Introduction to Ancient Philosophy
Ph 207 A01  Fall 2014,
CRN 12496

Instructor:  Thomas Heyd, Ph.D.
Office:  Clearihue B 309
Class meetings:  Tue, Wed, Fri: 1130 - 1220 , CLE A203
Office Hours:  Tuesday and Friday 12:30-13:20, or by appointment
Tel. and e-mail:  (250) 853 3767, heydt@uvic.ca

Course description
This course introduces central philosophical topics through a discussion of Ancient Philosophy in the European or Western tradition. It is open to students from all faculties. We explore methods to reflect on the basic constitution of our world, on how we can know, and on what it means to lead a good life. In particular, we will discuss the first speculations about the structure of our physical world on record in the Western tradition, the first conceptions of the difference between knowledge and belief, and the first systematic proposals for an everyday ethics. Class discussion centred on course topics will be highly encouraged.

Course objectives
• To learn to about the earliest conceptions of our physical world and of ourselves, as developed by Early Greek Philosophers, and how some of their insights may still shape present thinking.
• To acquire an understanding of the first debates on ethics, theory of knowledge and metaphysics, as presented by Plato, Aristotle and some of their predecessors.
• To sharpen your ability to work with the arguments developed by these philosophers, and to learn to assess their strength and weaknesses.

Texts and Moodle
Required text: Introductory Readings in Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy by Reeve Miller and Gerson (Hackett, 2006). Recommended optional: Presocratic Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction, Catherine Osborne (OUP, 2004), and Julia Annas, Ancient Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction (OUP, 2000). Some additional texts may be assigned throughout the course and to be downloaded through the Moodle website. Please be attentive to announcements in class and via e-mail.

Course organisation and student engagement
It is expected that students do the assigned weekly readings ahead of class lectures. Attendance during class periods, constructive participation, and tolerance with regard to the views of others, will be expected. If classes are missed, students are responsible for materials covered and should inform themselves through classmates and via Moodle about any announcements made while they were absent. You are encouraged to think critically about your own beliefs, and to reflect this attitude in class discussion.

Tips for best performances
1. Do readings ahead of class periods and read material attentively, and do weekly assignments.
2. Come to class, and participate in class discussion with constructive points.
3. Speak to the instructor if failing to understand the material.

Grading
Two short mid-term tests, worth 35%
A final, comprehensive, take-home exam, worth 45%
Participation, including course journal, worth 20%

1. Mid-term tests will cover both readings and lectures. Both understanding and recall of material covered, and reflective analysis, will be expected. Test questions will consist of a combination of shorter and longer answer, and possibly some true-false and multiple choice, questions.
2. **The final exam** will be a comprehensive take-home exam with long as well as short answer questions. Questions will be handed out on the last day of classes. Completed exam must be delivered to the Dept. of Philosophy no later than **5 days later**, before 4 p.m. and submitted simultaneously through Moodle. **No late exams will be accepted (late exams will receive 0%)**. Understanding of material covered and reflective analysis will be expected. Answers to questions will be assessed on the basis of the following three criteria: (1) effective and correct use of the English language; (2) accurate presentation of the views discussed; (3) presentation of valid arguments.

3. **Participation** will be assessed on the basis of **regular attendance**, through participation in class discussion, quality of interventions, and especially through **weekly assignments** based on the course readings and personal analysis of the issues under discussion. Class interventions should be constructive. Class attendance will be taken. **Class attendance will be taken.** Attendance will be particularly encouraged in the case of guest speakers and for films. Justified absences should be discussed with the instructor ahead of time.

**Assignments**

As incitement to keep up with the readings, you are expected to write one paragraph (1/2 page) weekly on each week’s readings. The paragraph should address some basic questions, which will be announced in class, and sometimes by e-mail. (If no questions have been set for a particular week, a paragraph with a summary of key arguments found in the readings should be written up.) It is essential that what you write is in your own words (it should **not** be copied from the textbook or other texts).

Answers should be about a paragraph long, and handed in on the first day of classes every week (usually Tuesdays). The purpose is to allow you to engage with the material and concepts before the lecture. Each assignment should be submitted through Moodle. (If no questions have been set for a particular week, a paragraph with a summary of key arguments found in the readings should be written up.) It is essential that what you write is in your own words (it should **not** be copied from the textbook or other texts).

Other matters

**Numerical and letter grades**

Grades will be given as percentile marks. The percentile mark for the course will be converted to a letter grade in the following manner: A+ = 90 - 100, A = 85 - 89, A- = 80 - 84, B+ = 77 - 79, B = 73 - 76, B- = 70 - 72, C+ = 65 - 69, C = 60 - 64, D = 50 - 59, F = 0 - 49. The A range means exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. A grade in the B range means a very good, good and solid performance. A grade in the C+ or C range means satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory, performance. A grade of D or D- indicates merely passable or marginal performance. An F indicates unsatisfactory performance.

**Late assignments, extensions and plagiarism**

Late assignments will **not** be accepted and exams will **not** be rescheduled. There will not be make-up exams. If an exam is missed for significant reasons of a medical sort (provide medical certificate), or for other serious, documented personal reasons, the final exam will be weighted so as to incorporate the weighting of the missed exam. Documented evidence for having legitimately missed an exam and an explanatory statement in writing have to be received **no more than ten days after the deadline or exam missed**.

Academic honesty will be expected in this course. Plagiarism (e.g. copying from others or working together on the take-home exam) may lead to dismissal from the course and the university. Any matters not covered in this handout will be handled in accordance with University and Department policies. Please familiarize yourself with them.

**Transition and inclusivity/diversity**

Students who are new to the University, and would like assistance may contact the Transition Office, www.uvic.ca/transition. This course is committed to inclusivity and diversity, in line with the policy of the University Senate outlined in 1999, which states that “UVic is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.”

**Schedule of lectures and tests**
Please note that the schedule is subject to changes. Weekly reading assignments will be confirmed during class periods, so please be attentive to announcements in class and on Moodle. Class time will be divided between lectures and discussion. Informed participation in class discussion will be expected, so you should read the assigned texts in advance. Readings are from our textbook unless indicated otherwise.

Week 1
3-7 Sept  Introduction
Readings: General Introduction (pp. ix-xxix), plus Maps and Timeline

Week 2
8-14 Sept  Early Greek Philosophy
Readings: Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes

Week 3
15-21 Sept  Early Greek Philosophy continued
Readings: Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Zeno
19 Sept Last day for adding courses

Week 4
22-28 Sept  Early Greek Philosophy and Socrates
Readings: Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Democritus

Week 5
29 Sept – 5 Oct  Plato
Readings: Euthyphro, Apology
**30 September: First mid-term**

Week 6
6-12 Oct  Plato
Readings: Crito, parts of Meno, Phaedo (selected sections TBA)

Week 7
13-19 Oct  Plato
14 Oct Thanksgiving Day
Readings: Symposium, Republic (selected sections TBA)

Week 8
20-26 Oct  Aristotle
Nichomachean Ethics

Week 9
27 Oct – 2 Nov  Aristotle
Readings: Metaphysics and Physics (selected sections TBA)
31 Oct Last day for withdrawing from first-term courses without penalty of failure

Week 10
3-9 Nov  Epicurus, Lucretius, Greek Stoics
Readings: as listed in textbook

Week 11
10-16 Nov  Greek Stoics continued
READING BREAK 10-12 November, Remembrance Day 11 Nov
**12 November: Second mid-term**

Week 12
17-23 Nov  Pyrrho, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius
Readings: as listed in textbook

Week 13
24-30 Nov  Review, and Course Experience Survey
Readings: selections TBA

Week 14
1-3 Dec  Review
3 December Last Day of Classes **Final take-home exam questions handed out**
4 December National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women
***Final exam due 8 Dec, before 4 p.m. at the Dept of Philosophy *** AND via MOODLE