

**Ancient Greek Philosophy**  
**PHIL 210 – Spring 2017**  
**Class MWF 11:15am-12:05pm in Caldwell 105**

**Instructor:**

Larisa Svirsky

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Office: Caldwell 210A

Office Hours: Mondays 12:15-1:15pm, Fridays 1:30-2:30pm or by appointment

**Course Description:** This course will involve careful study of the works of Ancient Greek philosophers. We will begin by discussing some Pre-Socratic philosophers, including Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Zeno. Our main focus, however, will be the works of Plato and Aristotle. In particular, we will discuss their responses to questions about what constitutes a good life, the nature of our minds and their relation to the world, what we can know, and what the structure of a just human society might be. Classes will proceed primarily by lecture, but there will be a significant discussion component as well.

**Assigned Text:**

S.M. Cohen, P. Curd and C.D.C. Reeve (eds.), *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy* (From Thales to Aristotle), Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis/Cambridge. Fifth edition.

(In the course schedule, CCR refers to the page numbers in this volume.)

**Course Website:** This course will have a Sakai site on which I will post the **syllabus, course assignments, and any readings not in the textbook**. All students enrolled in the course should have access to the Sakai site, but if you have any difficulty with this, please let me know.

The Sakai site will also have a section labeled **blogs** in which you are to complete your responses to course readings, described in more detail below. Additionally, the Sakai site will also have a **forum**, where you should feel free to post any questions you have about the reading or class discussions. These forum posts will count as a form of participation in the course, and I will reply to them regularly, schedule permitting.

**Course Requirements:**

- |                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1) Four short writing assignments   | 40% (10% each) |
| 2) Ten responses to course readings | 10% (1% each)  |
| 3) Final exam                       | 40%            |
| 4) Participation                    | 10%            |

**1) Short writing assignments**

There are four papers that need to be handed in (in class) during the semester. They must be two pages (double-spaced, 12 pt font, Times New Roman). Topics will be posted two weeks before the due date.

Paper I is due on: Friday, 1/27

Paper II is due on: Friday, 2/17

Paper III is due on: Friday, 3/10

Paper IV is due on: Monday, 4/10

**Rewrites:** Students are free to submit one rewritten and corrected version from among the first three papers for a higher grade. The rewrite, with the original, graded version attached to it, must be turned in on Monday, 4/17 at the latest.

- 2) **Responses to course readings:** In preparation for the class, you will need to post a short response to the readings for that week on Sakai (under 'blog') before 5 pm on the Tuesday or Thursday before the class meets, for a total of ten posts, distributed over the semester as follows: 3 posts for section I; 3 for section II; 2 for section III; and 2 for section IV. These responses should be short (no longer than 100-150 words) and include, regarding a passage/chapter of your choice: 1. A question (explained if necessary), 2. A critique (a short paragraph), and 3. Something you liked about the reading (a sentence or two). Good quality posts will be rewarded with 1 point, passable posts with 0.5 point, no points for posts that lack any effort or insight.
- 3) **Final Exam:** The final exam will be a combination of multiple-choice and short essays. This exam will primarily test your ability to understand and write clearly about the works that we have studied.
- 4) **Participation:** One earns a high participation grade in this course by attending class regularly, carefully preparing thoughts on the readings, and speaking in class and/or posting on the Sakai forums. Reading philosophy can be quite difficult, especially if you haven't done much of it before. This is compounded by the fact that the reading for this course was written over two thousand years ago, and we are reading it in translation. I recommend taking notes and reading the required texts multiple times.

#### **Grading:**

I will grade all assignments from this course (aside from the blog posts) blind. What this means is that **you should not include your name anywhere on your course assignments, but rather include your PID as identifying information.** Grading blind is one way of correcting against certain kinds of bias, and ensuring that every student is graded fairly.

Below is a list of criteria that will be used to evaluate your papers (note that the % only give a rough indication of how important these aspects are, and that not all of the criteria will apply equally to each of the different assignments; this is not a mathematical scale):

**a. Quality of ideas (50%)**

Range and depth of argument; fair representation position of the philosopher; logic of argument; quality and/or originality of thought; appropriate sense of the complexity of the topic; appropriate awareness of opposing views.

**b. Organization and Argumentation (40%)**

Clarity of thesis statement in the introduction; logical and clear arrangement of ideas; effective use of transitions; unity and coherence of paragraphs; good development of arguments through supporting details and evidence.

**c. Clarity, style, and grammar (10%)**

Ease of readability; appropriate voice, tone, and style for the assignment; clarity of sentence structure; grammatically correct sentences; accurate spelling; careful proofreading.

If you have any questions about these policies, please feel free to ask me about them.

**Late work policy:**

If you need an extension on a paper, you must contact me with at least one day's notice and a medical or comparable excuse (barring very unusual circumstances). Otherwise, late work will be graded down a third of a letter grade for each full day that it is late. In other words, if a paper were due on Monday, you would need to email me by Sunday to receive an extension if one is appropriate. If you didn't contact me or an extension is not appropriate given your circumstances, handing in the paper on Tuesday would bring an A paper down to an A-, etc.

**Excused Absences:**

If you have special needs, or plan to be absent from class on a particular date, please send me an e-mail (preferably at least one day in advance) to explain your situation. Otherwise I expect you to attend each and every class and take the exams as scheduled.

**Accommodations:**

Any student with a disability or special learning requirement impacting his or her participation in the course should discuss this with me in the first week of class so that reasonable accommodations may be made. An example of a special need would be larger font for handouts.

**Honor Code:**

The honor code is in effect in this and all other classes at UNC. You are responsible for complying with this code and therefore also for learning its content and for clarifying any questions you may have regarding this content or applicability.

The code is available online here:

<https://studentconduct.unc.edu/sites/studentconduct.unc.edu/files/documents/Instrument.pdf>

**Note:** The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including paper due dates and test dates, when unforeseen circumstances occur. These changes will be announced as early as possible so that you can adjust your schedule.

## **Course Schedule:**

### **Section 1: Pre-Socratic Philosophy**

#### **Week 1:**

W, 1/11 – Introduction to the Pre-Socratics and Sophists (CCR pg. 1-6)  
F, 1/13 – The Milesians (CCR pg. 7-11),  
“The Origins of Greek Science and Philosophy” handout (Sakai)

#### **Week 2:**

M, 1/16 – MLK Day, no class  
W, 1/18 – Heraclitus and Parmenides (CCR pg. 19-30)  
F, 1/20 – Zeno (CCR pg. 31-33)

#### **Week 3:**

M, 1/23 – Empedocles (CCR pg. 33-47)  
W, 1/25 – Anaxagoras (CCR pg. 47-50)  
F, 1/27 – Leucippus and Democritus, (CCR pg. 51-59) **first short paper due**

#### **Week 4:**

M, 1/30 – The Sophists: Intro, Protagoras, Gorgias (CCR pg. 63-69)  
W, 2/1 – The Sophists: Antiphon (CCR pg. 70-73)  
F, 2/3 – Socrates mocked: selections from Aristophanes, The Clouds (on Sakai)

### **Section 2: Plato**

#### **Week 5:**

M, 2/6 – Plato, Apology (CCR pg. 90-106)  
W, 2/8 – Plato, Apology (CCR pg. 90-106)  
F, 2/10 – Plato, Crito (CCR pg. 106-114)

#### **Week 6:**

M, 2/13 – Plato, Euthyphro (CCR pg. 80-90)  
W, 2/15 – Plato, Meno (CCR pg. 145-166)  
F, 2/17 – Plato, Protagoras (CCR pg. 114-131), **second short paper due**

#### **Week 7:**

M, 2/20 – Plato, Republic I (CCR pg. 234-254)  
W, 2/22 – Plato, selections from Republic VI (507a-511e, CCR pg. 348-351)  
F, 2/24 – away at conference, TBA

#### **Week 8:**

M, 2/27 – Plato, selections from Republic X (595a-608b, CCR pg. 402-410)  
W, 3/1 – Plato, Gorgias (CCR pg. 131-144)  
F, 3/3 – Plato, selections from Symposium (198a-219d, CCR pg. 218-231)

### **Section 3: Aristotle on ethics and politics**

#### **Week 9:**

M, 3/6 – Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics I 1-8 (CCR pg. 577-583)  
W, 3/8 – Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics II (CCR pg. 585-593)

F, 3/10 – Aristotle, Politics I 12-13, III 9, VII 7 (Sakai), **third short paper due**

**Week 10:**

M, 3/13-3/17 – Spring Break, no class

**Week 11:**

M, 3/20 – Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics III 1 (CCR pg. 593-595), III 5 (598-599)

W, 3/22 – Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics VIII 1-3, IX 8-9 (Sakai)

F, 3/24 – Aristotle's Ethical Theory discussion – no new reading

**Section 4: Aristotle on the science of nature & Course wrap-up**

**Week 12:**

M, 3/27 – Aristotle, Physics II 1-3 (CCR pg. 481-485)

W, 3/29 – Aristotle, Physics II 7-9 (CCR pg. 488-492)

F, 3/31 – Aristotle, Metaphysics I 1-9 (CCR pg. 536-546)

**Week 13:**

M, 4/3 – Aristotle, selections from On Coming-to-Be and Ceasing-to-Be (CCR 496-505)

W, 4/5 – Aristotle, On the Soul I 1 (CCR pg. 512-514), II 1-4 (CCR pg. 515-520)

F, 4/7 – Aristotle, On the Soul (readings continued from 4/5), Meteorologica IV 12 (CCR pg. 510)

**Week 14: Aristotle's biology**

M, 4/10 – Aristotle, Parts of Animals I 1, I 5 (CCR pg. 530-535), **fourth short paper due**

W, 4/12 – Aristotle, Parts of Animals II 10-16; IV 10; 14 (Sakai)

F, 4/14 – University Holiday, classes canceled

**Week 15: Philosophy and The Good Life**

M, 4/17 – Plato, selections from Phaedo, (57a-85b, CCR pg. 166-183)

W, 4/19 – Plato, selections from Republic X (609d-621d, CCR pg. 411-418)

F, 4/21 – Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics X 1, 4-9 (CCR pg. 616-623)

**Week 16: Review and Q&A**

M, 4/24 – Pre-Socratics

W, 4/26 – Plato

F, 4/28 – Aristotle

**Final Exam, Tuesday, 5/9 at 12pm**