

PHIL 3111

ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

Tuesday & Thursday, 3:40-5:20 PM  
3305 Boylan Hall

Prof. Andrew Arlig

**Objectives:**

At the end of this course:

- You will have a broad understanding of the major figures and themes of Ancient Greek philosophy, including in particular, an understanding of the major interests and positions of Plato and Aristotle,
- You will be familiar with the main positions and supporting arguments presented by Greek thinkers in this period
- You will be able to express our authors' positions and supporting arguments with precision and clarity, both in your written work and in classroom presentations
- You will develop the capacity to evaluate the validity and soundness of the arguments used by our authors
- You will be able to present evaluations and criticisms of arguments in a precise and clear manner, both in your written work and in classroom presentations.

**Prof. Arlig's Contact Information:**

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 1-2 pm, *and by appointment*

Office: 3300 Boylan Hall

Cell phone (emergency only, please): (646) 243-5381

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**Assessment:**

PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY. ONCE WE REVIEW THE SYLLABUS TOGETHER, THE INSTRUCTOR ASSUMES THAT YOU UNDERSTAND HOW YOU WILL BE ASSESSED AND THAT YOU AGREE TO COMPLY WITH ALL POLICIES PERTAINING TO ASSESSMENT.

Your grade will be determined as follows:

- Four (4) argument reconstructions (approx. 1-2 pages each) – 20%

All reconstructions must be in your own words. NO QUOTATIONS allowed.

- One (1) office visit, in which the student identifies the strengths and weaknesses of an argument presented in an argument reconstruction paper – 10%
- One (1) post-visit report, which summarizes the strengths and weaknesses identified during the office visit (approx. 2-3 pages) – 10%
- One (1) presentation – 5%
- One (1) multi-part capstone [see below] – 55%

The argument reconstructions, office visit, and post-visit report may be done anytime during the semester with the following stipulations. The office visit must be completed no later than November 20, which means that you will

need to complete at least one argument reconstruction no later than a week prior to that date. All reconstructions and the post-visit report must be handed in by December 11. I recommend that you do these assignments as soon as possible, and in particular, I urge you to meet with me for your required office visit and to complete your post-visit report as early in the semester as you can. You may do more than the minimum amount of work. I will count your best scores.

The presentation may be done individually or in a small group (no more than 3 people). Your task is to lead us into the text. Focus on a particularly difficult or interesting passage, thesis, or argument. Do not summarize the text as a whole. Assignment of texts is on a first-come, first-served basis. Do not procrastinate. You cannot make up these points in any way. Failure to give a presentation will give you a score of zero for 5% of your grade.

For the following parts of the capstone, substitute for “X” either Plato, or Aristotle, or Epicurus.

- One (1) list of advantages of X’s system over the systems of the other two (1-2 pages, bulletin point format is acceptable) – 10%

The list is due one week prior to the debate. The lists will be posted on Blackboard and I encourage you to review these lists prior to the debate. No late lists will be accepted.

- Attendance and participation in a debate, which is to be held during the assigned final exam period (December 14-21: actual date to be announced later in the semester) – 15%

Attendance at the debate is *mandatory*. Excuses will be made only for *documented* emergencies. In case of an emergency, an alternate assignment (to be determined by the instructor) will be due in substitution for the debate.

- One (1) argumentative paper in which you defend X’s position on one specific point (e.g. Plato’s thesis that the soul is immaterial, Epicurus’s claim that the good is what is pleasurable, Aristotle’s assertion that there are no Platonic Ideas, etc.) – 30%

Notice that this assignment is much more focused than the list of advantages mentioned above. It should also be noted that this is a formal paper (approx. 5-7 pp., including introduction and conclusion, scholarly citations, etc.). This paper is due no later than 3 days after the debate, which means that you must begin to write it well before the debate takes place. (Although, since it is due after the debate, you are free to revise your paper in light of the discussion that we have.) Since I will need to grade this assignment quickly in order to meet the deadline for submission of grades, no late papers will be accepted.

All components are required. There is no extra credit. Make-up work is allowed only in EXCEPTIONAL circumstances. (Note: procrastination is NOT an exceptional circumstance.)

### **Policies:**

PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY. ONCE WE REVIEW THE SYLLABUS TOGETHER, THE INSTRUCTOR ASSUMES THAT YOU UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THESE POLICIES.

**Deadlines:** All deadlines are final. Incompletes will only be given in exceptional cases and at your instructor’s discretion. Note: procrastination is not an exceptional circumstance.

**Submissions:** All work should be submitted via Blackboard. For an added measure of security you may also email your papers to me. All attachments must be in DOC, PDF, or RTF formats. My office computer cannot interpret files with, for example, WPS, DOCX or ODT extensions. Any papers delivered in an unreadable format after a deadline will be assessed a grade of “F”.

Religious observance: Please consult the state law regarding non-attendance because of religious beliefs (p. 49 in the 2011-2012 Bulletin).

Academic Misconduct, i.e. Cheating: Please note the following statement.

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation.

If you are unsure whether your use of another individual's work or ideas is legal and ethical, please consult me before you hand in the version of your work that is to be graded.

Students with Disabilities: Please note the following statement in reference to the Center for Student Disability Services.

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.

### **Textbooks:**

The following textbooks have been ordered for this class and should be available both at the College Bookstore and at Shakespeare & Company.

- Aristotle *Basic Works of Aristotle*. Edited by Richard McKeon. New York: Modern Library.
- Plato *Five Dialogues*. Trans. G. M. A. Grube. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Plato *Republic*. Trans. C. D. C. Reeve. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Jonathan Barnes (trans. & ed.) *Early Greek Philosophy*. New York: Penguin.

Earlier editions of these books are acceptable, provided that they contain the scheduled readings. Other editions and translations will be tolerated so long as they meet minimal scholarly standards (e.g. Bekker pagination for Aristotle's texts, and Stephanus pagination for Plato's).

### **Curriculum:**

**\*\* IMPORTANT \*\***

This curriculum is subject to change based upon the pace of class presentations and discussions. Presentations must be on the day that the reading comes up in the queue. It is the student's responsibility to monitor all changes to the curriculum. Regular attendance is the only reliable way to know where we are in the curriculum.

Unit 1. The nature and aims of philosophy

Gorgias, *Defense of Helen* (xerox, handed out in class)  
The Milesians, fragments (*Early Greek Philosophy*, chs. 2-4)  
Plato *Euthyphro*  
Plato *Apology* (i.e. *Defense*) of Socrates  
Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1.1-7

## Unit 2. Reality

### 2.1. Pre-Socratic views:

Heraclitus, fragments and reports (*Early Greek Philosophy*, ch. 8)

Parmenides, fragments (*Early Greek Philosophy*, ch. 9)

Zeno, fragments (*Early Greek Philosophy*, ch. 11)

Democritus, fragments and reports (*Early Greek Philosophy*, ch. 21)

### 2.2. Platonic Forms:

Plato *Republic* 6 (503b-end) and 7 (514a-519c)

Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1.3-4, 1.6, 1.9

Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.6

### 2.3. Aristotelian Forms:

Aristotle *Physics* 1.7-9, 2.1

Aristotle *Metaphysics* 8.1-3, 8.6

Aristotle *Metaphysics* 12.6-8

### 2.4. Revival of atomism:

Epicurus *Letter to Herodotus* (PDF on Blackboard)

## Unit 3. Knowledge

### 3.1. Dogmatism:

Parmenides, fragments

Plato *Meno*

Plato *Republic* 6 (503b-end) and 7 (514a-519c)

Epicurus *Letter to Herodotus*, sections ## 46-59 (PDF on Blackboard)

Lucretius *On the Nature of Things* 4.469-499 (PDF on Blackboard)

### 3.2. Skepticism:

Democritus, select fragments

Protagoras, fragments ## 1-13 (McKirhan *Readings*, pp. 105-7) (PDF on Blackboard)

Aristotle *Metaphysics* 4.3 (especially 1005b12-34)

## Unit 4. The Soul

### 4.1. Dualism:

Plato *Phaedo*

### 4.2. Hylomorphism:

Aristotle *On the Soul* 1.1, 2.1-3, 3.5

### 4.3. Materialism:

Epicurus *Letter to Herodotus*, sections ## 63-7 (PDF on Blackboard)

Lucretius *On the Nature of Things* [selection] (PDF on Blackboard)

Galen, *The Soul's Dependence on the Body* (PDF on Blackboard)

## Unit 5. The Good Life

### 5.1. The good is what is pleasurable:

Democritus, select fragments

5.2. Virtue ethics:  
Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.1-5, 1.7-9, 1.13, 2.1-6, 10.6-8

5.3. Pleasure, once again:  
Epicurus *Letter to Menoeceus* (PDF on Blackboard)

#### Unit 6. Justice

Plato *Republic* 1 (skim), 2-4  
Plato *Crito*

#### Unit 7. Causation, Choice, and Responsibility

Gorgias, *Defense of Helen*  
Aristotle *Physics* 2.3-6 (see also Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1.3)  
Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.1, 3.5  
Cicero *On Fate* 18-48 (PDF on Blackboard)  
Lucretius *On the Nature of Things* 2.216-293 (PDF on Blackboard)

#### Important Dates:

##### 1. Relevant to PHIL 3111:

August 28: First day of class	September 3: Labor Day, College Closed
September 18: No Class	September 10: Last day to apply for Pass/Fail option
September 25: No Class	September 14: Last day to drop without receiving a grade for Fall (25% tuition refund)
November 22: Thanksgiving, No Class	September 17 and 18: No Classes
December 11: Last day of class	September 25 and 26: No Classes
December 14-21: Final Examinations	October 8: Columbus Day, College Closed

##### 2. Other important dates:

August 27: First day of Fall 2012 weekday classes	October 15: Last day to file for Fall 2012 graduation
August 31: Last to add a class. Last day to drop a class with 75% tuition refund	November 8: Last day to resolve Spring 2012 and Summer 2012 ABS grades and incompletes (INC)
August 27 to September 14: Drop period (online)	November 9: Last day to withdraw from courses without a W grade
September 4 to September 9: Late add period	November 22 to 25: Thanksgiving Recess
	December 12: Last day of Fall 2012 classes