

1000-E21;Kierkegaards Authorship: On the Loss and Recovery of Meaning+1000-E21;Kierkegaards Authorship: On the Loss and Recovery of Meaning

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University of Copenhagen

Fall Semester 2021

Course Content:

This English language course offered by the Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre at the University of Copenhagen is open to Danish students as well as international students interested in contemplative reading and discussion of the works of Copenhagen's most radical author, Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855).

Kierkegaard's entire authorship is centered around the existential project that every human being is confronted with: to become oneself and none other than oneself. And as he sees it, becoming oneself does not happen passively and is never achieved once and for all, but requires constant effort. He thus often describes this project as one of taking responsibility for "choosing," "gaining," or "becoming oneself."

This course examines his witty, humorous, but also deeply earnest exploration of the psychology of self-identity. Kierkegaard's thoughts about the struggle for personhood take us through perhaps unexpected territories: beginning with the breakdown of culture-specific

ethnic and religious that have traditionally defined the self, he explores the culturally destructive power of Socrates' irony, the art of seduction, theories of beauty and boredom, a scathing critique of religious culture and politics, religious demands that conflict with ethical duty, the joy of being embodied here and now, and finally, love.

We will remain especially attentive to the ways in which Kierkegaard's thought is critical of inherited ethnic and cultural definitions of self, and why he nonetheless considers human relationships to be absolutely essential to understanding oneself and one's obligations to other human beings.

Course Instructor:

K. Brian Soderquist, Ph.D. in philosophical theology, University of Copenhagen, 2005; M.A.R. in philosophy of religion, Yale University, 1994; B.A. in philosophy and natural sciences, Utah State University, 1990., email: [kbs@sk.ku.dk \(mailto:kbs@sk.ku.dk\)](mailto:kbs@sk.ku.dk)

Times:

Mondays, 12:15-14.30, room 7C.1.05

Language of instruction and discussion:

English. (Final papers, however, may also be written in Danish, Swedish, or Norwegian).

Credit:

15 ECTS credits

Streaming:

We plan on physical participation this semester, but the course will also be livestreamed, though the requirements for the research paper are changed significantly if you follow the course online.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89923323889> [_\(https://www.google.com/url?q=https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89923323889&sa=D&source=calendar&usd=2&usg=AOvVaw04rUoISPg\)](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89923323889&sa=D&source=calendar&usd=2&usg=AOvVaw04rUoISPg)

Requirements:

Discussion board: A short post (ca. 1 page, or ca. 500 words) about each of the readings on the Absalon discussion board. Posts are due before the beginning of the next class. *You must post in 10 of the 11 discussions in order to pass the course.* (Contact me if you cannot finish a post on time).

Short papers: Three short papers (ca. 4-5 double spaced pages) will be assigned during the course of the semester. (*Danske studerende må gerne skrive på dansk.*)

Research paper. An analytical/interpretive paper will be due toward the end of the semester. For KU students, the due date is *Thursday, Dec. 23 at 12.00.* For DIS students, the due date is *Friday, Dec. 17 at midnight.* (*Danske studerende må gerne skrive på dansk.*)

If you participate physically in the classroom (at least 75% of the time), the exam requirements are:

- Undergraduate requirements (bachelor students): A research paper of 19,200-24,000 characters, i.e., 8-10 "normal" pages (1.5 line spacing), based on 400-500 pages literature in agreement with the teacher. The assignments are assessed by the teacher and the final assessment is graded according to the 7-point grading scale.
- Graduate requirements (kandidat/master students): A research paper of 26,400-36,000 characters, i.e., 11-15 "normal" pages (1.5 line spacing), based on 800-1000 pages of literature in agreement with the teacher. The assignments are assessed by the teacher and the final assessment is graded according to the 7-point grading scale.

If you not not participate in the classes physically (at least 75% of the time), the research paper requirements are:

- Undergraduate requirements (bachelor students): A research paper of 36,000-48,000 characters, i.e., 15-20 "normal" pages, based on 1,200-1,500 pages literature in agreement with the teacher. The assignments are assessed by the teacher and the final assessment is graded according to the 7-point grading scale.
- Graduate requirements (kandidat/master students): A research paper of 60,000-72,000 characters, i.e., 25-30 "normal" pages, based on 1500 pages of literature in agreement with the teacher. The assignments are assessed by the teacher and the final assessment is graded according to the 7-point grading scale.

Course Evaluation:

Research paper: 45%

First short paper: 15%

Second short paper: 15%

Third short paper: 15%

Attendance and participation: 10%

Readings:

Completion of reading assignments as scheduled is required and is a prerequisite for participating in class discussions.

For students who read Danish: Kierkegaards samlede værker, *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter (SKS)*, is available online at www.sks.dk (<http://www.sks.dk>). I have provided references to *SKS* for the Kierkegaard readings (e.g., Danish: *SKS* 4, 148-151) in this reading plan. (Note: To see page breaks, place a checkmark in the middle box, next to *SKS*, on the top left-hand side of the screen).

Course texts to be purchased before the beginning of class:

Søren Kierkegaard, *Either/Or*, trans. Alastair Hannay, London: Penguin Books, 2004. ISBN 978-0-140-44577-0

Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness unto Death*, trans. Alastair Hannay, London: Penguin Books, 1989. ISBN 978-0-140-44533-6

Pdf texts:

See daily schedule to find linked texts.

For students who read Danish:

Kierkegaards samlede værker, *Søren Kierkegaards Skrifter (SKS)* is on the net: www.sks.dk (<http://www.sks.dk>). I have provided references to *SKS* for every reading (e.g., Danish: *SKS* 4, 148-181) in the daily schedule. (Note: To see page breaks, place a checkmark in the middle box, next to *SKS*, on the top left-hand side of the screen).

Recommended Secondary Literature:

Johannes Sløk, *Kierkegaard's Universe, A New Guide to the Genius*, Copenhagen: Danish Cultural Institute, 1994 (155 pages) (also available in the original Danish as *Kierkegaards Univers*)

Karsten Harries, *Between Nihilism and Faith*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010 (177 pages).

Oversigt over fag:

Dato	Nærmere oplysninger	Forfalder
man den 30. Aug 2021	 On the Loss and Recovery of Meaning (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85604&include_contexts=course_52635)	0:00
man den 6. Sep 2021	 On the Concept of Irony: Irony as Truth and Untruth (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85606&include_contexts=course_52635)	0:00
man den 20. Sep 2021	 Either/Or I: On Aesthetics and Actuality (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85605&include_contexts=course_52635)	0:00
lør den 25. Sep 2021	 Optional tour to Kierkegaard's Nordsjælland (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85707&include_contexts=course_52635)	9:00 til 20:00
man den 27. Sep 2021	 Either/Or I: Boredom and Nothingness (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85615&include_contexts=course_52635)	0:00
fre den 1. Okt 2021	 First short paper due (https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/52635/assignments/134453)	forfalder 23.59
man den 4. Okt 2021	 Either/Or II: On Taking Ownership of Oneself (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85610&include_contexts=course_52635)	0:00
man den 18. Okt 2021	 Either/Or II: On Taking Ownership of Choice (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85613&include_contexts=course_52635)	0:00
man den 25. Okt 2021	 Concluding Unscientific Postscript: The What and the How (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85607&include_contexts=course_52635)	0:00
fre den 29. Okt 2021	 Second short paper due (https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/52635/assignments/134454)	forfalder 23.59

Dato	Nærmere oplysninger	Forfalder
man den 8. Nov 2021	 The Sickness unto Death: Quiet Despair at the Heart of Existence (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85614&include_contexts=course 52635)	0:00
man den 15. Nov 2021	 Film: Synecdoche, New York (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85608&include_contexts=course 52635)	0:00
man den 22. Nov 2021	 The Sickness unto Death: Defiant Despair (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85609&include_contexts=course 52635)	0:00
man den 22. Nov 2021	 The Sickness unto Death: Sin is Despair (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85611&include_contexts=course 52635)	0:00
man den 29. Nov 2021	 Strengthening in the Inner Being: Inwardness; The Moment: A Return to Socrates (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=85612&include_contexts=course 52635)	0:00
fre den 3. Dec 2021	 Third short paper due (https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/52635/assignments/134455)	forfalder 23.59
fre den 17. Dec 2021	 Research paper due for DIS students (https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/52635/assignments/134456)	forfalder 23.59
tors den 23. Dec 2021	 Research paper due for KU students (https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/52635/assignments/134457)	forfalder 12:00