This course concentrates on the philosophy of Theodor Adorno. A major figure in critical theory (Frankfurt School), Adorno was a brilliant original philosopher whose work does not fit easily into any category. We will focus on four of his major contributions: his political philosophy, tied to critical theory's loose appropriation of Marxism; his critique of popular culture and the culture industry; his conceptualization and defense of new classical music (from Schoenberg to Stockhausen); and his powerful interpretation and negative twists on Hegel's dialectic. Adorno's writing style is oddly organized, fragmented but carefully interwoven, and his thinking and writing is dialectical down to the structure of individual sentences. Part of our goal in this course is to learn to think and write dialectically in Adorno's fashion, and to assess how to make use of the his version of critical theory as resources for our own philosophizing about politics, culture, and art.

Since this is a Writing Intensive course, we will regularly discuss ways of writing philosophy in general, and particular difficulties in writing about Adorno, given Adorno's own unusual writing style. Students will consider their own writing styles, and work on improving the style of their choice. This will be accomplished in part through discussions of philosophical writing curing class, and in part through a series of revisions that students will do on their term paper, beginning with a preliminary term paper outline that students will submit in early November, and continuing with improved drafts and consultations with the instructor leading up to the final paper submission at the end of the course.

Texts:
Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*
Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*
Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*
Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory" (on reserve at the Library)
Habermas, "The Entwinement of Myth and Enlightenment: Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno" in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (on reserve)

Read your choice of ONE of these four essays on music by Adorno (on reserve):
- "Berg's Discoveries in Compositional Technique"
- "The Natural History of the Theatre"
- "The Radio Symphony"
- "On Jazz"

These four essays on music are on reserve in the Library, in either *Essays on Music or Cuasi una Fontasia*

Fulfills the graduate distribution requirement in Contemporary Philosophy.