

ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 310 – FALL 2015

Lectures: Tu/Th 11-11:50 in Tydings 2109

Discussion Sections: Mon 10-10:50 in LeFrak 1220; 12-12:50 in Tydings 2108;
1-1:50 in LeFrak 1201

Instructor Info:

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Graduate Teaching Assistant Info:

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Course Description and Objectives:

In this course, we will focus on the works of Plato and Aristotle. Students will be given a comprehensive picture of the theories of metaphysics, ethics, and action theory posited in these texts. A significant portion of the course will be oriented around questions in moral and political philosophy, such as: What is justice? What is virtue? What does it mean to live a good life? Theories regarding weakness of will and right action will provide much of the framework for understanding and answering such questions. Additionally, significant attention will be given to understanding, comparing, and contrasting how Plato and Aristotle characterize the ideal human being, the ideal human life, and the goods required for human flourishing.

The central aim of this course will be to critically evaluate positions and arguments put forth by the Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Students will be encouraged to compare theories, charitably interpret texts, and extrapolate central themes to the world beyond ancient Athens. To this end, you will be expected to possess or develop the skills necessary in order to parse historical texts and extract the relevant arguments. I hope that you will leave this course with a solid understanding of the views of these ancients and their role in the history of philosophy, along with an appreciation of their enduring relevance to many areas of philosophical discourse.

Required Texts:

Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy (4th edition), eds. Cohen, Curd, and Reeve (Hackett, 2005)

Ancient Philosophy: A Contemporary Introduction (2nd edition), Christopher Shields (Routledge, 2012)

All other readings will be posted on ELMS.

Course Requirements and Policies:

Attendance and participation: You are expected to attend all of the lectures and discussions, to come to class having done the assigned reading (preferably more than once), and thus to be prepared to engage in lecture and discussion.

Exams: You are required to take two exams: a mid-term and a final. The exams will consist primarily in short answer questions. Please note that I will cover material in class that is not in the readings and this material is fair game for the exams. Please note as well that I will not give make-up exams unless you have a reasonable, documented excuse and you notify me prior to the exam.

Essays: You are required to write two essays (about 5 pages each). I will provide paper topics and detailed instruction on how to write a philosophical essay during the course. Late papers will not be accepted unless you have a reasonable, documented excuse.

Grading:

Attendance and participation: 5%

Mid-term: 20%

Final: 25%

Papers: 25% each

Classroom behavior: The use of electronic devices such as laptops, ipads, cell phones, etc. is prohibited during class. Please turn off and put away any such devices before class begins. If you are seen with your phone out during class, your participation grade will be docked accordingly. In addition, please put away any reading material not related to the course. Please do not speak to the person sitting next to you when the instructor or anyone else is addressing the class - it is very distracting. If you have a question, comment, or objection, please raise your hand so that you can have the opportunity to address the entire class at the earliest opportunity.

E-mail Policy: E-mails will be read and responded to during standard working hours. If you have a question about policies, grading, assignments, deadlines, and so on, please check this syllabus before asking your instructor or teaching assistant. If you cannot find a document on ELMS, please check all of the links on the page before asking your instructor or teaching assistant. We will not respond to emails asking questions which can be answered simply by consulting the syllabus or clicking around the ELMS page.

Academic Honesty: The University has approved a Code of Academic Integrity which prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. Plagiarism is defined as the act of representing the work, ideas, or words of others as your own. Thus, all quotations taken from other authors, including from the Internet, must be indicated by quotation marks and referenced. Paraphrasing must be referenced as well. If you are in doubt as to what counts as plagiarism, or what references need to be made, please discuss your questions with the graduate teaching assistant or me.

Learning assistance services: If you are experiencing any difficulties in keeping up with the academic demands of this course, please see me. You can also contact the Learning Assistance Service (2202 Shoemaker Building, 301-314-7693). Their educational counselors can help with reading, note-taking and exam preparation skills, as well as time-management. All their services are free to UM students.

Special needs: Students with disabilities should contact me at the beginning of the semester to discuss any special accommodations for the course.

Course Schedule:

Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to change; students will be notified in advance of any changes that could affect grading, such as exam and paper due dates.

Sept 1st: Intro, Syllabus, etc.

Sept 3rd: *Euthyphro* & *Ancient Philosophy* 2-2.5 (optional:ix-xii)

Sept 8th: *Apology*

Sept 10th: *Apology*

Sept 15th: *Crito* & *Ancient Philosophy* 2.5-3.0

Sept 17th: *Crito* & *Ancient Philosophy* 2.5-3.0

Sept 22nd: *Crito* & *Ancient Philosophy* 2.5-3.0

Sept 24th: **CLASS CANCELLED**

Sept 29th: *Protagoras* 351b-362a & *Ancient Philosophy* 3-3.5

Oct 1st: *Protagoras* 351b-362a & *Ancient Philosophy* 3-3.5

Oct 6th: *Republic*, II

Oct 8th: *Republic*, III

Oct 13th: *Republic*, III-IV

Oct 15th: *Republic*, IV-V

Oct 20th: *Republic*, VI-VII

Oct 22nd: *Republic*, VIII-IX (**Paper #1 due**)

Oct 27nd: *Physics* Book II 3-9

Oct 29nd: *De Anima* II 1-3 **MIDTERM EXAM**

Nov 3rd: *Nicomachean Ethics* I

Nov 5th: *Nicomachean Ethics* II

Nov 10th: *Nicomachean Ethics* III

Nov 12th: *Nicomachean Ethics* V

Nov. 17th: *Nicomachean Ethics* VI

Nov 19th: *Nicomachean Ethics* VII

Nov 24th: *Nicomachean Ethics* X

Nov 26th: **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

Dec 1st: *Symposium*

Dec 3rd: *Symposium* (**Paper #2 Due**)

Dec 8th: *Epicureanism: Ancient Philosophy* 5-5.3 (& selected passages)

Dec 10th: Review, etc.

December 14, 8-10 a.m. Final Exam