

Provisional Draft: This outline gives students a sense of what the course involves, but it is not the final, *official* outline.

PHIL/GRS 379 A01 (22344/21762) – EARLY GREEK THOUGHT

Spring 2020, University of Victoria

Department of Philosophy

Course website: available at <http://coursespaces.uvic.ca>

Instructor & Contact Information

Dr. Clifford Roberts (cliffordroberts@uvic.ca)

Office hours: Tue-Wed 2-3:30pm (or by appt.)

Office: CLE B318

Meeting Times & Place

Tue–Wed–Fri 12:30-1:20pm

Room: CLE A203

Course Description

This course surveys the ideas of a group of ancient Greek thinkers who inaugurated a new method of investigating and explaining the natural world. Ranging geographically in the Mediterranean from Turkey to Sicily and historically from the 6th to the 5th centuries BCE, they were united by the Greek language and a shared methodology of rationally explaining the world by means of its own inherent natural principles. These thinkers, sometimes misleadingly called ‘Presocratics’ (some were contemporaries of Socrates), were the first recognizable natural scientists and philosophers in the Western tradition. By originating naturalistic, rational and explanatory accounts of the world, these thinkers shaped the kinds of questions, answers and methods employed in subsequent philosophical and scientific inquiry up to and including the present day. Among the thinkers whose views we will examine are: Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Democritus and Leucippus, Anaxagoras, and Empedocles. Our focus will be on their physical and metaphysical views and our goal will be the articulation of a clear and precise account of their views and their methods of argument and inquiry.

Course Texts

Required: [PB] *Philosophy Before Socrates*, 2nd ed., ed. by Richard D. McKirahan (Hackett, 2010)

[PR] *A Presocratics Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. by Patricia Curd (Hackett, 2011)

Course Evaluation

(1) **Comment Sheets**

Value: 1st = 15%, 2nd = 15%, 3rd = 20% (**total** = 40%)

Length: ≥750 words

Assignment: Students must write a commentary on an assigned topic from among a set provided by the instructor. Each assignment will be provided 1 week before the due date. Further information will be provided with each assignment.

Due dates: see course schedule.

(2) **Mid-Term Exam (In-Class)**

Value: 20%

Assignment: Students must complete a mid-term exam involving multiple choice and short answers in-class. Further information will be provided prior to the exam.

Dates: see course schedule.

(3) Final Exam

Value: 35%

Assignment: Students must complete a final exam involving multiple choice, short and long answers during the exam period.

Dates: tba during exam period.

(4) Class participation

Value: 5%

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

Grades	GPV	Percentage	Description
A+	9	90-100	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.
A	8	85-89	
A-	7	80-84	
B+	6	77-79	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.
B	5	73-76	
B-	4	70-72	
C+	3	65-69	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.
C	2	60-64	
D	1	50-59	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.
F	0	0-49	F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.

Interpretation of these grade definitions is up to the discretion of the instructor. If you receive a grade during the course that you believe is unfair, please begin by discussing the matter with the instructor in a respectful, open-minded manner. Rest assured that if you still believe the grade you received is unfair you can appeal the matter to the chair of the department. For additional information regarding grades, please see pp. 51-53 of the most recent (September 2019) edition of the University of Victoria Undergraduate Calendar. All evaluations of tests and assignments will be

calculated according to percentage scores. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference.

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 read and understand the University's policy on academic integrity: <https://web.uvic.ca/calendar2018-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html>

Policy on Late or Missed Assignments

All assignments submitted **on or before** the specified due dates will be adjudicated and returned with written comments. Assignments submitted **within one week after** the specified due dates will be adjudicated without penalty; however, they will be returned **without** written comments. Lastly, any assignment submitted **more than one week after** the specified due date will be adjudicated and returned without comments, and a penalty of **6%** per day will be assessed, 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.

Counseling Services

Many, if not most, students experience some difficulties with their mental health during their years as undergraduate students. Make sure you are familiar with the university's **Counseling Services** (<https://www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/>) which is an excellent resource you have at your disposal on campus. It is hard to shake the stigma associated with problems like depression and anxiety, but if at any point you can benefit from help with mental health issues, please contact Counseling Services. They genuinely want to help, and why not take advantage of this free resource?

Important Dates

Please consult the university calendar's **Academic Year Important Dates** for information about last possible dates to withdraw from courses without penalty, examinations period start/end dates, and so on: <https://web.uvic.ca/calendar2018-09/general/dates.html>

Technology in Classroom

Some students require laptops or voice recognition apps for their learning strategies, so I do not prohibit their use in the classroom. However, studies demonstrate that multi-tasking reduces the performance of other nearby students, so anyone caught on social media, internet surfing, etc. will be asked to leave and potentially subject to disciplinary action.

Academic Advising

For information about declaring a program, academic concessions or interpreting your CAPP report, please visit **Undergraduate Advising** (<https://www.uvic.ca/services/advising/>) or make an appointment with an adviser.

Territory Acknowledgment

The University of Victoria is committed to acknowledging and respecting the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. For information about support for indigenous students and efforts to foster reconciliation, please visit the **Office of Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement**: <https://www.uvic.ca/services/indigenous/>.

Course Schedule

Dates	Assignments
<u>Week 1</u> : Jan 7, 8 & 10	<i>Sources & Beginnings</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 1-20 [PR] pp. 1-12
<u>Week 2</u> : Jan 14, 15 & 17	<i>The Early Ionians I: Thales & Anaximander</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 18-47 [PR] pp. 13-19
<u>Week 3</u> : Jan 21, 22 & 24	<i>The Early Ionians II: Anaximenes & Xenophon</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 48-78 [PR] pp. 19-22, 31-38
<u>Week 4</u> : Jan 28, 29 & 31	<i>The Pythagorean Tradition</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 79-111 [PR] pp. 23-30 *1st Comment Sheet Due Jan 31*

<p><u>Week 5:</u> Feb 4, 5 & 7</p>	<p><i>Heraclitus of Ephesus</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 112-145 [PR] pp. 39-54</p>
<p><u>Week 6:</u> Feb 11, 12 & 14</p>	<p><i>The Monists I: Parmenides</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 145-173 [PR] pp. 55-64 *1st In-Class Test: Feb 14*</p>
<p><u>Week 7:</u> Feb 18, 19 & 21</p>	<p><i>Reading Break</i> <i>No class.</i></p>
<p><u>Week 8:</u> Feb 25, 26 & 28</p>	<p><i>The Monists II: Zeno & Melissus</i> Readings: [PB] pp.174-192, 293-303 [PR] pp. 66-72, 127-131</p>
<p><u>Week 9:</u> Mar 3, 4 & 6</p>	<p><i>The Pluralists I: Anaxagoras</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 193-229 [PR] pp. 101-108</p>
<p><u>Week 10:</u> Mar 10, 11 & 13</p>	<p><i>The Pluralists II: Empedocles</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 230-293 [PR] pp. 73-100 *2nd Comment Sheet Due Feb 28*</p>
<p><u>Week 11:</u> Mar 17, 18 & 20</p>	<p><i>The Early Atomists: Leucippus & Democritus</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 303-342 [PR] pp. 109-126</p>
<p><u>Week 12:</u> Mar 24, 25 & 27</p>	<p><i>Diogenes of Apollonia & Philolaus of Croton</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 343-364 [PR] pp. 132-143</p>
<p><u>Week 13:</u> Mar 31, 1 & Apr 3</p>	<p><i>Beyond the Natural World: The Sophists</i> Readings: [PB] pp. 365-404 [PR] pp. 144-161 *3rd Comment Sheet Due Apr 3*</p>