

Suggested Topics for First Heidegger Paper

1. Explain the claim that “significance” can be understood in terms of something being stamped with value-predicates (p. 132 top). Why does Heidegger disagree with this claim? What counterclaim does Heidegger make about significance? Which position would you defend, and why?
2. Heidegger claims that the world does not “consist” of the sum of present-at-hand entities. (p. 93) What would be left out and could not be understood if world were to be understood this way? What evidence is there that something is indeed being left out?
3. What does Heidegger mean (on p. 72, for example) when he says that starting with an “I” or subject misses the phenomenal content (richness) of Dasein? What concerning Dasein’s way of being is missed in starting this way? How does what Heidegger goes on to say reveal this content that the tradition has supposedly missed?
4. Heidegger is clear that “the world does not ‘consist’ of the ready-to-hand” (p. 106 top). What is the relationship between the ready-to-hand and the world? What more goes into the phenomenon of world beyond the phenomenon of readiness-to-hand?
5. What is the ultimate for-the-sake-of-which? How does it differ from the toward-which and the penultimate for-the-sake-of-which? Describe and give your own examples of what it might be.
6. What does Heidegger mean when he says that knowledge is a founded mode of being-in-the-world (p. 86)?
7. According to Heidegger the one (*das Man*) is a positive and negative phenomenon. What is there about the phenomenon of being-in-the-world and about the nature of intelligibility that justifies this apparently contradictory claim?
8. What does Heidegger mean by dealing with equipment? Why isn’t this a version of the subject-object relation?
9. How does a sign, as an item of equipment, raise the totality of equipment to the level of circumspection? What does Heidegger mean by a sign in the first place, as well as the connected notions of referring, relating, and indicating? Use examples.
10. Heidegger says “being is that on the basis of which (woraufhin) entities are already understood.”(p.25) What does this mean? How does Heidegger’s phenomenology of everydayness expand this definition?
11. What does Heidegger mean in saying that "Dasein is ontically distinctive in that it is ontological" (32).

(over)

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12. What is Heidegger's understanding of "familiarity?" How is it that it "goes to make up Dasein's understanding of being?" (119). (See also p. 120)

13) Describe Heidegger's notions of "de-distancing" (desevering in our translation) and "directionality" (see especially paragraph 23). How do they constitute a sense of space different from objective, "3-D" space? Why are these notions not merely "subjective?"

14) Why is it that "space is not in the subject, nor the world in space"(146) for Heidegger? How is spatiality related to the being of Dasein?

You are encouraged to write on a topic not on this list, but such topics must be approved by your Graduate Student Instructor. Do not wait until the last minute to propose a topic to your GSI.

**Note:** In writing your paper, do not merely repeat what was said in lecture and section. Focus on the phenomenon, and on a specific philosophical issue, not on the historical context, secondary sources, or broad philosophical themes. Make sure that you answer *each* question of your topic. Where relevant, present arguments, examples, and counter-examples.

**Length:** Approximately 7 pages. Please use Times New Roman 12 pt. font, 1-inch margins, number your pages. Do not write more than 8 pages.

**DUE: Monday, October 8<sup>th</sup>.** Students should hand in their papers at Howison Library (top floor of Moses Hall) by 5:00 PM.

Late papers must be handed into the Library and dated by the librarian. Late papers will be penalized one increment of grade (e.g. A to A-) per lecture. For example, an "A" paper handed in on Tuesday, Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> will receive an "A minus, and on Thursday, Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>, a "B" plus, etc.

Please put your GSI's name, section day, and time in the upper right-hand corner of your paper.

**BE SURE TO KEEP A COPY OF YOUR PAPER.**