Suggested Topics for Second Heidegger Paper

1. What does the traditional conception of truth get right and wrong according to Heidegger? What is Heidegger’s understanding of the truth of an assertion? (Be clear on what makes true assertions true, and what would make an assertion false.)

2. How can Heidegger hold that truth is “relative to Dasein’s being” (270) and yet deny that truth is ‘subjective’? Explain the view that Heidegger is against by considering objections to his view. How would Heidegger meet these objections?

3. According to Heidegger, what motivates external world skepticism? How would Heidegger respond to the skeptic? Consider the strongest objections to Heidegger’s position. How could he meet those skeptical objections?

4. According to Heidegger in Section 43 of Being and Time, what is wrong with idealism and realism? What does Heidegger find valuable in each? How does Heidegger attempt to avoid the mistakes of each? Do you think Heidegger succeeds in this attempt?

5. What does Heidegger mean by interpretation? What is the distinction between the hermeneutic “as” and the apophantic “as”? Why is the distinction important to Heidegger?

6. What does Heidegger mean when he says, “In interpretation, understanding does not become something different. It becomes itself. Such interpretation is grounded existentially in understanding; the latter does not arise from the former.” (188) Be sure to clarify what understanding and interpretation are. In light of the above quotation, what is the philosophical significance of the relation between understanding and interpretation?
Length: Approximately 7-8 pages. Please use font: times, 12 pt., 1 inch margins, and put your G.S.I.’s name on your paper. Do NOT hand in a paper longer than 8 pages, not counting the title page and bibliography.

Due: Monday, Dec. 12 at 5:00 PM in Howison Library, top floor of Moses Hall. (You are welcome to hand in the paper early). A late paper will receive one full letter grade deduction (If the paper is of A- quality, it will receive a grade if B-) for each day it is late. Do NOT put your paper in your GSI’s box.

Keep a copy of your paper.

You are encouraged to write on a topic not on this list, but such topics must be approved by your Graduate Student Instructor.

In writing your paper, focus on answering all the questions, not on the historical context, secondary sources, or broad philosophical themes. Cite the text and any secondary sources that you use to support your claims when appropriate (do not plagiarize). Do not merely repeat what was said in lecture and section as the central answer to the question. Propose a new reading of the text, offer new arguments or phenomena to back up your answer to the question, or give reasons for disagreeing with one of the claims made in the course.