

Heidegger on Being and the World

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Week 1: August 26, 2026

Wednesdays at 1pm in 1008 B, Cathedral of Learning

The course website, with a week-by-week schedule and all the readings, is available at:

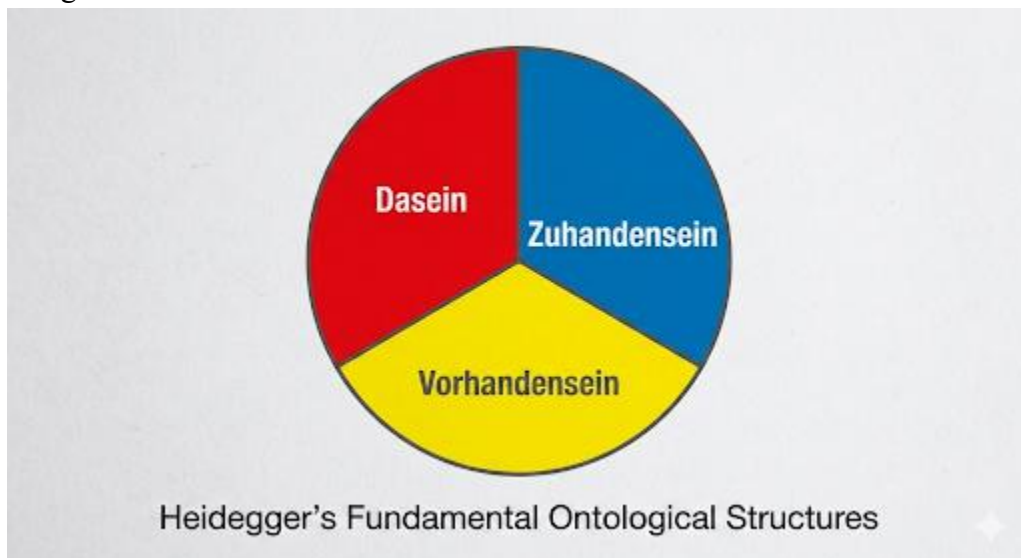
<https://spaceofreasons.netlify.app/courses/heidegger-2026/>

Or by drilling down under the “Courses” tab from my Pitt website:

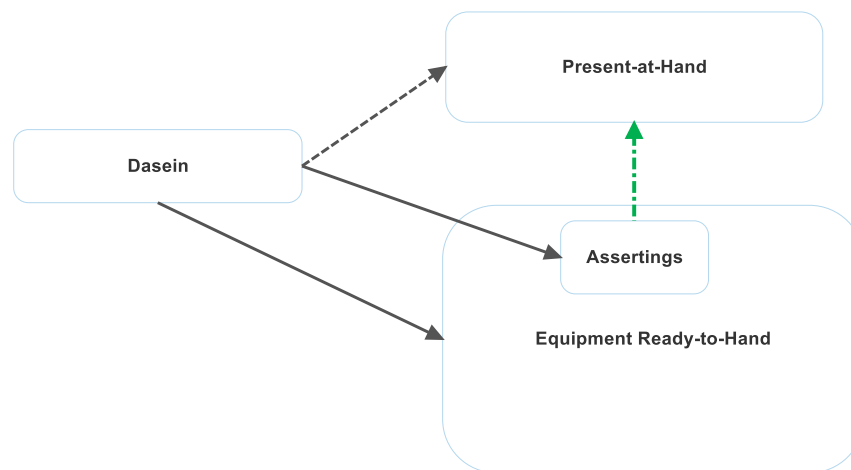
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Plan:

1. "To think is to confine yourself to a single thought that one day stands still like a star in the world's sky," Heidegger. His one thought was the question of the meaning of Being.
2. The ontological difference is between beings and their Being.
The ontic/ontological distinction lines up with that between beings and their Being.
On the broadly epistemic dimension, beings are *discovered* and Being is *disclosed*.
3. The ontotheological mistake: treating Being as a being.
4. Heidegger has a three-part ontology, comprising Dasein (us) and *two* kinds of beings whose Being is *not* that of Dasein:



5. Being has a history: the metaphysics of presence, from Plato to Nietzsche. Later: philosophy as beginning in wonder (with the Greeks) and ending in startled dismay (Erschreckung).
6. Vorhandensein: presence, or the occurrent. It is what can be *conceptually* or *discursively* available to Dasein.
7. Dasein, as *ontologically* self-conscious Being: Being whose Being is an issue for it.
8. Zuhandensein: Holistic equipmental totality of the functional affordances of what is ready-to-hand for skillful use and coping.
9. Normativity, Kant, and the Neokantians on facts and values, from distinction to dualism.
10. Heidegger's pragmatism and how presence precipitates out of what is *zuhanden*.



11. From Kant's representational version of appearance/reality to concealed/unconcealed.
12. Falling and authenticity, expressing two aspects of Dasein: Mitsein and Jemeinigkeit, one socially assimilating and the other individuating. Das man and Rede as Gerede.
13. Heidegger's *Kehre* (turning). The central topic remains Being-in-the-world. Late work rejects the *subjectivism* of his existentialist conception of Dasein, and the *instrumentalism* of his conception of Zuhandensein.
14. Life: Heidegger was born. He wrote. He was a Nazi. He died.
15. Work: *Being and Time*, the *Beiträge*, das Geviert.