

Introduction to Ancient Philosophy

Ph 207a A01 Spring 2022

This course outline is © Thomas Heyd

Instructor: Thomas Heyd, Ph.D.
Lectures: TWF 9:30 – 10:20
Classroom: COR A129
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Provisional outline: Given changing circumstances arising from the Covid-19 situation, this outline is subject to changes before start of the course.



Caryatids, Erechtheion (created 421 - 406 BCE), Akropolis, Athens

Territory acknowledgment

We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples, on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples, whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. This acknowledgment entails a commitment to ongoing dialogue and reconciliation with the peoples of these lands. For information about support for indigenous students and efforts to foster reconciliation, please visit the UVic Office of Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement.

Course description

In this course we consider the earliest reflections in the European philosophical tradition on the structure of the world, the nature of wisdom, the foundations of the good life, and the limits of knowledge. Class discussion centred on course topics is highly encouraged. Students from all faculties are welcome to attend.

We begin by considering the suggestion that everything is made up of certain basic constituents, such as water, air, atoms or some particular unknown thing, and that the properties of things depend on their constituents. We continue by examining classical Greek critiques of traditional religious beliefs, of standard gendered and ethnocentric practices, and of societal structures that allow populists to gain the upper hand in the state.

Furthermore, we reflect on explanations of the relation between constantly changing appearances to more stable, underlying, structures and processes, we inspect several ways to think of justice, and ask whether grasping the nature of reality depends on a personal engagement with it. Throughout the course students are encouraged to develop arguments backed up by reflection and careful reading of the assigned texts.

Textbook and additional Readings

Required: Reeve Miller and Gerson (eds.), *Introductory Readings in Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy* (Hackett, 2015). **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 Brightspace.

Course organisation and student engagement

To facilitate comprehension and class discussion, assigned weekly readings are to be done *ahead of lectures*. Constructive participation and tolerance of the views of others are expected. Everyone is encouraged to be self-reflective about his or her own beliefs, and to constructively contribute to class discussion. Throughout the course, work will be assessed on the basis of A) care

in the explanation of key points, B) quality of development of points presented, C) effective and correct use of the English language and clarity, neatness, and organisation of points.

Tips for best performances

- Do readings *ahead of class periods*, read material attentively (by asking questions about the material), and do weekly assignments.
- *Participate* in class discussion with constructive contributions.
- *Contact the instructor* if failing to understand the material.

Graded student activities

1. Final take-home exam	40%
2. Mid-term test	30%
3. Group project	20%
4. Participation, including weekly assignments	10%

1. **The final exam** will be a comprehensive take-home exam with short and long answer questions. Questions will be handed out on the last day of classes, and the completed exam must be submitted to the Brightspace website **by NOON, no later than five (5) days after the last day of classes**. Late exams will **NOT** be accepted (they 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) accurate presentation of the views discussed and explanation of key points, (2) well-developed discussion of points presented, (3) effective and correct use of the English language and clarity, neatness, and organisation of points.

2. **The mid-term in-class sit-down test** will cover both readings and additional points raised in lectures. Both understanding and reflective analysis will be expected. Test questions will likely consist of a combination of shorter and longer answer, as well as some true-false and multiple choice, questions. The assessment criteria are the same as for the Final Exam.

3. **Group projects**. This component is aimed at **deepening your understanding of Ancient European Philosophy**. Groups of 4 to 6 students choose a topic from a list provided, and develop an insightful approach to a topic from the list provided, grounded in readings, lectures and supplementary research. Each group is to produce a brief group report (worth 50% of the grade) and a 10-minute presentation (worth another 50% of the grade).

To receive a grade for the project group, members have to comply with ALL four of the following steps: a) form a group, select a topic, and have it approved by the instructor by Week 4, b) submit a one-page plan of action by Week 5, c) submit a short report by Week 9, d) give a group presentation on the assigned day in the last two weeks of classes. Further information will be forthcoming after the start of the semester. For further information, see the handout that will be placed on Brightspace.

Group field trip: each group is required to visit Greek and Roman Studies to look at their exhibit of reproductions of Ancient artworks in the hallway near Clearihue B409. Groups choose a time and date to make the visit as a group. During their visit groups should choose one or several items on view for which it finds a connection with the group's project. Integrate the insights gained from viewing the item(s) in your group project report and presentation. You may accompany the report by one or two photographs. **ATTENTION**: please be respectful of people in nearby rooms by keeping your voices down, don't block the hallway. All health precautions regarding Covid-19 in place are to be applied in a strict manner.

4. Participation. Assessed on the basis of a) *regular attendance*, b) *constructive participation in class discussion*, c) *weekly assignments* based on the course readings and analysis of the issues under discussion. *Class attendance will be taken, and is particularly expected in the case of guest speakers* (justified absences on guest speaker days should be discussed with the instructor ahead of time).

Weekly response assignments. Unless indicated otherwise, you are expected to write up a brief response to a question regarding each week's readings, to help you engage with the material and concepts before lectures. Answers to questions posed should be in your own words and not copied from assigned readings or other sources, be up to half a page long, and submitted on the first day of classes weekly.

IMPORTANT: when submitting your assignments, at the head of the page please state, in this order, a) LAST NAME and first name (e.g., JONES, Peter), b) course (Phil 232), c) the date assignment is due (e.g., 9 September 2021), d) the particular readings discussed (e.g., Singer and Taylor).

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 *pass or fail* basis. *Both* quantity and quality of assignments will be taken into account in grading. All assignments that *pass* will be assigned 85%. *No late assignments will be accepted.*

Participation grade: a grade in the A range will be given if all required assignments were handed in, done at the level that deserves a pass, combined with regular attendance, and class participation was constructive; a grade in the B range will be given if most of the assignments are handed in and done at a pass deserving level, and most lectures have been attended and class participation was constructive; a grade in the C range will be given if less than 2/3 of assignments have been handed in and attendance has been less than 2/3 of the time; a grade in the D range will be given if half the required assignments and half the lectures were attended while class participation was constructive; a grade in the F range will be given if fewer assignments than 2/3 were handed in or if less than half of the lectures were attended or participation was non-constructive.

Grading scale and interpretation

Percentages will convert to a letter grade according to the standard University scheme:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 65-69	D = 50-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 60-64	F = 0-49
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72		

What the Grading Scale Means:

- A+, A, or A-** 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.
- B+, B, or B-** 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. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students. B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material.
- C+ or C** Earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material, adequate skills to work with the course material are displayed, and the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
- D** 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** Work that is not worthy of course credit toward the degree.
- N** An N grade indicates that the student did not complete one or more of the course's essential requirements. In this course that means that a student has not completed the Final take-home exam or the Mid-term test or the Experiential project. N is a failing grade and factors into the student's GPA as "0".

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 (or TA) in a respectful, open-minded manner. Rest assured that if, after discussing the matter with the instructor, you still believe that the grade that you received is unfair you can appeal the matter to the Chair of the Department of Philosophy. For additional information regarding grades, including N and DEF status, please see the most recent edition of the *UVic Undergraduate Calendar*. Final examinations are the property of UVic and will not be returned. They are available for viewing at the Records Office according to UVic procedures and regulations.

All evaluations of tests and assignments will be calculated according to *percentage scores*. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference. The final course grade will be calculated according to the percentages indicated above. However, this will not be done automatically on Brightspace, so please ignore the 'Grades' section on Brightspace.

Other matters

Late assignment and extensions

Late weekly assignments will *not* be accepted and tests will *not* normally be rescheduled (no make-up exams). If a test is missed for serious, *documented*, reasons, the final exam may be weighted so as to incorporate the weighting of the missed exam.

Documented evidence for legitimately having missed a test and an explanatory statement in writing have to be received *no more than ten days after the deadline or test missed*, and preferably before the test.

Academic integrity and University academic regulations

The University Calendar states that “Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. ... Any action that contravenes this standard, including misrepresentation, falsification or deception, undermines the intention and worth of scholarly work and violates the fundamental academic rights of members of our community.”

All students in this course should complete the Integrity Matters module that is available in Brightspace ([here](#)) before you hand in any coursework for evaluation. Students need to self-enrol in this module by searching for it under the Discovery tab (drop-down menu) on the Brightspace homepage.

Violations of academic integrity include plagiarism, multiple submissions, falsifying materials subject to academic evaluation, cheating on work, tests and examinations, unauthorized use of an editor, and aiding others to cheat. To avoid plagiarism and cheating please view the Uvic Libraries plagiarism guide <https://www.uvic.ca/library/research/citation/plagiarism/>. I reserve the right to use plagiarism detection software or other platforms to assess the integrity of student work.

Penalties for violations vary, with first violations generally resulting in a failing grade on the work. Please view https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk_0xsM_V?bc=true&bcCurrent=08%20-%20Policy%20on%20Academic%20Integrity&bcGroup=Undergraduate%20Academic%20Regulations&bcltemType=policies. Also, please familiarise yourselves with Undergraduate Academic regulations here: <https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/future/undergrad/index.php#/policies>.

Copyright Statement

All course content and materials are made available by the instructor for educational purposes and for the exclusive use of students registered in their class. This includes all lecture notes, exams and quizzes that I make available to you. The material is protected under copyright law, even if not marked with ©. Any further use or distribution of materials to others requires the written permission of the instructor, except under fair dealing or another exception in the Copyright Act. Violations may result in disciplinary action under the Resolution of Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy (AC1300). Any evidence that you are circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.

Technology in the classroom

Some students require laptops or voice recognition apps for their learning strategies. For this reason, they are not prohibited in the classroom. However, studies demonstrate that multi-tasking reduces the performance of other nearby students. Therefore, anyone caught on social media, internet surfing, etc. during lecture periods may be asked to leave and potentially subject to disciplinary action.

Inclusivity/diversity

The Philosophy Department is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all students, staff, and faculty. We affirm the diverse identities of persons and that the rights all individuals have to be treated with dignity and respect irrespective of their gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, class, or national origin. This basic commitment entails, among other things, specific recognition and support for trans, queer, two-spirited, and non-binary people, and we respect the rights of individuals to self-determination and self-description. Information about Uvic policies on human rights, equity, discrimination and harassment are available at www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/HkQ0pzdAN. If you have any particular concerns about these matters in our course, please don't hesitate to contact me. Information regarding accommodation of religious observance can be located in the Uvic Calendar at <https://www.uvic.ca/equity/education/religious/index.php>.

Transition and New Student Connect Program

Students who are new to the University and would like assistance may contact the Transition Office, www.uvic.ca/transition, and you may also participate in New Student Connect. Participating students in New Student Connect will be assigned in small groups by Faculty and/or interest groups to upper year peer mentors who will provide insights about student life, the Uvic student community, available support services, and ways that students can get connected as needed. For further information see: <https://www.uvic.ca/services/studentlife/initiatives/new-student-connect/index.php>

Student Mental Health Supports / UVic Support Connect

Many, if not most, students experience some difficulties with their mental health at some point in time as undergraduate students. This may especially be the case during the present Covid-19 pandemic. It is hard to shake the stigma associated with problems like depression and anxiety, however, if at any point you believe that you could benefit from help with mental health issues, please contact the new UVic Student Wellness Centre / UVic Support Connect. In addition to providing face to face help, they offer a 24 x 7 phone & online mental health counselling and support program, no matter where you are located, at any time. This is an excellent resource at your disposal on campus. They genuinely want to help, so do consider taking advantage of this free resource.

Health Services and Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL)

A note to remind you to take care of yourself, especially in the present times. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. The sooner you let any of these on-campus services know your needs the quicker they can assist you in achieving your learning goals. Resources include

- Mental health counselling Services, already mentioned above. See <https://www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/>.
- University Health Services (UHS), which provides a full-service primary health clinic for students and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives. <http://www.uvic.ca/services/health/>

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Center for Accessible Learning (CAL) as soon as possible. CAL staff members are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations, see: <https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/>. Please note that instructors cannot provide CAL-type accommodations without CAL documentation.

Food bank and Community Cabbage

Sometimes students run out of money for food. Health restrictions permitting, the Food bank and Community Cabbage are available at the Students' Union. These are their statements: "The UVSS Food Bank & Free Store is run by a team of dedicated staff and volunteers and offers all UVic students access to food essentials and free household items", see <https://uvss.ca/foodbank/>. "The Community Cabbage is a student organization at the University of Victoria. We serve a free weekly hot meal to the campus community prepared from reclaimed food – edible but unsellable food donated by grocery stores. A crew of volunteers turn these ingredients into a healthy and delightful vegetarian meal at a community kitchen. Anyone is welcome to come cook with us and/or eat with us!" See <https://uviccommunitycabbage.wordpress.com/about/>.

Important dates and academic advising

Important dates for the 2021-2022 Academic Year are found here: <https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/dates/>. Please consult the Important Dates for information about last possible dates to withdraw from courses without penalty, examinations period start/end dates, etc. For information about declaring a program, academic concessions or interpreting your UVic CAPP report, please visit Undergraduate Advising or make an appointment with an advisor.

Schedule of lectures and tests

Please note that this schedule is tentative and will be adjusted as we proceed through the semester. Any changes to the schedule will be announced in class. *Informed* participation in class discussion will be expected, so *please read the assigned texts in advance*. All readings are from our textbook, unless otherwise indicated.

Week 1 Introduction

10-16 Jan Readings: Maps and Timeline, Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes

****Monday 10 Jan: first day of classes****

Optional, supplementary film of the play *Symposium (Plato) – The Drinking Party*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Al9u1lal6KY&t=2104s>.

Week 2 Early Greek Philosophy

17-23 Jan Readings: Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Heraclitus, Parmenides

****Tuesday 18 Jan: the assignment about this week's readings is DUE (ahead of lectures!)****

****Exploration of groups and topics****

****Friday 21 Jan: GUEST LECTURE: Dr. Geoffrey Kron, Greek and Roman Studies, UVic, on Ancient Greek technologies and society** TENTATIVE**

Week 3
24-30 Jan

Early Greek Philosophy

Readings: Parmenides (continued), Zeno, Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Democritus

26 January: last date for adding courses

****Friday 28 Jan: Final date for groups to form and to select group projects****

Week 4
31 Jan-6 Feb

Introduction to Socrates

Readings: Euthyphro, Apology, Symposium (selections)

Week 5
7-13 Feb

Plato on the last days of Socrates, and on love and beauty

Readings (continued): Euthyphro, Apology, Symposium (selections)

****Tuesday 8 February: Virtual FIELD TRIP to Athens directly from on-site! Guided by Dr. Brendan Burke, Greek and Roman Studies, UVic and Mellon Professor of Archaeology at the American School of Classical Studies** CONFIRMED**

****Friday 11 Feb: Plan of action for group work required****

Week 6
14-20 Feb

Plato on justice, review and midterm

Readings: Republic (selections)

****Friday 18 February: Mid-term****

Week 7
21-27 Feb

****READING WEEK****

No new readings, no assignments

21 February: Family Day in British Columbia, and Louis Riel Day in Manitoba

Week 8
28 Feb – 6 Mar

Plato on justice

Readings: Republic (selections) continued

28 February: Last day for withdrawing from courses without penalty of failure

Week 9
7-13 Mar

Aristotle on the good life (ethics)

Readings: Nichomachean Ethics (selections)

****Friday 11 March: group work reports due****

Week 10
14-20 Mar

Aristotle on what there is (metaphysics) and later schools of philosophy

Readings: Metaphysics and Physics (selections)

Week 11
21-27 Mar

Later schools of philosophy

Readings: Greek Stoics, Epicureans, Skeptics (selections)

Week 12
28 Mar–3 Apr

Later schools of philosophy + Group work presentations

Readings: Greek Stoics, Epicureans, Skeptics (selections) continued

Presentation schedule TBA

Week 13
4-10 Apr

Group Work presentations + Summary-Conclusion

Presentation schedule TBA

Wednesday 5 Apr, last day of classes

****FINAL EXAM take-home exam questions handed out****

Week 14
11-17 Apr

Final Exam Submission

*****Exam answers to be submitted on Brightspace by NOON Monday 11 April*****

Late submissions will not be accepted!