundred years and practiced worldwide. In this course, we will first study the basics as developed by Husserl and certain of Husserl’s phenomenological findings, including those concerning “lived time” and the problem of “inter-subjectivity.” We will then study Martin Heidegger’s phenomenological ontology including his phenomenological critique of the basic ontological thesis of modern philosophy and his analysis of “The Fundamental Ontological Question of the Meaning of Being in General,” as well as his certain of Heidegger’s findings regarding “lived time,” “world,” and “the ontological difference.” After this we will study Jean-Paul Sartre’s work in phenomenological ontology as well as certain of Sartre’s findings regarding “bad faith” and the question of “the other.” Finally, we will study Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological critique of standard conceptions of perception as well as certain of Merleau-Ponty’s findings in regard to “lived space,” “the lived body,” and “The Body as Expression, and Speech.” Along the way we will note differences among the modes of phenomenology as understood and practiced by these break-through phenomenologists, including “transcendental phenomenology,” “hermeneutical phenomenology,” “existential phenomenology,” and “life-world phenomenology.”

TEXTS:

- *Cartesian Meditations* by Edmund Husserl (entire text)
- *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* by Martin Heidegger (selections)
- *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* by Jean-Paul Sartre (selections)
- *Phenomenology of Perception* by Maurice Merleau-Ponty

Recommended secondary sources: *Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology* by Paul Ricoeur; *Husserl: Philosopher of Infinite Tasks* by Maurice Natanson; *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology* by Dermot Moran; *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought* by William Richardson; *Martin Heidegger’s Path of Thinking* by Otto Pöggeler; *Heidegger: An Introduction* by Richard Polt; *Jean-Paul Sartre* (an anthology of secondary essays, preceded by an interview with Sartre, in the Library of Living Philosophers); *Merleau-Ponty and the Possibilities of Philosophy: Transforming the Tradition* (an anthology of secondary essays). Additional secondary sources will be recommended during the course.

**SCHEDULE** (this is an approximate schedule and can be changed depending on the needs of the class):

Week One: Introduction
Week Two: Husserl on the “natural attitude” and the phenomenological “epoché” (first and second meditations in *Cartesian Meditations*)

Week Three: Husserl on the “eidetic phase” of the “transcendental phenomenological reduction” (third meditation in *Cartesian Meditations*)

Week Four: Husserl on the “transcendental phase” of the “transcendental phenomenological reduction” (fourth meditation in *Cartesian Meditations*)

Week Five: Husserl on the problem of “intersubjectivity” (fifth meditation in *Cartesian Meditations*)

Week Six: Heidegger on “The Thesis of Modern Ontology: The Basic Ways of being are the Being of Nature (*res extensa*) and the Being of Mind (*res cogitans*)” (Part I, Chapter 3 of *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*)

Week Seven: Heidegger on “Time and Temporality” (Part II, Chapter 1, first section—number 19 of the text, in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*)

Week Eight: Heidegger on “Temporality and Being” and the “Ontological Difference” (Part II, Chapter 1, second through fourth sections—numbers 19-21 of the text, in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*)

Week Nine: Sartre on “The Pursuit of Being,” “The Problem of Nothingness,” and “Bad Faith” (Introduction and Part I, Chapter One of *Being and Nothingness*)

Week Ten: Sartre on “Being for Others” (Part III, Chapter One, sections I, II and IV of *Being and Nothingness*)

Week Eleven: Sartre on “Concrete Relations With Others” (Part III, Chapter Three of *Being and Nothingness*)

Week Twelve: Merleau-Ponty on “Traditional Prejudices and the Return to Phenomena” (Preface and Introduction in *Phenomenology of Perception*)

Week Thirteen: Merleau-Ponty on “The Spatiality of One’s Own Body and Motility” (Part I, Chapter 3 of *Phenomenology of Perception*)

Week Fourteen: Merleau-Ponty on “The Body in its Sexual Being” and “The Body as Expression, and Speech” (Part I, Chapters 5 and 6 in *Phenomenology of Perception*)

Concluding Remarks

**Written Work:** There will be two writing assignments in the course. The first will be responses to essay questions selected from several questions distributed in class. These questions will concern points in the texts discussed in class. They will be distributed midway in the course.
The other writing assignment is a term paper. This is to be a research paper, including bibliography and reference notes, on a topic determined by the student in consultation with the instructor. This paper is to be on the order of twelve to fifteen pages in length. It will be due after classes, during the period designated for final examinations. (The GMU Honor Code is in effect in this course.)