

Ancient Philosophy (PHL200Y1Y) – Syllabus

Instructor: Willie Costello

Lectures on Tuesdays from 9:00 to 12:00 and Thursdays from 9:00 to 11:00 in Sidney Smith room 1085. Tutorials on Thursdays from 11:00 to 12:00 in Lash Miller 157 *or* from 12:00 to 1:00 in Sidney Smith 2128; sign-up on Blackboard. Instructor's office hours on Thursdays from 11:00 to 1:00 in Sidney Smith room 2115, or by appointment.

Course description

This course is an introduction to ancient Greek philosophy, an unprecedented period of intellectual development which became the foundation for the western philosophical tradition as we know it. Though we will cover a wide variety of authors ranging from the 6th century BCE up to the 2nd century CE, our primary focus will be the pivotal figures of Plato and Aristotle, whose philosophies pulled together and built on the ideas of their Presocratic and sophist predecessors, and set the agenda for the various Hellenistic schools which followed them.

Unlike most introductions to ancient philosophy, which present their material chronologically, this course is primarily organized *thematically*, and will continually circle back to look at the same thinkers from different philosophical perspectives. We will begin with an investigation of philosophy itself, and consider how philosophy (at least as it was first espoused by Socrates) distinguished itself from the various other competing sources of ancient wisdom, and, especially, from the argumentative stylings of the sophists. Following this, we will look at ancient varieties of metaphysics (the theory of reality), psychology (the theory of the soul), epistemology (the theory of knowledge), and ethics. Along the way we will also touch on ancient natural science and physics, logic, and the philosophy of language.

Required texts

- *Plato: Complete Works*, edd. Cooper & Hutchinson (Hackett)
- *Aristotle: Selections*, edd. Irwin & Fine (Hackett)
- *Cicero: On Moral Ends*, ed. Annas (Cambridge)
- *Sextus Empiricus: Outlines of Scepticism*, edd. Annas & Barnes (Cambridge)

Evaluation

One obvious aim of this course is to introduce you to the specifics of ancient Greek philosophical thought, and thirty percent of your grade will correspondingly consist of an end-of-term final exam testing your comprehension of the material. In addition, this course also aims to help you develop the analytical skills required of all good philosophical work, and most of the rest of your grade will focus on this element, in the form of a series of increasingly challenging writing assignments, in which you will start off writing short argumentative analyses and slowly build your way up to full-fledged philosophical essays. **Writing assignments must be handed in *at lecture on the day they are due; no late papers will be accepted*** (unless accompanied by valid documentation). **The due date for each writing assignment is listed on the course schedule below.** The full grade breakdown is as follows:

<i>Component</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Due date</i>
Tutorial participation	10%	N/A
First mini-essay (300 words)	5%	May 21
Second mini-essay (500 words)	10%	June 4
Third essay (1000 words)	15%	June 20
Fourth essay (1000 words)	15%	July 18
Fifth essay (1000 words)	15%	August 8
Final exam	30%	exam week

Plagiarism and all other forms of academic dishonesty will be treated with the greatest severity in this course. Students should make themselves familiar with the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters; see www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students.

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability and/or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at 416-978-8060 or accessibility.utoronto.ca.

Email policy

If you ever have any questions for me, you should come ask me *in person*, either at lecture or during my office hours. Email contact should be kept to a minimum, and you should not expect emails to be answered in less than 48 hours. If the answer to your question can be found in this syllabus or on the course website, I will not write back. I will also not respond to emails regarding philosophical, content-based questions about the course material; these are the sort of question that should be brought to office hours or tutorials. But if, after reading these stipulations, you still believe that it is appropriate to email me, my email address is willie.costello@mail.utoronto.ca.