

# Critical Theory

The Designated Emphasis (DE) in Critical Theory enables graduate students already enrolled in UC Berkeley PhD programs from across the social sciences, arts, and humanities to obtain certification of a Designated-Emphasis specialization in Critical Theory. (The DE is not an independent degree-granting program.) Students admitted to the DE who complete its requirements will receive a parenthetical notation to that effect on their doctoral degrees. The program offers graduate fellowships, hosts international scholars, and presents lectures, seminars, and other events for the wider campus community and local public. Critical Theory also maintains important collaborative relations with other critical theory institutes and programs nationally and internationally.

"Critical Theory" is often associated with the Frankfurt School, a group of intellectuals who, starting in the 1920s, developed critiques of modern capitalist society, fascism, and the new global dispensations that followed in the aftermath of World War II; in doing so, the Frankfurt School constructed modes of social theory distinct from established forms of philosophy. But key modern concepts of critique had already emerged in various forms in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the work of Immanuel Kant, G.W.F. Hegel, Karl Marx, and others, and critique has assumed historically distinct modalities across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The Designated Emphasis in Critical Theory offers courses on the nineteenth-century notion of critique; on the Frankfurt School and other twentieth-century currents of critical theory and philosophy; and on contemporary forms and modes of critical theory, including critical race theory, postcolonialist theory, feminist critique, gender studies and queer theory, and the diverse approaches to critique arising with and after structuralism and poststructuralism. The Program emphasizes the centrality of theoretical critique in the examination of contemporary values, of the power relations that constrain and enable political, social, cultural and economic life, and of the modes of justification that legitimate historical and cultural inquiry and sociopolitical analysis.

The DE student community comprises 90 graduate students (academic year 2014-2015) enrolled in a wide range of established PhD programs across the humanities and social sciences at UC Berkeley.

Only students enrolled in PhD programs at Berkeley are eligible to apply for the DE in Critical Theory. Students must apply in the first or second year of graduate study in order to fulfill the requirements of the DE in addition to those of their home departments.

Petitions for admission to the DE are accepted each Spring for admission to the program Fall. The DE in Critical Theory admits approximately 15 students each year. Petitions and due dates are available on the program's website (<http://criticaltheory.berkeley.edu/academics>) .

For further information regarding admission to graduate programs at UC Berkeley, please see the Graduate Division's Admissions website (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions>) .

## Curriculum/Courswork

CRIT TH 200	Critique in 19th-Century Thought	4
CRIT TH 205	The Classical Frankfurt School: The First Generation of Critical Theory	4
CRIT TH 240	Contemporary Critique and Critical Theory	4
Two Electives, selected from a list of courses offered by DE faculty, including CRIT TH 290		

## Qualifying Exam

One of the members of the student's qualifying examination committee must represent the DE in Critical Theory and be a member of the DE's designated faculty. These faculty members may be outside or inside members of the student's committees.

## Dissertation

One of the members of the student's qualifying dissertation committee must represent the DE in Critical Theory and be a member of the DE's designated faculty. These faculty members may be outside or inside members of the student's committees.

## Degree Conferral

Upon successful completion of the dissertation, the student's transcript will include the designation: "PhD in [major] with a Designated Emphasis in Critical Theory." This designation certified that she or he has participated in, and successfully completed, a Designated Emphasis in Critical Theory in addition to all departmental requirements for the doctorate.

A full annual calendar of lectures, colloquia, and conferences contributes to Critical Theory's rich research environment. Ongoing participation of international visiting scholars and researchers as well as student-led working and writing groups facilitate dialogue and build community across academic disciplines.

With adequate funding, The Program in Critical Theory awards a yearly dissertation fellowship to Critical Theory DE students with records of achievement and promising dissertation projects. The annual fellowship is open to Critical Theory students in UC Berkeley Departments including Anthropology, Boalt Law School, Comparative Literature, East Asian Languages and Cultures, English, Ethnic Studies, Film and Media, French, Gender and Women's Studies, German, Geography, History, History of Art, Italian, Music, Philosophy, Political Science, Rhetoric, School of Education, School of Public Health, Sociology, Spanish, and Theater, Dance and Performance Studies. The fellowship supports dissertating students with up to \$36,000 toward a stipend, fees, and summer funds.

## Critical Theory

### CRIT TH 200 Critique in 19th-Century Thought 4 Units

This course will examine various formulations of critique in 19th-century theory. Thinkers who may be studied include Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Weber, though the selection will vary by instructor. This is the "foundations" course for the Designated Emphasis in Critical Theory.

#### Rules & Requirements

**Prerequisites:** Admission to the critical theory designated emphasis or consent of instructor

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

#### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

#### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Critical Theory Graduate Group/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructor:** Brown

### CRIT TH 205 The Classical Frankfurt School: The First Generation of Critical Theory 4 Units

This course will explore the founding texts of the Frankfurt School's first generation: Horkheimer, Adorno, Benjamin, Marcuse, Lowenthal, and their circle. It will follow the development of critical theory through its Weimer years, American exile, and return to postwar Germany.

#### Rules & Requirements

**Prerequisites:** Admission to the critical theory designated emphasis or consent of instructor

#### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

#### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Critical Theory Graduate Group/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

**Instructor:** Jay

### CRIT TH 240 Contemporary Critique and Critical Theory 4 Units

This course will explore various contemporary engagements with the foundations of critical theory in relation to other histories and locations. Topics will vary by instructor but may include: post-continental political theory, critique and the problem of political dissent and citizenship, gender and race in relation to critical practices, psychoanalysis, and literary and art theory and criticism.

#### Rules & Requirements

**Prerequisites:** Admission to the critical theory designated emphasis or consent of instructor

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit with consent of instructor. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

#### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

#### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Critical Theory Graduate Group/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.

### CRIT TH 290 Critical Theory Elective 2 - 4 Units

Critical Theory electives are taught by core and affiliated faculty in the Critical Theory program and offer important treatments of theoretical materials significant to the intellectual traditions of the program's course of study in nineteenth-century social theory and philosophy, Frankfurt School and related currents in theory and criticism, and contemporary critical theory. In a typical Critical Theory elective, theoretical materials are presented in dialogue with an anthropological, artistic/aesthetic, economic, educational, historical, philosophical, political, rhetorical, sociological, or other disciplinary matrix that constitutes the course's primary materials for study and inquiry.

#### Rules & Requirements

**Prerequisites:** Admission to the Critical Theory Designated Emphasis or consent of the instructor

**Repeat rules:** Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

#### Hours & Format

**Fall and/or spring:** 15 weeks - 2-3 hours of seminar per week

#### Additional Details

**Subject/Course Level:** Critical Theory Graduate Group/Graduate

**Grading:** Letter grade.