

ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY (PHL-3510)

MWF 8:30–9:22 AND 2:40–3:32, FALL 2017

Instructor: Dr. Zita Toth

Office: St. Maur, room A 002

Office hours: MW 4:00–5:00 p.m., and by appointment. To make an appointment, please go to <http://zitavtoth.com/2016/01/19/Officehours/> and click on the desired slot.

Phone: 2924 (office extension); 917-544-3364 (cell; please use it with consideration).

E-mail: ztoth@conception.edu.

Expected time required outside class: Approximately 2 hours for every class hour.

REQUIRED TEXTS

There are two required books for the course, both of them a collection of primary texts. There will be some additional primary and secondary material posted on Moodle. You will be responsible for accessing these, and, if you can, bringing a printed copy to class.

- Marc Cohen, Patricia Curd, and C.D.C. Reeve (eds). *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy*. Hackett, 2011. ISBN: 9781603844635.
- Brad Inwood and L.P. Gerson (eds.). *Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory Readings*. Hackett, 1998. ISBN: 0872203786.

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

In this course, we will look at ancient Greek and Roman philosophy from the pre-Socratics to the early Christian era. Representative figures include Parmenides, Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Skeptics, Cicero, Sextus Empiricus, Plotinus, and St. Augustine.

- Students will learn how to read and decipher the meaning of ancient philosophical texts;
- will familiarize themselves with various ancient currents of thoughts and discover how these currents influenced later figures;
- and will develop their philosophical speaking and writing abilities.

GRADING

Grading scale:

| Grade | GPA | Description |
|-------|------|--------------------------------|
| A | 4.00 | excellent, outstanding |
| A- | 3.67 | still excellent |
| B+ | 3.33 | very good |
| B | 3.00 | good; solid, and above average |
| B- | 2.67 | good; still above average |
| C+ | 2.33 | average |
| C | 2.00 | acceptable |
| C- | 1.67 | minimally acceptable |
| D | 1.00 | passing but unsatisfactory |
| F | 0.00 | failure |

Grade break-down:

| Component | Percentage |
|------------------------|------------|
| In-class participation | 15% |
| Notecards | 20% |
| Papers total | 30% |
| Midterm exam | 15% |
| Presentation | 10% |
| Final exam | 15% |

Participation: Conversation is essential to Philosophy. Everyone, even if they are bored or shy or anxious is expected to participate in class. Here are a few suggestions with regard to class discussion:

- Charity is very important in every engaging discussion. You should answer to your peers' suggestion according to the best interpretation you can give them.
- Criticism can be very useful, but be careful not to direct it towards the person instead of the idea.
- Please be willing to change your mind if the evidence so dictates.

To prepare for class participation: You will see that readings, especially in Ancient Philosophy, can be very difficult. Be sure to make notes about: (1) the main thesis or idea of the reading; (2) the main argument (if any); (3) the main examples the reading uses to illustrate the point; and any questions or remarks you have about the reading. There will also be some homework exercises (including writing), which you will be expected to complete.

Notecards: The notecards require that you show that you put effort into the readings and are prepared to participate well. After completing the readings for each class, write down at least two or three major questions that the authors of the texts are attempting to answer or problems that you see in the readings on a 3×5 notecard that you will put on my desk before the beginning of class. (If there are multiple readings for that day, each reading must be addressed by at least one of your questions). Strive

to be clear and to ask challenging, puzzling questions. Notecards are graded on a ✓-, ✓, ✓+ scale. A ✓+ is reserved for incisive, well-articulated questions. Because notecards are part of the preparatory work for class discussions, notecards cannot be turned in late. If you have an excused absence, that day will simply not count toward your average.

Papers: There will be three short paper assignments during the semester; detailed prompts will follow later. Here are the standards for distinguishing between Excellent, Good, Average and Poor papers:

- **Writing Quality:** Papers should demonstrate good grammar as well as good spelling. They should also be copy-edited to reduce or eliminate typos. Writing should be clear and exhibit good structure. Paragraphs should be cohesive and build towards a complete essay with a substantial thesis (as opposed to a string of disconnected thoughts).
- **Accuracy and Understanding:** Papers should be able accurately to recreate an argument or a position. They should find the relevant issues and argument(s) worthy of analysis.
- **Argument:** Papers should argue for or against a position rather than merely exchange opinions. Is the argument for or against a position constructed persuasively within the confines of the paper?

Midterm and Final exam: Details will follow; the final exam will cover all the material assigned throughout the course.

COURSE POLICIES

Electronic Devices: Electronic devices are not allowed in class. They can be very distracting, and new research shows that even when computers are used solely for taking notes, learning is impaired, because the keyboard encourages taking verbatim notes while the pen requires you to process as you take notes.¹ Everyone is expected to leave their devices (phones, laptops, tablets, etc.) at home or keep them turned off and out of sight during class time. For any special concerns about this policy, please ask me directly.

E-mail: There will be some official communication via e-mail, and everyone is expected to check their e-mail accounts regularly and read their e-mails carefully. You can expect me to read and answer my e-mails within 24 hours; please do not send me e-mails at midnight expecting a response by the next morning class.

Outside resources: You will not have to do outside research beyond the assigned books. If you feel you must read more than what is assigned, please do not rely on wikipedia (which tends to be rather unreliable in philosophy). Instead, I recommend an excellent and free website, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: plato.stanford.edu.

1. Pam A Mueller and Daniel M Oppenheimer, "The Pen is Mightier than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking," *Psychological Science*, 2014,

Plagiarism: If you use or copy a source without properly citing it, you commit plagiarism. Plagiarism is a form of stealing. It is very easy to detect, and will result in your automatic failure of the course.

Lateness: Late assignments will not be considered unless for very serious reasons. If you have such reasons, please let them know as soon as you can. I will not accept excuses related to technology (“my e-mail address wasn’t working,” “it remained in my Draft folder,” etc.) unless it is a major technical issue that affects the campus and the IT department knows about it.

This course complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written request for accommodation to me and the Academic Dean before the fourth day of class.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

The schedule is tentative, which means it might change at any point during the semester. I will post any changes and will call your attention to it in advance.

Abbreviations: M = on Moodle; CCR = the Cohen-Curd-Reeve anthology; IG = the Inwood-Gerson anthology. Page numbers in the CCR refer to the 5th edition; those in parentheses refer to the 4th edition.

| The Presocratics | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Aug 21 | Introduction | Lewis (M) |
| 23 | Introduction to Presocratics | Osborne 2004 (M); Close 2009 (M) |
| 25 | The Milesians | CCR 7–11 (10–17) |
| 28 | Heraclitus | CCR 19–30 (29–39) |
| 30 | Parmenides | CCR 26–30 (40–46) |
| Sep 1 | Atomists | CCR 51–58 (80–92) |
| 6 | Historiography | |
| 8 | Sophists | CCR 63–73 (104–117) |

| Plato | | |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 10 | Introduction to Plato | Student presentation |
| 12 | Eutyphro | CCR 80–89 (135–152) |
| 15 | Apology | CCR 90–105 (153–178) |
| 18 | Republic: book 1 | CCR 234–253 (369–397) |
| 20 | Republic: book 4 | CCR 293–310 (456–482) |
| 22 | Republic: books 6 and 7 | CCR 333–367 (515–567) |
| 25 | Phaedo | CCR 166–201 (267–319) |
| 27 | Phaedo (cont.) | |
| 29 | Plato: Review; the Cynics | Diogenes (M) |

| Aristotle | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Oct 2 | Introduction to Aristotle | Student presentation |
| 4 | Aristotle’s criticism of Plato | First paper due; CCR 536–546 (796–809) |
| 6 | Matter and form | CCR 475–481 (732–740) |

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|----|--------------------|---|
| 11 | The four causes | CCR 481–492 (740–757) |
| 13 | Midterm | |
| 16 | The unmoved mover | CCR 495–496; 572–576 (763–764; 838–846) |
| 18 | Ethics: happiness | CCR 578–582 (870–878) |
| 23 | Ethics: virtues | CCR 585–593 (883–890) |
| 25 | Ethics: friendship | Aristotle, NE (M); Murphy 2016 (M) |
| 27 | Aristotle: Review | |

Hellenistic Philosophy and Augustine

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|-------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 30 | Introduction to Hellenism | Student presentation |
| Nov 3 | Lucretius | Second paper due; IG 64–65 |
| 6 | Epicureanism | IG 45–63, 72–81 |
| 8 | Stoicism: Fate | IG 179–189 |
| 10 | Stoicism: Ethics | IG 232–247 |
| 13 | Skepticism: Pyrrho | IG 285–296 |
| 15 | Skepticism: Sextus Empiricus | IG 302–325 |
| 17 | Class cancelled | |
| 20 | Plotinus | Enneads (sel.) (M) |
| 27 | Plotinus | Enneads (sel.) (M) |
| 29 | Augustine against the skeptics | selections (M) |
| Dec 1 | Augustine on Evil | selections (M) |
| 4 | Augustine on free will | selections (M) |
| 6 | Final review | Third paper due |
| TBA | Final exam | |
