

Introduction to Ancient Greek Philosophy

Philosophy 7, Fall 2018

Instructor

K. Lindsey Chambers (lchambers@fas.harvard.edu)

Meeting

Emerson 101

T/R 10:30am-11:45am

Office Hours

Emerson 309

Tuesdays from 12:30-1:30 and Thursdays from 1:30-2:30

Course Description

The philosophy of ancient Greece forms the cornerstone of Western intellectual thought and culture. This course will survey themes in ancient Greek philosophy from the works of three major figures: Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. We will look at their views about how humans should act, the nature of the soul, what the world is like, and how we can have knowledge. In this course we will pay special attention to the arguments given by these philosophers for their views. The goal of the course is not to learn *about* Greek philosophy; our goal is to learn how to *do* philosophy. Like the Greeks, our inquiry will be aimed at finding the truth, and we will critically engage with the arguments given by these philosophers to help us get there.

Evaluation

Your grade will be comprised of the following components:

Component	Weight	Due Date
Reading Responses	20%	Every Thursday, beginning of class (hard copy)
1 st Paper (5-7 pages)	35%	Oct 16 th , 10:30am (online)
2 nd Paper (7-10 pages)	45%	Dec 13 th , 10:30am (online)

Expectations

Philosophy is an active discipline. You are expected to engage with the philosophical ideas. To do so you must both do the readings and participate in class. You cannot pass the course if you have not attended class. You should also expect the readings to be short, but difficult. Expect to read each reading assignment at least three times. I have posted a resource on how to read philosophy on the course website.

Weekly Reading Responses

Each week you have the opportunity to write a 3/4 to 1 page (double-spaced) response to one of the week's readings. A hard copy of your response should be turned in at the beginning of Thursday's lecture. In your response you can raise a question, contribute a thought, agree or disagree with the author's argument, etc. The response is not a summary of the reading. The response should show that you have critically engaged with the reading. The responses will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Late responses and emailed responses will not be accepted. You only need to pass 10 responses for an A, 9 for an A-, 8 for a B+, etc.

Papers

The papers should be submitted via the course website at 10:30am on the day they are due. Late papers will be docked 1/3 of a letter grade for each day it's late.

Writing Resources

I have posted a resource on how to write a philosophy paper on the course website. Philosophy papers are not research papers. You will be expected to have your own view about the arguments presented in class. Expect to begin working on your paper well ahead of the deadline.

I encourage you to brainstorm with classmates, discuss your ideas with me at office hours, and make use of the Philosophy Department's Writing Fellow, Noel Dominguez (ndominguez@g.harvard.edu). You can schedule a meeting with the DWF here (<https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/phil-dwf/writing-meetings>). Note that the meeting slots fill up quickly around mid-term and at the end of term.

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with Harvard University's honor code, available here (<https://honor.fas.harvard.edu/honor-code>) and on the course website. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me before turning in your work. All work is expected to be your own and original (not previously submitted to another class).

Required Text

Cohen, S. Marc & Curd, Patricia, & Reeve, C. D. C. *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy: From Thales to Aristotle* (4th ed). Hackett Pub, Indianapolis, IN.

Course Reading Schedule

Week 1:

Sept 4th, Course Introduction

Sept 6th, Socrates: Am I permitted to escape my execution?

Reading: *Crito*

Week 2:

Sept 11th, *Crito* continued

Reading: *Crito*

Sept 13th, Socrates: What is piety?

Reading: *Euthyphro*

Week 3:

Sept 18th & 20th, The Euthyphro Problem continued

Reading: *Euthyphro*

Week 4:

Sept 25th & 27th, Socrates: How is virtue teachable?

Reading: *Protagoras*

Week 5:

Oct 2nd & 4th, Plato: How can we learn anything new? (The Paradox of Inquiry)

Reading: *Meno*

Assignment: First paper prompt handed out

Week 6:

Oct 9th & 11th, Plato: The Theory of the Forms

Reading: *Phaedo*

Week 7:

Oct 16th & 18th, Plato: What is justice?

Reading: *Republic* (bk 1, 2, 4)

Assignment: First paper due, Oct 16th at 10:30am

Week 8:

Oct 23rd & 25th, Plato: The Form of the Good

Reading: *Symposium* (excerpts), *Republic* (bk 6, 7)

Week 9:

Oct 30th & Nov 1st, Aristotle: Critique of Plato's Form of the Good

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics* (bk 1)

Week 10:

Nov 6th & 8th, Aristotle: Practical Philosophy

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics* (bk 2, 6)

Week 11:

Nov 13th, Aristotle: Practical Philosophy continued

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics* (bk 10)

Nov 15th, Aristotle: What causes a thing to be what it is?

Reading: *Physics* (bk 2)

Week 12:

Nov 20th, Aristotle: Four causes continued

Nov 22nd, Thanksgiving break

Week 13:

Nov 27th & Nov 29th, Aristotle: What is the nature of the body and soul?

Reading: *De Anima* (bk 2, ch1-6)

Week 14:

Dec 4th, Course Recap

Assignment: Final paper prompt handed out

Week 15:

Reading week

Final paper due:

Dec 13th at 10:30am