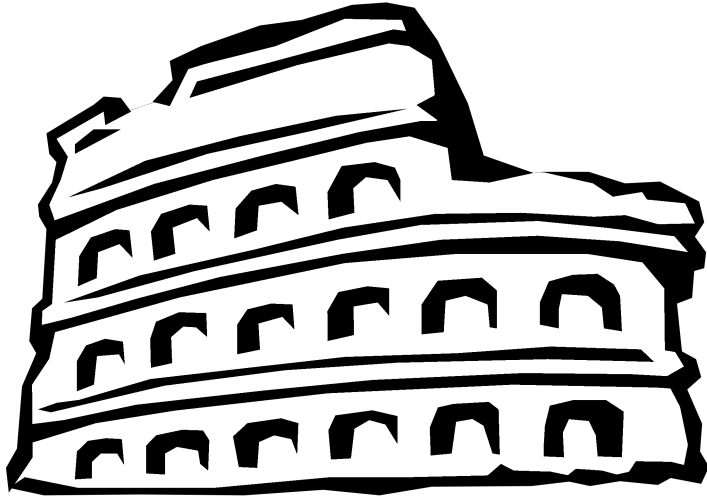


PHL 312: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY (Spring 2010)



Class meetings MW 2:00-3:50, building 9, room 285
Instructor Michael Cholbi
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Office hours Monday 10:30-12:30, Wednesday 12:30-2:00, and by appointment
Office Building 1, room 331
Philosophy office Building 1, room 321

Description

Our course will serve as an introductory overview of philosophy as it was practiced in the ancient Mediterranean world from 600 BCE to 300 BCE. The work done by philosophers in this period is the cornerstone of the Western philosophical tradition, and it is from this work that the modern conception of the scope and significance of philosophical activity eventually developed. After a brief consideration of the 'pre-Socratic' philosophers, we then focus on the work of the three principal figures of ancient Athenian philosophy (Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle). We will seek to identify both the methodologies and assumptions common to these three philosophers and the central disagreements that divided them. Throughout the quarter, special attention will be paid to four broad but closely related concerns within the ancient period: within ethics, the nature of virtue and happiness; within philosophical psychology, the nature of the soul; within epistemology (the theory of knowledge), how knowledge is acquired and its place in the well-lived life; and within metaphysics, problems of unity and individuation. Our overall aims are to gain an understanding of the philosophical concerns that animated the ancient period and to appreciate the distinctive contribution of ancient philosophy to philosophical inquiry and to Western civilization as a whole.

FURLOUGH NOTICE: Neither class meetings nor office hours will be held on my state-mandated furlough days. For the spring quarter, those days are:

- Friday, April 2
- Tuesday, April 13
- Friday, April 30
- Tuesday, May 18
- Tuesday, June 8

In addition, students should not expect timely responses to e-mails, phone calls, or other messages on furlough days.

Course learning objectives

By the conclusion of the course, students should be able to:

1. articulate the main ethical, psychological, epistemological, and metaphysical doctrines of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, identifying key points of agreement and disagreement
2. engage in the critical and systematic analysis of these doctrines and the textual arguments offered for them
3. outline the contributions of ancient philosophy to the Western philosophical and intellectual heritage
4. profitably pursue further study of the history of philosophy, especially the philosophy of late antiquity and the Middle Ages

Prerequisites

This is an upper-division philosophy course. While there are no formal prerequisites, successfully completing Introduction to Philosophy, Critical Thinking, and Logic would certainly be excellent preparation. Non-majors are of course welcome to enroll. However, the course will be taught at a level of rigor and sophistication that assumes students have some background in the main techniques and problems of philosophy. No special efforts will be taken to provide this background to those who lack it. I encourage students who are concerned about their readiness for this course to discuss this matter with me as soon as possible.

Varia

- Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be addressed according to Cal Poly policies.
- The copyright for these course materials is held by the instructor; any attempt to distribute or sell this material without instructor authorization is in violation of that copyright.
- Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss their needs and possible accommodations.
- If extraordinary circumstances arise that make it unusually difficult for you to meet the class requirements, please contact me so we can discuss the possibility of alternative arrangements.

Texts

Required

- Cohen, Curd, and Reeve (eds.) Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy: From Thales to Aristotle, 3rd edn. Hackett, 2005.

Optional

- Kenny, Ancient Philosophy. Oxford, 2004.



Blackboard

We will be use Blackboard **version 9** (<https://blackboard.csupomona.edu/webapps/login/>) in support of the in-class activities in this course. In order to use Blackboard, you will need to know your university Intranet ID and password. You should be checking the Blackboard site several times weekly for updates on course activities, etc. Also, Blackboard is where you will find the ‘Discussion questions’ forum as well as your group discussion forum. (See requirement [5] below.)

Evaluation and requirements

Your grade in this course will be determined by the following five components.

- [1] Approximately every other week, a short writing assignment will be made available on Blackboard. *Four* such assignments will be provided during the quarter. The schedule of these assignments is as follows:

Assignment #	Assigned	Date due in class
1	Weds 4/7	Mon 4/12
2	Weds 4/21	Mon 4/26
3	Weds 5/5	Mon 5/10
4	Weds 5/19	Mon 5/24

You must complete **three of these short assignments**. These assignments will be graded on responsiveness to the question prompt, organization, knowledge of the relevant course content, and effective argumentation. Each assignment will constitute **10% of your quarterly grade (30% total)**.

- [2] A **term paper** of 1500-3000 words (about 7-12 double-spaced pages) will be due to my office (building 1, room 331) by Wednesday, June 9, noon. It is suggested, but not required, that your term paper develop or elaborate one of the three short assignments you complete during the quarter (see [1] above). The term paper will be evaluated on the basis of its organization and clarity; knowledge and interpretation of course material; logic and force of reasoning; and style, grammar, and proofing. This term paper will constitute **25% of your quarterly grade**.

- [3] A **final exam** for this course will be administered in *two components*. An ESSAY-BASED COMPONENT will be administered during our university-scheduled exam period, Monday, June 7, 1:40-3:40 p.m. A BLACKBOARD-BASED COMPONENT will be made available Monday, June 7, 4:00 p.m. and will be due Thursday, June 10, 4:00 p.m. The Blackboard-based component will take approximately two hours to complete and may only be taken once. Each component will count equally in your final exam grade, and the final exam grade will constitute **25% of your quarterly grade**.

- [4] Each student will be placed randomly in a *learning group* for this course. Your learning group has two responsibilities.
- I. Each group has its own discussion forum on the course Blackboard site. Participation in the forum is one way to complete your participation requirement (see requirement [5] below).
 - II. For each class meeting, one learning group will be responsible for developing 7-10 questions based on the assigned readings. (Note that the group

responsible for each class meeting is listed in the rightmost column in the schedule of readings and topics below. I have intentionally not assigned groups for the last week of the quarter so that you can concentrate your energies on your term papers.) These questions should serve to stimulate class discussion and shape the agenda for the class meeting. These questions are to be posted in the Blackboard ‘Discussion questions’ forum by 10 a.m. of the day’s class meeting. Each group member should contribute at least one question for each of the meetings the group is assigned. At the conclusion of the quarter, each student’s questions will be graded on the basis of their understanding and analysis of the assigned readings. These questions will constitute **10% of your quarterly grade**.

[5] Participation in class discussion and on the Blackboard discussion forums will constitute **10% of your quarterly grade**. Attendance will be taken occasionally. Your participation in class discussion and on the discussion forum is evaluated both quantitatively and qualitatively. The following is a guide to how your participation will be graded:

GRADE LEVEL	REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS
A (90-100)	Student attends all (or nearly all) class meetings and is exceptionally well-prepared for each meeting, giving clear evidence of having carefully read the assigned material. Student participates regularly in class discussion and on the group discussion forum, both spontaneously and in response to instructor questions or comments. More importantly, student’s participation is insightful and reflects an active and substantive engagement with the class material. Student’s participation opens up new and profitable avenues for exploration and thereby advances both her own learning and that of others. If this student were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would suffer greatly.
B (80-89)	Student attends nearly all class meetings and is at least adequately prepared for each meeting. Student participates regularly and contributes substantively to class discussion, whether on the group discussion forum or during class meetings, but her contributions are more sporadic and only sometimes stimulate further discussion. If this student were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would suffer significantly
C (70-79)	Student attends most all class meetings and/or is only somewhat prepared for each meeting. Student participates infrequently in class or on the group blog, and her contributions are only sometimes substantive. If this student were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be unchanged.
D/F (0-69)	Student attends few or no class meetings and/or is completely unprepared for each meeting. Student participates either not at all, or her participation lacks substance, and disrupts or distracts the class. If this student were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would improve.

Annoying stuff that *should* be obvious

The function of our class meetings is to instill and enhance your understanding of the course material. To that end, I intend to arrive at each meeting prepared to engage in this task. I expect that you too will arrive prepared to engage in this task. Moreover, I will ask that you refrain from behaviors that prevent you or your classmates from engaging in this task. This includes *extraneous conversation, texting, Web surfing, game playing*, and the like. You may bring whatever technologies to class you wish, including your laptops, but I kindly request that these be used solely for the purpose of engaging in this task. And if you simply lack the energy or motivation to stay awake, PLEASE stay home!

Schedule of topics and readings

Readings from Cohen, Curd, and Reeve are designated by CCR. Readings from Kenny are designated by K. You are responsible for completing the assigned readings by the dates indicated below. (Readings from Kenny are of course optional.) The total reading load for this course is approximately 410 pages, or 41 pages weekly.

DATE	READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS	Q. GROUP
Mon 3/29	Introduction: Homeric civilization and cosmology; the concerns of the pre-Socratics	
Weds 3/31	NO CLASS (Chavez Holiday)	
Mon 4/5	The pre-Socratics: Cosmology, change, rhetoric <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the pre-Socratics and Sophists (CCR 1-6)• Selections on Thales (CCR 8-10), Heraclitus (CCR 24-34), Parmenides (CCR 35-42) and the Sophists (CCR 80-88)• Introduction to Plato (CCR 89-96)• K 1-32	1
Weds 4/7	Socrates as gadfly; Piety and direction of explanation in the <i>Euthyphro</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Euthyphro</i> (CCR 97-114)• K 290-92 <<SHORT ASSIGNMENT #1 AVAILABLE>>	2
Mon 4/12	Socrates on trial; the philosophical calling <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Apology</i> (CCR 115-140)• [recommended] <i>Crito</i>, main speech (CCR 146-152 = Stephanus 48b-53a)• K 37-45 <<SHORT ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE>>	3
Weds 4/14	Meno's paradox, the teachability of virtue, and knowledge by recollection <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Meno</i> (CCR 203-228)• K 145-52	4
Mon 4/19	Socrates vs. the sophists <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Protagoras</i> (CCR 154-180)	5

Weds 4/21	Virtue and the good life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gorgias</i> (CCR 181-202) <<SHORT ASSIGNMENT #2 AVAILABLE>>	1
Mon 4/26	Middle Platonism: Recollection, the Forms, and the soul's immortality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Phaedo</i>, selections (CCR 229-40, 243-53, 267-73, 279-81) • K 45-56, 234-40 <<SHORT ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE>>	2
Weds 4/28	<i>Republic</i> : The Thrasymachean challenge and the value of justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Republic</i> I, II (CCR 331-378)* • K 56-60, 260-66 	3
Mon 5/3	<i>Republic</i> : Philosopher kings and the ascent to wisdom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Republic</i> V-VII, selections (CCR 469-76, 494-510) • K 156-60, 237-39, 	4
Weds 5/5	The one and the many, Forms, and 'Third Men'; onward to Aristotle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parmenides</i> (CCR 604-613) • K 205-216 • Introduction to Aristotle (CCR 645-654) • K 65-69, 73-75 <<SHORT ASSIGNMENT #3 AVAILABLE>>	5
Mon 5/10	Aristotle: Substance, predication, and philosophical method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Categories</i> (CCR 656-662) • <i>De Interpretatione</i> (CCR 663-670) • K 116-29 <<SHORT ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE>>	1
Weds 5/12	Scientific knowledge and explanation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topics</i> (CCR 671-675) • <i>Posterior Analytics</i> (CCR 676-693) 	2
Mon 5/17	Causation and change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Physics</i> (CCR 694-709) • <i>Parts of Animals</i> (CCR 749-757) • K 189-192 	3
Weds 5/19	Aristotle's metaphysics: Substance and essence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Metaphysics</i> (CCR 758-771, 777-788, 796-97) • K 216-228 <<SHORT ASSIGNMENT #4 AVAILABLE>>	4

* As you read the selections from the *Republic*, please read the brief introductions to each book, including those books we won't read (books III, IV, VII, IX, X). This will help you put the selections we read in a clearer context.

Mon 5/24	The soul and its states <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>De Anima</i> (CCR 809-829) • K 161-66, 241-48 <<SHORT ASSIGNMENT #4 DUE>>	5
Weds 5/26	Aristotle's ethics, part I: Virtue and the highest good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (CCR 832-852) • K 79-82, 266-68 	Work on term papers
Mon 5/31	NO CLASS (Memorial Day)	
Weds 6/2	Aristotle's ethics, part II: contemplation and happiness; course review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (CCR 863-75, 881-891) • K 89-94, 269-77 	Work on term papers
Mon 6/7,	<<FINAL EXAM: ESSAY COMPONENT, 1:40-3:40>>	
Mon 6/7,	<<FINAL EXAM: BLACKBOARD-BASED COMPONENT DISTRIBUTED, 4:00>>	
Weds 6/9	<<TERM PAPER DUE, NOON>>	
Thurs 6/10	<<FINAL EXAM: BLACKBOARD-BASED COMPONENT DUE, 4:00>>	