PHIL 301 – PLATO  
Fall 2016, University of Victoria  
Department of Philosophy  
Course website: available at http://coursespaces.uvic.ca

Instructor and Contact Information  
Dr. Clifford Roberts (cliffordroberts@uvic.ca)  
Office hours: Fri 1:30 – 2:15 (or by appt.)  
Office: CLE B330

Meeting Times & Place  
Tue–Wed–Fri 12:30-1:20  
Clearihue A303

Course Description  
This course surveys some of the work of the ancient Greek philosopher, Plato (428/7-348/7 BCE). A student of Socrates and a teacher of Aristotle, Plato is one of the most influential and important figures in the history of Western thought. The mathematician and philosopher A. N. Whitehead remarked that: “the safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato.” It is no surprise, therefore, that today, more than 2300 years later, Plato’s ideas and methods continue to excite interest and reflection. Plato thought rigorously and systematically about a dizzying variety of topics. In this course we will consider some of his ideas, arguments and theories in political philosophy, moral theory, metaphysics, epistemology, and psychology. We will discuss such questions as: what is the best form of socio-political organization? What is justice? What is love? How do we come to know anything? What is the nature of the soul or mind? In what sense, if any, do we survive after death? Whether or not we agree with Plato’s often surprising answers to these questions, there can be little doubt that his method of rigorous argument and careful reasoning in pursuit of those answers calls for careful study and contemplation as much today as during Plato’s lifetime.

Course Texts  

Course Evaluation  
Students must submit a digital copy of each of the assignments through CourseSpaces and by the assignment deadline.

(1) Comment sheets  
Value: 20% (5% per comment sheet & 4 sheets in total)  
Length: 450 – 800 words  
Assignment: Students must submit a philosophical commentary on a short passage selected by the instructor from the course readings. Each assignment will be provided a week before its due date. Further information will be provided with each assignment.  
Due date: see course schedule.
(2) Essays
Value: 1st essay = 20%, 2nd essay = 20%, 3rd essay = 30% (total = 70%)
Length: 1st & 2nd essays = 1500 – 2100 words (per essay), 3rd essay = 2100 – 3000 words
Assignment: Students must write a paper of the relevant length on one of a selection of topics provided by the instructor. Each assignment will be provided 2 – 3 weeks before the due date. Further information will be provided with each assignment.
Due dates: see course schedule.

(3) Class participation
Value: 10%
This will be based on both class attendance and contributions to class. While this course is primarily lecture based, there will be time allotted each class for questions and students are strongly encouraged to raise questions during the lecture.

Course Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>GPV</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student’s full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student’s full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student’s full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.</td>
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Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that the student submits, whether individual or group work. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust,
and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research, and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

The responsibility of the institution
Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student
Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If the student is unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing sources, the instructor should be consulted. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student’s transcript, or a suspension.

It is the student’s responsibility to understand the University’s policy on academic integrity: http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2012/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcI.html

Policy on Late or Missed Assignments
The default expectation is that the student completes the assignments by the relevant deadline. However, I will consider extensions for assignments provided the student indicates a desire for an extension when the assignment is provided. Otherwise, delays in handing in assignments will be penalized by one letter grade for every day late (i.e., an A paper will become an A- paper after a day), unless the student can provide official documentation of the reason for the delay (e.g., a physician’s note). The previous policies do not apply to students with documented disabilities; all attempt will be made to accommodate such students including, but not restricted to, providing make-up assignments and tests.

Course Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1: Sep 7 &amp; 9</td>
<td>No reading.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2: Sep 13, 14 &amp; 16</td>
<td>Reading: Protagoras</td>
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| Week 3: Sep 20, 21 & 23 | Reading: Meno  
1st comment sheet due on Sep 23 |
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 4: Sep 27, 28 &amp; 30</td>
<td>Reading: <em>Phaedo</em></td>
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| Week 5: Oct 4, 5 & 7 | Reading: *Republic*, Books I – II  
1st essay due on Oct 7th |
| Week 6: Oct 11, 12 & 14 | Reading: *Republic*, Books III-IV                                           |
| Week 7: Oct 18, 19 & 21 | Reading: *Republic*, Books V-VI  
2nd comment sheet due on Oct 21 |
| Week 8: Oct 25, 26 & 28 | Reading: *Republic*, Books VII-VIII                                         |
| Week 9: Nov 1, 2 & 4  | Reading: *Republic*, Books IX-X  
3rd comment sheet due on Nov 4 |
| Week 10: Nov 8 (Fall break Nov 9-13) | Reading: *Symposium*  
2nd essay due on Nov 8 |
| Week 11: Nov 15, 16 & 18 | Reading: *Symposium*                                                        |
| Week 12: Nov 22, 23 & 24 | Reading: *Phaedrus*  
4th comment sheet due on Nov 24 |
| Week 13: Nov 29, 30 & Dec 2 | Reading: *Philebus*  
3rd essay due on Dec 5th |