Introduction to Ancient Philosophy  
Ph 207a A01 Fall 2016

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Office: Clearihue B 309  
Class meetings: Tue, Wed, Fri: 10:30 – 11:20  
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Library of Celsus, built 117-135 AD, Ephesus, Turkey

Course description
This course introduces central topics in the European philosophical tradition as first introduced by Ancient Greek and Roman philosophers. We explore methods for reflecting on the basic constitution of our world, on what constitutes knowledge, and on the good life. Class discussion centred on course topics will be highly encouraged. The course is open to students from all faculties.

Course objectives
• To learn to about the earliest conceptions of our physical world and of ourselves, as developed in pre-Socratic Ancient Greece, and how some of those insights may still shape present thinking.  
• To acquire an understanding of the first debates on ethics and theory of knowledge, as presented by Plato, Aristotle, their predecessors and those who followed them.  
• To sharpen your ability to work with the arguments developed by these philosophers, and to learn to assess their strength and weaknesses.

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

Course organisation and student engagement
Assigned weekly readings are to be read ahead of class lectures in order to facilitate class discussion. 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 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.

Grading
Midterm 30%  
Final, comprehensive, take-home exam 50%  
Participation, including course journal 20%
1. **The mid-term test** 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 after handout, before 3:30 p.m. and submitted simultaneously through Coursespaces. **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 constructive participation in class discussion, quality of interventions, and through **weekly assignments** based on the course readings and personal analysis of the issues under discussion. Grades will be assigned on the combined performance on assignments and class participation. **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**
You are expected to write on each week’s readings to help you to engage with the material and concepts before the lecture. Answers should be about a paragraph long, and handed in on the first day of classes every week (usually Tuesdays). The paragraph should address some basic questions, which will be announced as the course progresses. (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).

You should clearly indicate a) the week the assignment is for, b) the particular readings being discussed, c) the date due, and d) your last and first name. Feedback will be given on the first sets of assignments, and occasionally thereafter. At the end of the semester the total of the assignments minus two will be graded on a scale of fail, ok, good, very good.

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

**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](http://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 Coursespaces. Class time will be divided between lectures and discussion. Informed participation in class discussion will be expected, assigned texts should be read in advance. Readings are from our textbook unless indicated otherwise.

Week 1  Introduction
7-11 Sept  Readings: Introduction and Maps and Timeline (pp. xix-xxii)

Week 2  Early Greek Philosophy
12-18 Sept  Readings: Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes

Week 3  Early Greek Philosophy
19-25 Sept  Readings: Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Heraclitus
**23 Sept GUEST LECTURE: Dr. Geoffrey Kron, on Ancient Greece** (To be confirmed)
*23 Sept, last day for adding courses*

Week 4  Early Greek Philosophy
26 Sept – 2 Oct  Readings: Parmenides, Zeno, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Democritus

Week 5  Socrates and Plato
3-9 Oct  Readings: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito

Week 6  Review and midterm
10-16 Oct  *10 October, Thanksgiving Day*
**14 October: Mid-term**
*12 October: Columbus’ Encounter with the Americas Day*

Week 7  Plato on love and beauty
17-23 Oct  Readings: Symposium (selected sections TBA)

Week 8  Plato on justice and on the first utopia
24-30 Oct  Readings: Republic (selected sections TBA)
**28 Oct: FIELD TRIP to Greek and Roman Studies: meet at Clearihue B409** (To be confirmed)
*3 Oct: Last day for withdrawing from courses without penalty of failure*

Week 9  Aristotle on ethics
31 Oct – 6 Nov  Readings: Nichomachean Ethics

Week 10  Aristotle on what there is
7-13 Nov  Readings: Metaphysics and Physics (selected sections TBA)
9-11 Nov READING BREAK
**11 November, Remembrance Day**

Week 11  Aristotle continued and later schools of philosophy
14-20 Nov  Readings: Metaphysics and Physics (selected sections TBA) and Epicurus, Lucretius, Greek Stoics

Week 12  Later schools of philosophy continued
21-27 Nov  Readings: Epicurus, Lucretius, Greek Stoics

Week 13  Review, Course Experience Survey and summary-conclusion
28 Nov – 4 Dec  Final take-home exam handed out on last day of classes
**4 December: National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women**

Week 14  ***7 December: Final exam submission (hardcopy AND on Coursespaces), by 12:00 a.m.***
7 Dec