

FALL 2004

PHIL 201: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

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Clough 402
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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS:

This course aims to introduce you to the different styles, skills, and issues in philosophy through a careful examination of ancient Greek and Hellenistic philosophies. This is an introductory course, which means *not* that the material is easy but that the focus is on *developing* and *improving* reading, writing, and thinking skills when dealing with philosophical material.

Our exploration of these philosophies will be structured around two central questions: ***In what ways can philosophy guide us in securing what is good and avoiding what is bad?*** and ***Who is the philosopher?*** Through the lens of each philosophy, we will look carefully at each part of these questions, analyzing their **metaphysical**, **epistemological**, **ethical**, and **political** dimensions. In the process, we will uncover *reason's* dominant role in Greek philosophy, and its often complicated relation to *pleasure* in Hellenistic thought.

General Ends: The general ends of the course concern developing philosophical skills and gaining mastery of philosophical ideas. You should aim to:

- develop and improve basic philosophical skills, especially *identifying* and *making clear and precise distinctions*, whether in reading, writing, or discussing.
- understand ways of thinking: in particular to understand the “*vision*” or worldview which results from and reveals distinctive values and beliefs of a philosophical position.
- understand the relation between the *values (or goods) and beliefs* of a philosophical position and its particular *methods* (e.g., question-answer, use of myth and analogy, causal analysis, development of hierarchies, synthesis of different perspectives).

General Means:

- Careful *reading* and *preparation* for class (especially in Normal Class Work and Student Prompt).
- Clear, creative and insightful *analysis* and *exploration* of a particular issue (especially in Group Work and writing Papers).
- Ability to thoughtfully *present* and *relate* the different styles and positions of philosophers studied (especially in Exams).

II. REQUIRED TEXTS:

- All are available at the bookstore
- Plato: *Five Dialogues*, tr. Grube, Hackett Publ.
 - Plato: *Republic*, tr. Grube, Hackett Publ.
 - Aristotle: *Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. McKeon, Modern Library.
 - Seneca: *Moral Essays* Vol. 1, tr. Basore, Loeb Classical Library

III. COURSE OUTLINE:

- I. Introduction: Reconstructing the Ancient World
 - A. The Presocratics and Sophists
- II. Socrates (469-399 BCE) and Plato (428-348 BCE): *Euthyphro*, *Meno*, *Republic*
- III. Aristotle (384-322 BCE): selections from *Physics*, *De Anima*, *Metaphysics*, *Nicomachean Ethics*
- IV. Hellenistic Philosophies
 - A. Epicurus (341-270 BCE) & Epicureanism
 - B. Seneca (4 BCE-65 CE) & Stoicism

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 20% Participation (Discussion Participation, Student Prompt, Normal Class Work)
- 40% 2 Papers (@ 20%)
- 40% 2 Exams (@ 20%)

A. PARTICIPATION: Philosophical thinking requires active engagement in learning and testing key ideas and methodologies. The following are designed to promote this. Your overall participation grade will be the average of items 1 and 2, with serious consideration also given to item 3.

[1] **Discussion Participation:** *Qualitative* participation is vital to your learning and is expected throughout the semester. First, you should carefully prepare for class; this means actively reading (see “Reading Philosophy” handout) and reflect on the day’s assignment (both by noting key definitions and arguments and by formulating questions) *prior* to class. This will prepare you to listen with understanding and to actively participate in class discussion. Discussion participation involves (i) contributing your own views, questions, and reactions to the readings and class discussion, and (ii) carefully listening to, questioning, and responding to the views of others. Aim to participate regularly, but avoid dominating class discussion.

When determining your discussion participation grade, I will look at the *quality* and *pattern* of your participation over the course of the semester. The *quality* of your work is gauged in terms of its (i) **clarity**, (ii) **insight**, and (iii) **sophistication**. In assessing the *pattern* of your work, I will look at (i) **consistency**, (ii) **effort**, and (iii) **improvement** and **progress** (or regress) you have made in critically discussing materials throughout the semester.

Minimal participation, low attendance, and disruptive or dominating class-room behavior will result in a low participation grade. If you are concerned about your participation performance, please don’t hesitate to talk with me.

Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes. If you must miss a class, you are responsible for all material covered and assignments distributed or collected. Since I consider attendance a factor of participation, I don’t distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. (If you’re not present, you can’t contribute.) If you miss more than 2 classes (which is the equivalent of a week), your prep/participation grade will drop 1/3 letter grade per missed day. *Also*, you are expected to contact me so we can discuss your attendance.

[2] **Student Prompt and Assessment:**

(a) The Prompt: Each of you will prepare a prompt for class discussion **once** during the semester.* (A sign-up sheet will be distributed in class.) Your assignment is to prepare a prompt that *explores a key idea or issue* in terms of *at least one* of the following:

- A **question** of significance that arose from your reading of the day’s assignment.
- An **interpretation** of a baffling or controversial passage or point from the day’s reading.
- An **objection** to an important point from the day’s reading.
- **Additional support** (an important consequence or additional argument) for an important point from the day’s reading.

*NOTE: Typically, *two* students will prompt on each day. I recommend that the two of you discuss how you would like to coordinate your prompts (since it’s unproductive to have prompts that are virtually the same). You may, for instance, each propose opposing interpretations of a position. You may also do prompts that complement or build on one another. You may construct prompts on independent themes, but it’s best to do so with full knowledge of what the other prompter will do. I also invite you to consult with me as you prepare your prompt.

i. Set-up Guidelines: How you set up your prompt depends on whether you raise a question or an objection, or present an interpretation. I offer the following **guidelines** to help you construct your prompt:

Assume that everyone has done the reading, but be sure the *context* of the *central issue/idea* of your prompt is clear.

- Your *purpose* and the *context* of your key issue/idea: Be sure it’s clear what you are doing in the prompt. Are you raising a central question, providing an interpretation, objecting or providing additional support? You don’t need to mechanically explain what you will do, but the reader shouldn’t have to guess what your goal or purpose is. It is equally important to clearly identify the *central issue or idea* that you are questioning, interpreting, objecting, or supporting. If your issue and its relevant ideas are new to class discussion, if their meaning is controversial, or if they simply warrant special attention in light of the day’s reading, be sure to define or explain them.

Moreover, you want to be sure that the *context* of your issue/key idea is clear. Consider, for example, whether the idea functions as part of a central argument, e.g., as a key (and perhaps controversial) premise or central conclusion. If so, identify it as such, and consider whether your prompt will be strengthened by

concisely sketching the rest of the argument. If not, consider whether the idea functions to illustrate some larger or more elusive point, functioning as the basis of an analogy or as a concrete example that illustrates a general point.

***NOTE: Most readings have more than one key idea/issue, so you may select an idea of your choice. Since the prompts function as integral parts of our discussion, strive to work with the most important ideas rather than subordinate or tangential points. You may deal with more than one, but be sure to show that the ideas you discuss are clearly relevant to one another.

After setting up your issue/idea, your primary goal is to prompt class discussion by exploring, developing, and responding to your issue. Consider, for instance, whether you have

- *a puzzled or negative reaction*: If you have a question about your issue/idea (not addressed by the philosopher), raise it. If an idea is vague, incomplete, or open to controversy, provide a critical interpretation of it, keeping in mind the author's general project (so you offer a relevant and not tangential perspective on it). If you have an objection to the issue/idea, explain yourself clearly, making sure your own reasons for objecting are clear. (Counterexamples may help.)

***NOTE: Be sure that your question/interpretation/objection isn't answered/discovered/rebutted by a more careful reading of the assignment.

OR

- *a positive reaction*: If you find that you agree entirely with the philosopher's view of this issue/idea, then explain why by (i) explaining what additional reasons there are for believing it (is it coherent with other very plausible ideas? is there empirical evidence to support it? are there other arguments which can be given to support it), by (ii) showing its plausibility through concrete (perhaps contemporary) examples, or by (iii) exploring important implications or consequences of it not addressed in the reading.

Strengthening the quality of your prompt:

- Be sure to proofread your prompt. It should be a *well-written* piece.
- Draw relevant *distinctions* that help clarify your issue or idea. Also, provide *examples* (from the readings, your experience, or your imagination) where appropriate to develop or illuminate your points.
- Maximize *insight* and *sophistication* by exploring *possible alternatives*. If you raise a question or objection, consider and assess different *possible answers*, noting which you find the most compelling and why. If you provide an interpretation or additional support, consider and assess *possible responses* and *objections* to it.

***NOTE: Many students assume that if they respond to their own question, the prompt won't generate much discussion. That can occur and is why it helps to sketch *possible* responses. Doing so lays out the conceptual landscape of the issue and, when done well, generally elicits intriguing responses from the class.

- If your prompt has two or more points (no more than 3 is recommended), questions, interpretations, objections – or answers to such – be sure the *relation* between them is clear; there should be some link or unifying thread in your prompt.

ii. General comments:

While you will want to cite or briefly explain the relevant passage to give your contribution a context, prompts are intended as *philosophical responses* to (and *not summaries* of) the readings. There are **two extremes to avoid**: (1) having a clear focus without much substance, and (2) having a lot of material without much focus. The first case arises when you pose a simple question/interp./obj. without explaining (and exploring) its significance (to you and/or to class issues). The second occurs when you *either* ramble on without stating your central point *or* raise lots of points whose connection remains unclear.

The goal of this exercise is to give you an opportunity to test your reading and thinking skills. Asking questions is an art, as is developing answers, interpretations, and objections. You are welcome to talk with me or your classmates about your contribution, but the work you do must ultimately be your own. It must be formulated in your own words, reflect your own thinking, and demonstrate your own skills. Your prompt and assessment will be graded on (i) its **clarity and accuracy**, (ii) its **significance** and level of **insight/sophistication**, and (iii) its representation of **effort** and **intellectual growth**.

Prompts need to be carefully written, typed and no more than 1 page long. Give me your prompt **no later than 5 p.m. on the day before your prompt**; I'll then make copies for the class. Our goal as a class will be to respond to the day's contributions; they will thus provide the focus for our discussion.

If you *miss* your scheduled contribution, you may make it up so long as (1) there is an opening on the schedule, *and* (2) you discuss the matter with me at least *the day before* class. If you know you won't be able to present because of serious illness and have a friend who is willing to swap spots with you, you may *so long as you notify me before the fact*.

- (b) Assessment of your Prompt:** After class, write an assessment of your contribution in which you
- (i) summarize class discussion of your prompt, noting the main questions and objections made in response to your prompt; indicate clearly how you did (or now would) respond to these.
 - (ii) explore how your view has changed (or deepened) as a result of discussion. For instance, if you raised a question, explain what answer you have come to, especially in light of class discussion. If you provided an interpretation or an objection, explain whether you still believe it, considering whether it needs revision or amplification.
- ***NOTE: This part of the prompt is not an afterthought but an integral component of the whole process. The assessment gives you a chance to reflect on what you have learned.

Hand in your assessment at the **beginning** of the **next** class meeting.

PROMPT GRADING FORM

Symbol	Qualitative Description
E	Excellent: your work meets all requirements in an exemplary manner that demonstrates mastery of the material and/or relevant skills
G	Good: your work demonstrates strong command of the material and/or relevant skills
S	Solid: your work demonstrates a solid overall understanding of the material and/or competent skills (perhaps you correctly and clearly present all or most of the basic ideas, but you can also develop them more fully or with greater insight and sophistication)
N	Needs work: your work suffers from incompleteness, imprecision, or incorrectness (greater care is needed to complete, clarify, and/or develop your points or skills)

I. PROMPT ON: (Name of Reading)

- Prompt is **well-written** (clear, well-structured, uses proper grammar, etc.)

E	G	S	N
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- Prompt's **purpose** and **context** are clearly and sufficiently explained

E	G	S	N
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- Prompt clearly, correctly, and sufficiently introduces and explains/defines relevant key **ideas** (especially controversial ones) relevant to the prompt's issue

E	G	S	N
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- Prompt thoughtfully **explores** and **develops** the issue by attending to details from the readings, providing examples, drawing helpful distinctions, and offering relevant arguments where appropriate

E	G	S	N
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- Prompt offers an **insightful** and **sophisticated** treatment of the issue, especially in considering and assessing relevant alternative answers, interpretations, objections, or support

E	G	S	N
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II. ASSESSMENT OF YOUR OWN PROMPT:

- Assessment accurately reflects and responds to important issues raised in class discussion with detail:

E	G	S	N
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 - Assessment clearly demonstrates how your thinking about the issue has matured (showing intellectual growth):

E	G	S	N
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[3] Periodic Homework, Quizzes, In-class Writing, or Group Work: To gauge your **preparation** and understanding of material, I will occasionally give *homework* and *quizzes*, most of which will be designed to (i) test your understanding of the reading, or (ii) help you crystallize your thinking on a relevant class issue. In addition, there may be some *in-class writing* or *group work*. The chief criteria used in evaluating this work will be **clarity** and **accuracy**. I will comment on this work but typically *not* assign a numerical grade; instead I will assign a + (excellent work), √ (good work), – (problematic work), or 0 (no work) to indicate the quality of your work. I consider these exercises an important part of your ongoing work. Use them to test your understanding and recognize them as a valuable source of feedback from me. At the end of the semester, I will consider the profile of your work in this area. If your final course grade is borderline, and if you did good work on these exercises, your efforts here can push your grade up (e.g., from an 89% to a 90%).

Missed work in this category can be made up *only* when you have discussed the matter with me *prior* to the beginning of the class you miss. Each student is allowed *one* make-up, but make-up material must be completed by the beginning of the next class meeting.

If you are concerned about your performance in any of these areas, please don't hesitate to talk with me.

B. PAPERS: There will be 2 papers (approximately 5 pages; more details later), the first (on Socrates and Plato) tentatively scheduled for **September 23** and the second (on Aristotle and perhaps Hellenistic thinkers) for **November 23**. Their goal is to provide you the opportunity to develop your *understanding* of course material as well as your ability to *critically assess* it – but in greater detail than you can do in any of the other course components. There is no rewrite option, but I'm happy to discuss your paper with you in advance. Topics will be suggested but you may select your own with my approval. Please consult "Writing Hints" and "General Criteria for Written Work" handouts.

NOTE: You may request a later due date for the paper *if* you are writing on a work we have not yet finished. To do so, you need to write up a proposal identifying the topic and providing a thesis and outline; you must also actually complete the paper on this topic. Together we will determine the actual due date, but it will likely be no more than a few days after the official due date.

C. EXAMS: There will be 2 exams (a midterm tentatively scheduled on **October 7** and a final during **finals week**) consisting of a mix of objective, short-answer, and essay questions. The first exam will cover Socrates and Plato. The final will cover the remainder of the semester material (Aristotle and Hellenistic Philosophies); it will also include at least one comprehensive question.

V. COURSE RESOURCES:

• **Successful Classroom:** In our class everyone has a right to express a genuine observation, curiosity or criticism, but no one has a right to put one down. Respect towards all members of the class and to course content is expected. I work hard to generate a setting in which we can be honest and critical, but my efforts are minimal without your individual contributions. Impediments to a successful classroom include tardiness, cell phones, lethargy, excessive absences, and leaving the classroom before the end of the hour. We are biological creatures, but since we also have a certain mastery over our bodies, please take care of your biological needs before class.

• **Grading Criteria:** See "Grading Criteria for Written Work" handout for specifics. My scheme is the following:

		B+	87-89
A	94 and up	B	84-86
A-	90-93	B-	80-83 etc.

• **Computer Component:** You are responsible for any notes, assignments, etc. that I send out via e-mail. In addition, you will be expected to check documents left on the Academic Server. I will announce new documents that need to be read; if you are absent, you are responsible for reading these. If you're unfamiliar with computer use, please check with the computer staff. They'll be happy to help you.

• **Computer Communication:** I will send out notes, messages, reminders, etc. via email, and you are responsible for these. Also, our class has a folder on the Academic Server (it should be accessible at `\\Fileserver1\acad_dept_pgm\Philosophy\Shade_Patrick\Public\PHIL 201`). Included are: (1) occasional Powerpoint presentations, (2) readings that are handed out, (3) study questions (for some readings), and (4) biographies of the philosophers studied. I will announce new documents as I put them in the folder; you are responsible for reading these. Please consult this folder, and let me know if you have problems accessing it or finding materials.

• Websites:

General:

- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep>

- Guide to Philosophy on the Internet: <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/philinks.htm>

- Greek/English texts of Plato and Aristotle: <http://eserver.org/philosophy/>

PreSocratics: An Overview: <http://www.thebigview.com/greeks/>

Sophists: <http://ablemedia.com/ctcweb/netshots/sophists.htm> ; <http://www.radicalacademy.com/philosophists.htm>

Socrates: S. Beck files (extensive) on Socrates: <http://san.beck.org/Plato-Intro.html>

Plato: Plato and His Dialogues (good info): <http://plato-dialogues.org/plato.htm>

Aristotle: <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/a/aristotl.htm>; <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01713a.htm> ;

Epicurean Works (primary sources): <http://www.epicurus.net/>; <http://www.epicurus.info/>

Stoicism: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/stoicism/>

Stoic Works (primary sources): Epictetus' *Encheiridion*: <http://www.san.beck.org/Epictetus.html>

*****HONOR CODE***** The Honor Code stipulates that *all* the work you submit is to be your own. You are encouraged to discuss topics and assignments with your colleagues, but the work you hand in must be your own, i.e., it must be formulated and written in your own words and style reflecting your own thoughtful treatment. If you have any questions about the Honor Code, please ask me.

****This syllabus is subject to revision (I'll discuss any changes with the class before I make them).****

CALENDAR FALL 2004

Key:

S: Supplemental materials in our folder on the Academic Server, distributed in class, and/or on reserve in the Library

Tuesday	Thursday
	R 8/26 Introduction: Course Questions & the Setting
T 8/31 (a) View the Powerpoint Presentation "Setting the Stage for Socrates" on the Academic Server (b) Read "Philosophical Background of the Fifth Century BCE" http://ablemedia.com/ctcweb/netshots/sophists.htm (c) Read "The Philosophy of the Sophists" http://www.radicalacademy.com/philosophists.htm • Plato's <i>Euthyphro</i> (pp. 3-4, 5-22) • Greek Timeline (S) • Socrates Biography (S)	R 9/2 • Plato's <i>Euthyphro</i> (pp. 3-4, 5-22) • Plato's <i>Apology</i> : Socratic wisdom (pp. 26-29/20c-23b)
T 9/7 Plato's <i>Meno</i> , Intro and 70a-86c (pp. 57-76) • Plato Biography (S) • Table of Plato's Works (online at http://plato-dialogues.org/tetralog.htm#tetramap)	R 9/9 • Plato's <i>Meno</i> , 86d-100b (pp. 76-88)
T 9/14 What is Justice: • Grube's Introduction to the <i>Republic</i> (pp. viii-xviii) • Plato's <i>Republic</i> Bk I 336b-339b Bk II 357a-376c • Outline of the Republic (S)	R 9/16 Educating the Guardians: Plato's <i>Republic</i> Bks II & III 376e-392c, 401-403c Bk V 451d-466d
T 9/21 Justice in the City and in the Individual: Plato's <i>Republic</i> Bk III 408d-412 (largely review)-417b Bk IV 419a-445a	R 9/23 The Nature of the Philosopher-King: Plato's <i>Republic</i> Bk V 471c-480 Bk VI 484a-502c ***PAPER 1 DUE***
T 9/28 The Philosopher-King's Knowledge: Plato's <i>Republic</i> Bk VI 502c-511e Bk VII 514a-521d (skim 521d-531c), 531d-535a (skim 535a-541b)	R 9/30 Why Justice is Preferable to Injustice in this Life and the Afterlife: Plato's <i>Republic</i> Bk IX 571a-592b Bk X 608c-621d
T 10/5 Socrates & Plato on our Course Questions Review	R 10/7 MIDTERM

<p>T 10/12</p> <p>Aristotle and His Method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aristotle Biography (<i>R</i>) • Aristotle's <i>Metaphysics</i> Bk I.1-3 (689-96); Bk IX.1 (820-1), 6 (825-7), 8 (828-31) 	<p>R 10/14</p> <p>Aristotle on the Causes:</p> <p>Aristotle's <i>Physics</i> Bk I.1 (218), 7 (230-3) Bk II. 1.1-8 (236-51)</p>
<p>T 10/19</p> <p>FALL BREAK</p>	<p>R 10/21</p> <p>Soul and Life:</p> <p>Aristotle's <i>De Anima</i> Bk I.1-2 (535-42) Bk II. 1-6 (554-67), 12 (579-80)</p>
<p>T 10/26</p> <p>Soul and Thought:</p> <p>Aristotle's <i>De Anima</i>, Bk III.3-8 (586-96) Aristotle's <i>Metaphysics</i> Bk II. 1 (712) Bk XII.1 (872), 6-7 (877-81), 9-10 (884-8)</p>	<p>R 10/28</p> <p>Happiness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline of <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (<i>S</i>) • Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Bk I (935-52)
<p>T 11/2</p> <p>Virtue:</p> <p>Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Bk II-III (952-84) [for fun, read Bk. IV. 8 (1000-1)]</p>	<p>R 11/4</p> <p>Justice:</p> <p>Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Bk V (1002-22)</p>
<p>T 11/9</p> <p>Moral Weakness & Friendship:</p> <p>Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Bk VI.5 (1026-27) Bk VII.1-4 (1036-44) Bk VIII.1-9 (1058-69)</p>	<p>R 11/11</p> <p>The Highest Good:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Bk VI Chart (<i>S</i>) • Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Bk VI.1-7 (1022-29) Bk X. 1 (1093-4), 4-9 (1098-1112)
<p>T 11/16</p> <p>Epicureanism (<i>S</i>)</p>	<p>R 11/18</p> <p>Epicureanism (<i>S</i>)</p>
<p>T 11/23</p> <p>Stoicism:</p> <p>Seneca's <i>On Providence</i> (3-47) Also read the Introduction (vii-xiv)</p> <p>***PAPER 2 DUE***</p>	<p>R 11/25</p> <p>THANKSGIVING BREAK</p>
<p>T 11/30</p> <p>Stoicism:</p> <p>Seneca's <i>On Firmness</i> (49-105)</p>	<p>R 12/2</p> <p>Stoicism:</p> <p>Seneca's <i>On Mercy</i> (363-377)</p>
<p>T 12/7</p> <p>Wrap-up</p> <p>Aristotle, Hellenistic Philosophies and our Course Questions</p>	