

## Philosophy 303 – A01: Aristotle

Fall 2017 (CRN = 12512)

### General Course Information, Recommended Supplementary Reading, Schedule

#### 1. General Course Information

Location & Time: CLE A307, Mon. & Thurs. 10:00 – 11:20  
Instructor: David Scott  
Office: CLE B320  
Office Hours: Mon. & Thurs. 11:30—12:30 a.m. (or by appointment)  
Telephone & Email: 721-7517; djfscott@uvic.ca

#### ABOUT THIS COURSE:

In this course we shall examine some of the main works of Aristotle, whose writings constitute some of the most profound and influential in the history of Western and Islamic philosophy and culture. We shall focus on the following writings: *Categories*, *Physics*, *Metaphysics*, *De Anima*, and *Nicomachean Ethics*.

#### TEXT AND COURSE MATERIAL:

*Aristotle: Selections*, trans. Terence Irwin & Gail Fine, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co. 1995 (paper ISBN-13: 978-0-915145-67-6). Depending on the way the class discussion evolves, from time to time I may introduce supplementary material.

#### MARKING SCHEME & CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION:

(a) in-class mid-term (25%); (b) essay (35%); (c) final exam (40%).

(b) In this course you can assume that all essay or exam topics are intended to test you on *the material covered in class*, and, in part at least, *as* it is covered in class. Therefore, attendance is extremely important. You are of course permitted and encouraged to supplement class discussion of the subject with outside material, but the minimum expectation is that you deal with the material covered in class, and that you address the points raised there about that material. This does not mean that for tests and essays you are expected merely to repeat the in-class proceedings. Rather, it means that you are expected to take account of or do justice to in-class discussion. Thus, the tests and essays for this course constitute part of a continuous whole with the lectures and in-class discussions. Roughly speaking, “B+” and “A-“ papers take account of and rise to the level of the class discussion; “A” and “A+” papers take that discussion to a higher/deeper level.

c) Criteria for evaluation: The criteria I use to evaluate essays are, I believe, criteria which common sense would suggest in the assessment of a philosophy essay. Primarily my concern is with content or substance. Of course, this does not mean that form or style count for nothing (and indeed it may not ultimately be possible to divorce form from content). In indicating these evaluation criteria I emphasize that philosophy is an *arts* or *humanities* subject, which means that assessing the merits of a philosophy paper

ultimately requires qualitative evaluation or judgment on my part. Therefore, I do not assign precise numerical values to the following assessment criteria; nor is there a mathematical formula I can employ to judge the quality of philosophical writing. However, as a rough guide I employ a list of relative values, presented here in ascending order of importance:

- spelling/grammar
- organization & clarity of expression
- accuracy of exposition
- use of examples reflecting understanding of the subject
- breadth of analysis, i.e. number of points covered
- depth of analysis, i.e. how far into the issue analysis is pushed
- resourcefulness, originality and imagination
- tightness, rigor or logical coherence of analysis
- overall degree of philosophical insight

I stress that the order of these criteria is not absolute. Thus, sometimes less important criteria will be given more weight than more important ones. For instance, a student's use and analysis of examples might be so good that I am forced to conclude that that student has an excellent understanding of the subject. In such a case the value I attach to the use of examples might increase significantly, and I might overlook the fact that, for instance, the student has failed to cover as many points as other students.

d) Academic Honesty: Cheating of *any* kind, including collusion (working with others too closely) and plagiarism from (i) books and/or articles, (ii) other students' papers, and (iii) papers or other material on the internet, is a serious academic offence. University regulations also prohibit students from submitting the same work for two different courses; in other words, plagiarizing or "recycling" one's own work is not permitted. If detected, cheating can result in dismissal from this course (with an "F"), and dismissal from the university. Here is a link to the University's Academic Integrity policy:

<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2017-05/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html>

#### SUBMITTING AND RETURNING GRADED WORK:

(a) All essays must be *typed (12-font, Times), double-spaced, paginated, and contain the word-count on the front cover*. Essays should be stapled, *not* paper-clipped. I will not accept essays submitted as email attachments; nor will I accept essays that exceed the maximum word limit. In cases where I think the word limit has been exceeded, I will require an electronic copy to check. I'm afraid I will not be available to discuss test or essay questions on the day before or on the day they are due to be submitted, as I need to avoid being swamped by last-minute enquiries. Finally, when submitting essays, please submit *ONLY* in the metal mailbox with my name on it, on the wall directly outside the departmental office on the third floor, B-Wing, of Clearhue. If you submit your paper elsewhere, i.e., in the "returned work" box around the corner from the departmental office, you run the risk that it will not reach me on time.

(b) In general, I will return your graded work during class time, within two weeks of its having been submitted. If you are not there to receive your work when I return it in

class, you can pick it up either from me in my office or, if you are willing to sign a waiver form, from the pigeon hole designated for *RETURNED* work in this course (just around the corner from the departmental office). The Protection of Privacy Act prevents me from placing your work in that box unless you have signed the waiver form.

(c) When graded work is returned to you it will frequently be annotated with comments. If you wish to discuss your work with me, please read those comments first. To give you a chance to do this, as a matter of policy I do not discuss work on the same day as it is returned.

#### LATE ASSIGNMENTS / MISSED TESTS:

Late assignments will not be accepted without penalty unless justified by a medical or other academically legitimate reason, for which documentation of some kind (e.g., a medical certificate) will generally be required. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of 5% of the assessed grade of the paper per day (or part-day, including weekend days or part-days), for a maximum of 4 days (20%). After four days, no late assignments will be accepted.

#### OFFICE HOURS:

Because of demand (especially near test days or essay due-dates), you will need to make an appointment to see me both during my office hours or, if you are unable to see me then, at some other time. Appointments are generally limited to about fifteen minutes per student, so it's best to come prepared with specific questions.

#### MISCELLANEOUS NOTES AND CLASS POLICIES:

(a) Class discussion & participation: In general, my classes tend to involve lots of discussion. I encourage and greatly value your in-class contributions, and I can assure you that other students do too. It is a frequently unacknowledged fact of the classroom that if you have a question or comment, it's likely that others have the same one too. So go ahead and ask your question, or make your comment: it helps me, you, and your classmates. If, however, you are more shy or reserved but still have comments or questions, please see me during office hours.

(b) Emailing me: Because of problems with SPAM and viruses transmitted by email, I'm afraid I have to request that whenever you email me you make sure to put something in the "subject" line of your email to identify you as a student in this course. If you don't do this, and I don't recognize your name, I will delete your email without opening it. In addition to this, I would greatly appreciate it if you observed the (still) standard courtesy of beginning your emails with a salutation, e.g. "Dear ...". This piece of social etiquette is rooted in the recognition that people are not simply inanimate objects (like ATM machines), but should be addressed before being spoken to.

(c) Coming late to class: The classroom is a work environment, and when students arrive late this can be a distraction. So please try to be on time.

(d) Visits to the classroom by non-registered students: As the instructor for this class I am *duty-bound* to ensure that a work environment is preserved in the class. Both students and I can find

it a distraction for strangers to walk into the classroom. It takes some students a good deal of time before they gain confidence to participate in the class proceedings, and the presence of a stranger can be disruptive in that regard. If, as sometimes happens, you wish to invite a friend to attend my class to check it out, please ask permission ahead of time.

(e) Use of computers in the class: For the purpose of taking notes, you are welcome to use laptops with quiet keyboards in the classroom. Watching films and other distracting uses of computers are prohibited.

## 2. Recommended Supplementary Reading

One of the most extensive recent bibliographies on all aspects of Aristotle's philosophy can be found in *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle's Philosophy*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995 [listed below].

### Ancient Greek Philosophy Generally

**Armstrong, A.H.** *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1947. [B171 A78 1949]

**Guthrie, W.K.C.** *The Greek Philosophers from Thales to Aristotle*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1950. [B171 G8]

**Irwin, Terence.** *Classical Thought*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989. [B171 I77]

### Aristotle's Philosophy

**Ackrill, J.L.** *Aristotle the Philosopher*, Oxford: University Press, 1981. [B485 A3]

**Allan, D.J.** *The Philosophy of Aristotle*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952. [B485 A45 1970]

**Barnes, Jonathan.** *Aristotle*, London, 1982. [B485 B35]

**Barnes, Jonathan, ed.** *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle's Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. [B485 C35]

**Catan, J.K., ed.** *Aristotle: The Collected Papers of Joseph Owens*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981. [B485 O834]

**Düring, I., & Owen, G.E.L., eds.** *Aristotle and Plato in the mid-Fourth Century*, Göteborg, 1960. [B485 D832]

**Irwin, T.** *Aristotle's First Principles*. [B485 I74]

**Jaeger, W.** *Aristotle: Fundamentals of His Development*, trans. R. Robinson, Oxford, 1948. [B485 J33 1948]

**Lloyd, G.E.R., & Owen, G.E.L., eds.** *Aristotle on Mind and the Senses*, Cambridge, 1978. [B491 M5S95 1975]

**Marx, Werner.** *Introduction to Aristotle's Theory of Being as Being*, trans. Robert S. Schine, 1977. [B491 O5M3413]

**Moravcsik, J.M.E., ed.** *Aristotle: A Collection of Critical Essays*. [B485 M6]

**Ross, Sir David.** *Aristotle*, London: Methuen, 1964. [B485 R6 1964]

**Taylor, A. E.** *Aristotle*. [B485 T27 1955]

### 3. Class Schedule\*

- WEEK 1: (Sept. 7)** - Introduction to Aristotle and to *Categories*.
- WEEK 2 (Sept. 11 & 14)** - *Categories*.
- WEEK 3 (Sept. 18 & 21)** - *Physics*.
- WEEK 4 (Sept. 25 & 28)** - *Physics*.
- WEEK 5 (Oct. 2 & 5)** - *Physics*. **Mid-term exam (Oct. 5). Essay Assigned.**
- WEEK 6 (Oct. 9 & 12)** - **No class Mon., Oct. 9 (Thanksgiving Day)**  
- *De Anima*
- WEEK 7 (Oct. 16 & 19)** - *De Anima*
- WEEK 8 (Oct. 23 & 26)** - *De Anima*
- WEEK 9 (Oct. 30 & Nov. 2)** - *De Anima & Metaphysics*.
- WEEK 10 (Nov. 6 & 9)** - *De Anima & Metaphysics* (Mon., Nov. 6)  
- **Essay due (Fri., Nov. 10)**
- WEEK 11 (Nov. 13 & 16)** - **No class Mon., Nov. 13 (Reading Break)**  
- *Nicomachean Ethics*.
- WEEK 12 (Nov. 20 & 23)** - *Nicomachean Ethics*.
- WEEK 13 (Nov. 27 & 30)** - *Nicomachean Ethics* & Review.

Exams for this term begin on December 4 and end on December 18.

**\* This schedule is subject to revision, as sometimes discussion and the flow of ideas in class require us to spend more time on certain subjects, less time on others, than originally planned.**