

Phil. 190P: Husserl

Final Paper

Instructions

The paper (8–12 pages long) is due Thur., Dec. 8, by 5pm, in my office (Cowell Annex A-106), or by e-mail.

The below topics are suggestions. If you want to write on another topic, feel free to do so. It might be a good idea, however, in that case, to check with me first. (Given that the topics are rather broad, you might want to check with me about your specific idea, anyway, which you are welcome to do.)

These suggested topics are aimed at producing interpretative papers, rather than critical ones—i.e., papers in which the focus is on understanding what Husserl means, rather than attacking (or defending) his views. (This is true even of the second topic, if you think about it.) In general I prefer that kind of paper, but if you have an idea along other lines you can go that way at your own risk. Again, you might want to check with me about the details.

Grading will be based on (1) interestingness and originality of your thesis; (2) carefulness of your reading (whether or not I agree with it); (3) coherence of your argument/explanation (in roughly that order).

You can cite the assigned texts by page number, section number, or however else you find convenient. If you use any other source make sure you give enough information that I can find it. (Obviously—I hope this goes without saying—you should not use sources without citing them!) There's no need for a separate bibliography or title page.

Suggested Topics

1. Pick an issue which Husserl discusses in our readings from the *Logical Investigations* and explain how and why his view has changed, and how it hasn't, by the time of the *Ideas*. Are there subtle changes one might miss? Or: are there hidden continuities? (Either of those would be especially interesting.) Do changes in terminology obscure the issue? If so try to untangle them.

2. Pick some aspect of Husserl's views (in the *Logical Investigations*, the *Ideas*, or both) which seems to be wrong or confused. Explain why it seems wrong or confused. Then, explain how Husserl would defend it. (Note: there obviously might be objections against which Husserl would have no defense, or no good defense. This topic suggests not writing about those, but rather about the ones Husserl could meet. On the other hand, the objection had better be serious, or Husserl's response will not be interesting.)
3. Explain how Husserl intends to solve one or more of the epistemological problems we saw in Hume. Explain what Husserl thinks is right in Hume, and where he thinks Hume goes wrong (note: you may need to make some educated guesses about how Husserl would interpret Hume). (You could also use other passages in Hume, or do this with a different philosopher, if you feel you have enough background—e.g., Kant or Descartes.)