

PHIL 3210 (21857)
Weds & Fri 12:45p-2:05p
Cunz Hall 180

Spring 2017

History of Ancient Philosophy

Course Description

About 2500 years ago, the western philosophical tradition emerged from the myths, values, and politics of the peoples who inhabited the Mediterranean coasts around ancient Greece. Rather than appealing to conventional sources of authority like common opinion and faith, ancient philosophers used reflection and reasoning to answer fundamental questions about the natural and social world. This course will focus on the works of Plato and Aristotle, and also draw upon the pre-Socratics, Epicureans, Stoics, and Skeptics. This course will assess their responses to questions like: What is the nature and origin of the universe? What is real and what is a figment of our imagination or psychology? What is the best life for a human to live and how should one pursue it? Given the conditioning of culture and habit, what is the scope and value of freedom and moral action? How, or to what extent, can we be certain of an answer to any of these questions? Students will be asked to explain basic concepts and compare responses of various thinkers, and then argue for positions of their own. This class satisfies the following General Education courses: Literature; and Diversity: Global Studies.

Prerequisite

Three credit hours in Philosophy other than 1500, or by permission of the instructor. You must be able and willing to read carefully and conscientiously, think and write clearly, and participate in class discussion. This course satisfies a History distribution for the Philosophy Major.

Instructional Staff

	<i>Grader</i>	<i>Writing Associate</i>
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	and by appointment	

General Education Goals

- Literature: Students evaluate significant texts in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; and critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing.
- Global Studies: Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

General Education Expected Learning Outcomes:

- Literature: Students analyze, interpret, and critique significant literary works.
- Literature: Through reading, discussing, and writing about literature, students appraise and evaluate the personal and social values of their own and other cultures.
- Global Studies: Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world's nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S.
- Global Studies: Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

Students will achieve the Literature outcomes through thoughtful reading of assigned texts (which have been considered a basic building block to higher education for over 2000 years), participation in class activities (which are designed to model and build interpretive and analytical skills), and successful completion of formal and informal writing assignments (which require making an argument consistent with philosophical conventions about the assigned texts).

Students will achieve the Global Studies outcomes by reading, reconstructing in their own words, criticizing, and writing about the intellectual products of cultures and peoples who lived around the coasts of the Mediterranean sea between 850 B.C.E. and 530 C.E; these products are a touchstone for ideals and practices of democratic citizenship and cosmopolitanism—traditions that are central to global citizenship.

Required Texts

Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy, 5th edition (Hackett)

Additional readings posted to Carmen (indicated by * in Schedule of Classes)

Grade Distribution

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Value in Overall Grade</u>
Good Citizenship	Regular	15%
Annotated Bibliography	April 3	10%
Two Essays	March 6 and April 24	75%

You must complete each assignment of the course in order to receive at least a passing grade.

A rubric describing increasing levels of competency for each assignment will be distributed in advance of each due date. These rubrics will be used to structure feedback on student responses, and a holistic assessment will determine the grade.

The [OSU standard grade scheme](#) is used to convert percentage grades into letter grades.

Grades are posted during the semester to Grades in our Carmen course site.

Assignments

Good Citizenship

15% of course grade

How students contribute to the learning of fellow students and to the educational environment of our class is a basis for individual assessment in this course. Good citizens demonstrate in class that they have carefully read and taken notes on the assigned texts for that day of class in advance of class. Expect to spend 1-2 hours reading in advance of each class. After taking these notes, good citizens come to class with questions about elements of the text that they did not fully understand or that were particularly interesting to them. To contribute to the educational environment, good citizens project respect for and interest in the contributions of fellow students both in what they say and how they comport their bodies. Respect comes in a variety of forms, including but not limited to disagreement that takes the ideas of others seriously and sincerely, asking others to say more about their ideas, connecting the ideas of students, listening attentively, and reflecting back to others what you hear them saying. Lack of respect also comes in a variety of forms, including but not limited to arriving late to class and doing things during class that should be done outside of class (e.g. checking your phone, work for other classes). A major component of this assignment is also regular writing and thinking tasks during class time. These tasks are designed to help students practice basic skills of written philosophy, including citing evidence, explaining ideas, and analyzing arguments. These tasks will also gauge students' understanding of the course material at a formative stage in the learning process.

Annotated Bibliography

10% of course grade

Research is a hallmark of institutions of higher education. This assignment asks students to develop and demonstrate basic skills of philosophical research: crafting an appropriate topic, and identifying relevant and central scholarly literature. Students will submit an abstract that describes a genuine problem, puzzle, or question regarding the course material. The abstract will be approximately 300 words. Along with the abstract, students will submit an annotated bibliography of 10 secondary sources that address the topic. A rubric with additional specifications on the process that must be used to identify sources, and what should be included in the annotation of each source, is distributed later in the semester. Students are not expected to read in any fine detail the sources that are discovered in the research process.

Two Essays (2500-2800 words each)

75% of course grade

Philosophy is written in a distinctive form. Making this form explicit will be a topic for class discussion and activity. Students will develop and demonstrate competency in philosophical writing through two formal essays, each between 2500-2800 words. The first essay will pertain to material from Units 1-4. The second essay will pertain to material from Unit 5. Prompts for each essay will be distributed well in advance of the due dates. Excellent responses will accurately, clearly, and appropriately explain the relevant course material (with correct citations) and develop an insightful, original (i.e. the student's own) argument. Engagement with secondary literature is neither required nor encouraged, but students are permitted to draw upon such literature in consultation with course instructional staff. The better essay will be worth 45% of the overall course grade, and the other essay will be worth 30% of the overall course grade.

Schedule of Classes

Unit 1: What is ancient philosophy?

Weds, Jan 11 The School of Athens

Read in advance: Hesiod, Theogony 1-138* and Homer, Iliad 1.1-20 and 2.465-473*; Thales (§1-2), Anaximander (§15-16, 19), Pythagoras (§3-6, 11-12, 17); Xenophanes (§2, 5-8, 12, 13, 17, 20, 25, 32), Heraclitus (§5, 7, 8, 11, 17-18, 30, 33, 34), Parmenides (§1-2); Diogenes of Apollonia (§1-2, 5)

Lecture keyterms: Persian War and Peloponnesian War, anachronism, internal exegesis, external exegesis, rhapsodes (e.g. Homeridae), theology versus theogony versus cosmology

Learning Outcomes:

- Explain the lecture keyterms in broad outline.
- Identify major dates and geographical locations for the course material.
- Understand the geopolitics of the ancient world in broad terms.
- Identify a way to define ancient philosophy.

Fri, Jan 13 Poets — Sages and Sophists — Physicians

Read in advance: Protagoras (§1, 5, 8, 10, 11), Gorgias (§14), Prodicus (§17-18), Hippias (§19)

Pre-class reflection questions:

- What are the (presumed or explicit) grounds of authority? ...revelation, logic, observation, and/or something else substantiates the author's credibility?
- What do they think of truth? Is it accessible to the average person? Why (not)?
- Why does each author think people should or will agree with his claims?

Lecture keyterms: *sophos* (pl. *sophoi*), anthropomorphism, *phronein* versus *sophronein*, naturalistic explanation, orator or rhetorician, Protagorean relativism

Learning Outcomes:

- Identify textual passages that establish Homer's authority.
- Identify the sages of the pre-Platonic world.
- Answer the pre-class reflection questions.

Weds, Jan 18 Philosophers

Read in advance: Plato, Apology (17a-24a); Plato, Republic (366b-368c, 454a-b, 484a-504e, 531d-534d, 539b-d); Plato, Gorgias (456b-458b)*; Aristotle, Metaphysics I.1-2

Pre-class reflection questions:

- How can philosophy be distinguished from other practices?

- What is the place and purpose of truth in human society and an individual life according to philosophy?
- What is the basis of authority according to philosophy?

Lecture keyterms: the meanings of *logos*, historical Socrates versus the character of Socrates, periodization of Platonic dialogues (early, middle, late), the Academy, Lyceum or Peripatetic School, four stages of the *elenchus*, *aporia*, Socratic ignorance, dialectics versus eristics

Learning Outcomes:

- Define the lecture keyterms and track how they apply to the assigned material.
- Identify the two possible causes for Helen's igniting of the Trojan War, and how each impacts the assessment of her moral responsibility.
- Understand in broad outline the method of ancient philosophy, and what propels or motivates ancient philosophical analysis.
- Identify four ways in which the practice of philosophy differs from prior social practices.

Unit 2: The nature of the soul (and human nature)

Fri, Jan 20 How to assess moral responsibility?

Read in advance: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics I.13 and De Anima I.1; excerpts from Chrysippus, the Stoic*

Pre-class reflection question:

- Research online the story of Jason of the Argonauts and Medea. To what extent is Medea responsible for killing her children? On what basis do you think that?

Lecture keyterms: homunculus, mereology, parts of the soul (including nutritive, perceptive, appetitive, understanding, rational versus non-rational), student of nature versus student of dialectician, affections of the soul, motions of the soul

Learning Outcomes:

- Define the lecture keyterms and track how they apply to the assigned texts.
- Understand the difference between Aristotelian and Stoic grounds for identifying the psychology of decision-making.
- State how different ways of explaining the psychology of decision-making impacts the assessment of moral responsibility.

Weds, Jan 25 How human nature is the source of human diversity

Read in advance: Plato, Republic (414c-417b and 435a-441c); Heraclitus (¶13)

Pre-class reflection questions:

- Do you think there is a relationship between human psychology and human diversity? Why or why not?
- If so, how much of human diversity can human psychology explain? What sort(s) of human diversity is (are) left out of the explanation? Why?

Lecture keyterms: parts of the soul (appetitive spirited, and rational), ruling part; Myth of the metals (a.k.a. the noble lie)

Learning Outcomes:

- Define the lecture keyterms and identify relevant passages from assigned texts.
- Identify the relationship between the *Republic's* psychology and the noble lie.

Fri, Jan 27 Everything has a purpose. Everything.

Read in advance: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics I.7 and De Anima II.2,4-5,11-12

Lecture keyterms: actuality, potentiality, human function, living, nutrition, sense-perception, reason, capacity versus activity, the human good, first principle

Learning Outcomes:

- Define the lecture keyterms and identify relevant passages from assigned texts.
- Reconstruct the purpose and reasoning of the human function argument

Weds, Feb 1 Is this all there is? This can't be all there is!

Read in advance: Pythagoras (§7-8); Plato, Republic (614b-621d) and Apology (40c-42a)

Optional: "[Socrates acquitted in ancient trial re-run](#)" and [original proceedings](#)

Lecture keyterms: metempsychosis, immortality, Myth of Er, path dependency, moral responsibility

Learning Outcomes:

- Define the lecture keyterms and identify relevant passages from assigned texts.
- Assess arguments for the nature and consequences of the immortal soul.

Unit 3: What exists?

Fri, Feb 3 Why an answer to this question is not obvious or easy

Read in advance: Plato, Republic 514a-518b; Heraclitus (§1, 13, 26, 39-41); Parmenides (§6-8); Zeno of Elea (§1-2, 4-7, 13)

Lecture keyterms: metaphysics, ontology, being, existence, predication, appearance (or Way of Seeming) versus reality (or Way of Truth), stability versus flux/change

Learning Outcomes:

- Define the lecture keyterms and track how they apply to the assigned authors.
- State four reasons why answering the question of this unit is not obvious or easy.
- State why not-Being does not exist according to Parmenides.
- Name the five qualities of Being according to Parmenides.

Weds, Feb 8 Early hypotheses

Read in advance: Thales (§4-6), Anaximander (§9-11) and Anaximenes (§21, 24, 25, 29); Xenophanes (§29, 34) and Heraclitus (§12, 45, 48-52, 54, 62); Leucippus and Democritus (§2-7, 10-12, 17-27, 32, 37, 46, 47); Gorgias (§15)

Pre-class reflection questions:

- Who agrees with Parmenides?
- What does each author identify as the fundamental element of existence? In particular, does only one thing exist or do a set of things?

Lecture keyterms: elementalism and atomism, monism and pluralism, *aperion*, materialism, sophism

Learning Outcomes:

- Define the lecture keyterms and track how they apply to the assigned authors.
- State the three skeptical arguments offered by Gorgias.
- Describe the faulty reasoning in one skeptical argument offered by Gorgias.

Fri, Feb 10 The Classical Doctrine of Plato's Theory of the Forms

Read in advance: Plato, Phaedo 78d and 96a-102d, especially 100c

Recommended: Plato, Timaeus (27e-58c)

Lecture keyterms: *reductio ad absurdum*

Learning Outcomes:

- Name the six principles that comprise the classical doctrine.
- Identify text that pertains to each principle.
- Give an example of each principle.

Weds, Feb 15 Objections to the Classical Doctrine?

Read in advance: Plato, Parmenides (127b-135d)

Learning Outcomes:

- Name the four objections to the classical doctrine as they appear in this dialogue.
- Identify text that pertains to each objection.
- Describe how one might defend the doctrine against at least two objections.

Fri, Feb 17 From forms to substances

Read in advance: Aristotle, Metaphysics I.3 and I.9

Lecture keyterms: *eidōs*, *ousia*, substance versus essence (or quiddity)

Pre-class reflection question:

- Which of Aristotle's criticisms of Plato's forms ring similar to an objection courted in Plato's Parmenides?

Learning Outcomes:

- Define the lecture keyterms and identify relevant passages from assigned texts.
- Identify and assess ten Aristotelian arguments against Platonic forms.

Weds, Feb 22 How things come to be in the world

Read in advance: Aristotle, Physics I.1, I.5-9, II.1 -3

Lecture keyterms: four causes or *aitia* (material, efficient, formal, final), hylomorphism, *stoicheia*

Learning Outcomes:

- State and offer examples of the four causes.
- Pose some questions about the nature of causality in Aristotle.
- Explain how change occurs according to Aristotle.

Unit 4: What can humans claim to know?

Fri, Feb 24 If you can't recall it, then suspend judgment

Read in advance: Plato, Meno (TBA); excerpts from Skeptics (1.A, 1.F, 1.H, 71.C, 72.A-K)*

Weds, Mar 1 Critical reflections on recollection

Read in advance: Plato, Phaedo (65a-66a and 72d-77a)

Fri, Mar 3 Knowledge versus Opinion?

Read in advance: Xenophanes (§24 and 25); Plato, Republic (507a-511e, 514a-521c, and 534a)

Mon, Mar 6 **First Essay due by 10:00pm to Carmen**

Weds, Mar 8 Saving perception and common sense

Read in advance: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics VI.1-2, 5, 7, 12, 13

Fri, Mar 10 On thinking and explaining

Read in advance: Aristotle, De Anima III.3-4 and Posterior Analytics 1.1-3, II.8, II.10, II.19

Fri, Mar 10 **Draft of bibliography abstract due by 10:00pm to Carmen**

~ Spring Break ~ March 13-17 ~

Unit 5: How should one live?

Weds, Mar 22 Prepare to die

Read in advance: Plato, Crito (43a-54e) and Phaedo (66a-70d and 115c-116a)

Fri, Mar 24 Play the numbers then fake it 'til you make it

Read in advance: Pythagoras (§8, 10); Plato, Gorgias (462a-472a)

- Weds, Mar 29 Prefer to suffer injustice than commit injustice (say what?)
Read in advance: Plato, Gorgias (472a-481a)
- Fri, Mar 31 Be a lover, not a hater
Read in advance: Plato, Symposium (198a-212c)
Optional: [“The Origin of Love” from Hedwig and the Angry Inch*](#)
- Mon, Apr 3 **Final Annotated Bibliography due by 10:00pm to Carmen**
- Weds, Apr 5 Pay your debts and live to your advantages
Read in advance: Antiphon (¶21) and Plato, Republic (327a-348a)
- Fri, Apr 7 Be strong (so, might makes right?)
Read in advance: Plato, Republic (348a-367e)
- Weds, Apr 12 Be good (but, is that asking too much?)
Read in advance: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics I.1, I.4, II.1-6, III.4-5
Optional: [Shaquille O’Neal’s Aristotelian virtues*](#)
- Fri, Apr 14 Be happy (but, is that really enough?)
Read in advance: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics I.5, I.7-9, X.6-9
Optional: [David Brooks on the Crews Missile and How People Change*](#)
- Weds, Apr 19 Pursue pleasure in all of its forms
Read in advance: Epicurus, “Letter to Menoeceus”* and “Principle Doctrines”* and Epictetus, “Encheiridion”*
- Fri, Apr 21 Catch Up and Conclusions
Read in advance: Nothing
- Mon, Apr 24 **Second Essay due by 10:00pm to Carmen**

NB: This syllabus is subject to change without prior notice.

Changes will be announced in class and posted to the course website in Carmen.

College of Arts and Sciences Required Statements

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

**Consult Carmen > Modules > Course Policies & Procedures
for policies and procedures developed specifically for this course.**