

# ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY (PHL-3510)

MWF 8:30–9:22 AND 2:40–3:32, FALL 2018

**Instructor:** Dr. Zita Toth

**Office:** St. Maur, room A 002

**Office hours:** MW 4:00–5:00 p.m., TR 2:00–3:00 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](mailto: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*. Fifth Edition. Hackett, 2016. ISBN: 9781624665325. (N.B.: The page numbers in the earlier editions are different.)
- 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, Sceptics, 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	15%
Papers total	40%
Midterm exam	10%
Presentation	10%
Final exam	10%

**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.
- Attendance in class is mandatory. After your second absence, even if excused, you will be required to do some extra work in order to complete the course.

**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 *either* a short summary of the reading *or* 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. You will hand these to me on a  $3 \times 5$  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 your notecard). Strive to be clear and to ask challenging, puzzling questions. Notecards are graded on a  $\times$  (D),  $\checkmark$ - (C),  $\checkmark$  (B),  $\checkmark+$  (A) scale. A  $\checkmark+$  is reserved for incisive, well-articulated summaries and 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 four 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.

**Presentation:** Each student will need to select a single text from the syllabus on which he is going to present. Presentations are brief (15 minutes), but will require the reading of an additional, pre-selected secondary source.

## 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

---

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,

**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](http://plato.stanford.edu). An up-to-date, reliable catalogue of philosophy papers can be found at [philpapers.org](http://philpapers.org) (but please note that they do not store the papers; you will still have to find them in the library).

**Plagiarism:** If you use or copy a source without properly citing it, whether this act is intentional or not, 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. Seminary-related events and assignments for other courses also do not count as very serious reasons.

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.

---

The Presocratics		
Aug 20	Introduction	Lewis (M)
22	Introduction to Presocratics	Osborne 2004 (M); Close 2009 (M)
24	The Milesians	CCR 7–11
27	Heraclitus	CCR 19–30
29	Parmenides	CCR 26–30
31	Anaxagoras	CCR 47–50
Sep 5	Atomists	CCR 51–58
7	Sophists	CCR 63–73

---

Plato		
10	Euthyphro	CCR 80–89
12	Apology	CCR 90–105; <b>First paper due</b>
14	Timaeus (sel.)	CCR 425–445
17–21	Phaedo	CCR 166–201
24	Republic: book 1	CCR 234–253
26	Republic: book 4	CCR 293–310

28 Republic: books 6 and 7      CCR 333–367  
 Oct 1 Plato: Review

---

**Aristotle**

---

3	Aristotle’s criticism of Plato	CCR 536–546
5	Categories, chs. 2, 4, 5	CCR 453–456; <b>Second paper due</b>
8	Matter and form	CCR 475–481
10	The four causes	CCR 481–492
12	The unmoved mover	CCR 495–496; 572–576
15	De Anima I-II	CCR 512–523
17	De Anima III	CCR 523–529
19	Aristotle: Review	

---

**Hellenistic Philosophy**

---

22	Lucretius	IG 64–65
24	Epicureanism	IG 45–63, 72–81; <b>Third paper due</b>
26	Stoicism: Fate	IG 179–189
29	Stoicism: Fate (cont.)	Frede (M)
Nov 2	Stoicism: Ethics	IG 232–247
5	Skepticism: Pyrrho	IG 285–296
7	Skepticism: Sextus Empiricus	IG 302–325
9	Writing philosophy	Frances (M)
12	Philo of Alexandria	On Providence (M)
14	Plotinus	Enneads (sel.) (M)
19	Plotinus	Enneads (sel.) (M)

---

**Augustine**

---

26	Augustine and Plato	selections (M)
28	Augustine against the skeptics	selections (M); <b>Fourth paper due</b>
30	Augustine on Evil	selections (M)
Dec 3	Augustine on free will	selections (M)
5	Final review	
TBA	Final exam	

---