



Shanghai Jiao Tong University

PI913 History of Ancient Philosophy

Term: May 29 – June 23, 2017

Instructor: Professor Ross Hamilton

Home Institution: Barnard College, Columbia University, New York City

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Class Hours: M-F, 120 minutes each day (2,400 minutes in total)

Credit: 4 units

Course Description

This course will survey the history of philosophy from the Pre-Socratics to the rediscovery of Aristotle by the Scholastics in the 12th century CE. Lectures and discussion will be supplemented by exercises in philosophical speculation. Lectures Monday through Friday, 2 hours, with additional tutorials on Saturdays for students in need of help or with an interest in philosophy.

Course Goals

This course will survey key philosophical ideas from the Pre-Socratic philosophers, through Plato and Aristotle, Roman philosophy and the Neo-Platonists, to early Christianity and will end with a brief discussion of the major Scholastic philosophers. Throughout, the lectures will link the philosophical ideas to the historical moment of their thought. Although students will only read a brief selection of the philosophers under consideration, the lectures will summarize other central texts and this knowledge forms part of the course. Students will also gain an understanding of the nature of philosophical investigation and leave with a good understanding of the history of Western Philosophy.

Required Textbooks

Cohen, Curd, and Reeve: Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy, third edition (**RAGP**)
Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory readings (translated with introduction and notes by Brad Inwood and L. P. Gerson. Second edition. Indianapolis, 1997. ·
Augustine, Confessions (translated Henry Chadwick, Oxford)

We will supply you with a reader containing additional materials, essays, etc with brief selections from:

Ackrill, Aristotle the Philosopher

Barnes, The Presocratic Philosophers

Burnet, Early Greek Philosophy



Guthrie, A History of Greek Philosophy
 Hussey, The Presocratics
 Kirk, Raven, & Schofield, The Presocratic Philosophers (KRS)
 McKirihan, Philosophy Before Socrates
 Ring, Beginning with the Presocratics, second edition
 Shields, The Blackwell Guide to Ancient Philosophy
 Cicero: On Moral Ends. Translated by R. Woolf. Cambridge, 2001. .
 Seneca: Dialogues and Essays. Translated by J. Davie. Oxford, 2007.

Course Requirements

Final Grade Percentages

- ✧ Class Participation 10%: regular attendance and participation is requested.
- ✧ 2 Reaction Papers (20% each): you will be asked to write two reaction papers (4 pages) on key readings throughout the course. Reaction papers summarize the article or primary source assigned, identify the main arguments made by authors and briefly discuss them.
- ✧ Midterm 20%
- ✧ Final Exam 30%: overall evaluation at end of semester

Please note: simple attendance is insufficient for this portion of the grade.

You must follow the lecture, if you are uncertain please raise your hand or contact your T.A. and I will meet with you to clarify the lectures.

Grading Policy

Number grade	Letter grade	GPA
90-100	A	4.0
85-89	A-	3.7
80-84	B+	3.3
75-79	B	3.0
70-74	B-	2.7
67-69	C+	2.3
65-66	C	2.0
62-64	C-	1.7
60-61	D	1.0
≤59	F (Failure)	0

Course Schedule



Please note: the lectures will be wide-ranging and therefore careful note-taking is important. The assigned texts form only the basis for the discussion of the philosophical ideas under consideration in lecture.

READING ASSIGNMENTS (only those in boldface are required; note that the page numbers in **RAGP** are to the third edition):

Part One: The Pre-Socratics and Plato

Introduction: What is philosophy?

Readings from the Pre-Socratics **RAGP** 1-7

The Milesians **RAGP** 8-14

Heraclitus **RAGP** 24-34

Parmenides **RAGP** 25-31

Zeno **RAGP** 59-63

Empedocles **RAGP** 47-57

Anaxagoras **RAGP** 42-47

The Atomists **RAGP** 64-71

Plato: selections from most important works with commentary.

RAGP, 89-96 [Introduction to Plato]

RAGP: 97-114, 203-281 [Euthyphro, Meno, Phaedo]

RAGP: 445-528, 578-581 [Republic (books V-VII, excerpt from book X)]

RAGP: 604-613 [Parmenides (127b-135d)]

RAGP: 614- 644 [Timaeus (27e-58c)]

Recommended: Apology, Crito [in RAGP]

Guthrie (vol. 3): 325-488; (vol. 4): 236-265, 324-365, 487-521

Shields: 55-99

Part Two: Aristotle

Aristotle: selections from the most important works with commentary.

RAGP, 645-654 [Introduction to Aristotle]

RAGP: 656-662 [Categories, Chapters 1-5]

RAGP: 694-719 [Physics, Books I and II (excerpts)]

RAGP: 727-735 [On Generation & Corruption, Book I (excerpts)]

RAGP: 749-757 [Parts of Animals, Book I (excerpts)]

RAGP: 758-800 [Metaphysics, Books I, IV, VII, VIII (excerpts)]

RAGP: 809-825 [De Anima, Books I and II (excerpts)]



Lecture: Aristotle, Poetics (selection) and Sophocles, Oedipus Rex

Recommended:

Ackrill, Aristotle the Philosopher: all, esp. 1-54, 116-134

Shields, The Blackwell Guide to Ancient Philosophy: 163-183, 211-227

Essay One Assigned: With explicit reference to at least four texts (two from each philosopher) discuss the similarities and differences between Plato and Aristotle's philosophy.

Midterm Exam

Part One: Quote Identifications

Part Two: Essay

Part Three: Roman Philosophy

Introduction to Epicureans Reading: pp.3-45 of Hellenistic Philosophy

Epicurean Ethics Reading: Cicero, On Moral Ends

Introduction to Stoics Reading: pp. 110-178 of Hellenistic Philosophy 8.

Stoic Ethics Reading: Cicero, On Moral Ends 3 9.

Pyrrhonian Scepticism Reading: Pp.302-324 and 387-398 of Hellenistic Philosophy

Introduction to Seneca Reading: Seneca, On the Happy Life, On Tranquility of Mind, On the Shortness of Life On Anger On Mercy Week 9 25.

Marcus Aurelius, Meditations (selections; handout)

Essay 2 assigned: Take an experience you have had today – for example, an event, a desire, an object, yourself – and describe it using at least three of the philosophers we have discussed in first lecture to date.

Part Four: From Augustine to Aquinas

Augustine, Confessions (selections from Books I, II, IV, VIII, XII)

Boethius, selections from Consolation of Philosophy.

Averroes and Avicenna, selections

Porphyry's commentary on the Categories

Aquinas, selections from Summa Theologica

Final Exam

Part One: Quote Identifications from ENTIRE COURSE

Part Two: Essay from ENTIRE COURSE