



Shanghai Jiao Tong University

PI913 History of Ancient Philosophy (Online)

Instructor Information	<p>Marcello Barison Home Institution: University of Chicago Email: marcello.barison@gmail.com</p>		
Term	<p>June 28, 2021 - July 23, 2021</p>	Credits	<p>4 units</p>
Course Delivery	<p>Monday through Friday, 60 minutes per teaching day plus online material (videos, Power Point presentations, additional texts). The lessons, each lasting one hour and for a number of five per week, will be held asynchronously and will be uploaded on an online platform (Zoom). Each of them will be accompanied by specific additional interactive material (videos, texts, Power Point presentations, etc.) which will complement the teaching material exposed during the lesson and will in all respects be part of the content of the lesson. It is also planned to activate an online window on a weekly basis (2 hours long) in which students will be able to interact directly with the teacher and the teaching assistant through a special chat to share their questions and observations. The chat will therefore serve both to answer any questions and to replace the discussion in presence.</p> <p>The workload students are expected to complete to properly pass this course is about 12 hours per week.</p>		
Required Texts (with ISBN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ARISTOTLE, <i>The Metaphysics</i>. Trans. by H. Tredennick (Cambridge (Mass.) and London: Harvard University Press, Loeb Classical Library, 1935). ■ MARIJA GIMBUTAS, <i>The Language of the Goddess</i>. Foreword by J. Campbell (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001). ■ PLATO, <i>Five Dialogues</i>. Trans. by G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002). ■ PLATO, <i>The Republic</i>. Trans. by Griffith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). ■ SOPHOCLES, <i>Theban Plays</i>. Trans. by P. Meineck and P. Woodruff (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003). ■ <i>The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy. The Complete Fragments and Selected Testimonies of the Major Presocratics</i> (2 vol. set). Translated and edited by D. W. Graham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). 		
Prerequisite	<p>Open to freshmen</p>		



Course Overview

Ancient Greek philosophy is not only the basis of the Western and Arabic philosophical traditions, it is also of central importance for understanding Western culture in general, including literature, science, religion, politics, and art.

This course will be devoted to a survey of the central figures of the Ancient Greek tradition from the beginnings among pre-Socratic philosophers up to Plato and Aristotle. After a survey of the poetic-philosophical thought of the most influential pre-Socratic philosophers (Thales, Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Parmenides), we will move on to a close study of selected dialogues of Plato and some of the most important and influential works of Plato's student, Aristotle. The lectures will focus primarily on the metaphysical and political implications of this tradition.

Course Goals

1. To provide a general introduction to the philosophical thought of the Ancient Greek philosophical tradition as well as a survey, analysis and evaluation of many of the key teachings of that tradition;
2. To display the teachings of Ancient Greek philosophy in their own historical and cultural context while at the same time making occasional reference to their impact on contemporary thought;
3. To identify and explain the philosophical vocabulary of the Ancient Greek tradition;
4. To identify and explain key philosophical teachings of the Ancient Greek tradition, particularly in metaphysics, epistemology, and politics;
5. To penetrate some key issues in Ancient Greek philosophy with critical philosophical depth;
6. To provide students with the foundation for further study of Plato and Aristotle and the philosophical tradition that followed;
7. And perhaps more importantly, I hope the course to provide students the opportunity to think deeply about Ancient Greek Philosophy and its importance as a gateway to understanding the essence of Western culture generally.



Grading Policy

There will be two exams, a midterm exam and a final exam. Each is worth 40% of your final grade. The remaining 20% is for oral participation and/or use of office hours.

Midterm Examination	40%
Final Examination	40%
Attendance and Oral participation	20%

Grading Scale

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



Class Schedule

Date	Lecture	Readings
Day 1	Introductory remarks and discussion	No reading
Day 2	THE PRE-SOCRATICS: THE MILESIANS, PARMENIDES & HERACLITUS	<i>The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy</i> , Chapters on Thales, Anaximander and Heraclitus.
Day 3	PLATO	<i>Apology</i>
Day 4	PLATO	<i>Phædo</i>
Day 5		Film: <i>The Matrix</i>
Day 6	PLATO	<i>Republic</i> , Book I
Day 7	PLATO	<i>Republic</i> , Book II-III
Day 8	PLATO	<i>Republic</i> , Book VI-VII
Day 9		Reading Day
Day 10	Midterm Examination	<u>No reading</u>
Day 11	PLATO	<i>Republic</i> , Book X
Day 12	SOPHOCLES	<i>Oedipus Tyrannus</i>
Day 13	SOPHOCLES	<i>Oedipus Tyrannus</i>
Day 14	SOPHOCLES	<i>Antigone</i>
Day 15		Film: <i>Oedipus Rex</i>
Day 16	MARIJA GIMBUTAS	<i>The Language of the Goddess</i>
Day 17	ARISTOTLE	<i>Metaphysics</i>
Day 18	ARISTOTLE	<i>Metaphysics</i>
Day 19		Reading Day
Day 20	Final Examination	<u>No reading</u>