

Philosophy 20: History of Ancient Philosophy
Spring 2008
Office: 314 Sequoia Hall

Dr. Michelle Sandell
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Office hours: Tu, Th 12:00-1:00, by appt.

Catalog Description: Examines the origin of Western philosophy, with emphasis on the works of the Pre-Socratics, Plato and Aristotle. Attention will be paid to the general historical and cultural setting within which the philosophical theories developed. Satisfies Area C1: World Civilizations

We start with an immersion into the pre-philosophical worldview of the *Iliad*. The *Iliad*'s standard of human conduct and view of the natural world came under critique over the next 250 years by Greek historians, tragedians, ethicists, doctors and scientists. We will dwell over the reasons Plato (428-347 B.C.E.) and Socrates (469-399) believed Naturalists' views were an inadequate foundation for justice, virtue or knowledge. Plato's student Aristotle (384-322) came away unsatisfied and constructed his own view of justice and the cosmos. We shall see how Roman stoicism and skepticism (~270 B.C.E.) responds to the tradition left by the Greeks. In our readings we will also have the opportunity to consider the role and contributions of women, and the significance of same-sex emotional commitments in Plato and Socrates' time in Athens.

Learning Objectives:

- To understand the philosophical issues raised in the Greek cultural regions in the 6th to 4th centuries B.C. when the Homeric worldview of 800 B.C. began to lose its authority;
- To examine the responses, methods, and arguments of the early "Naturalists" to the newly-raised cosmological and religious questions;
- To understand the life and career of Socrates as one individual's attempt to answer the newly-raised moral questions;
- To develop a critical grasp of Plato's philosophical arguments regarding knowledge, morality, and politics;
- To develop a critical grasp of Aristotle's 'new scientific method' as the proper method of answering philosophical questions, from metaphysics to literary criticism;
- To gain an appreciation of the influence of Plato and Aristotle on Hellenistic and early Christian thought, and on the development of Western culture generally.

Students will be expected to:

- improve their ability to read primary sources carefully;
- indicate the arguments contained in passages;
- develop a capacity to criticize these arguments;
- write expository and argumentative papers on philosophical topics generally, issues in Greek philosophy in particular.

Texts, Texts (required); available at Hornet Bookstore and on-line

Homer, *The Iliad*; Richard Lattimore, trans.

Terence Irwin, *Classical Thought*.

Forrest Baird & Walter Kaufmann, *Ancient Philosophy*, 5th edition

Supplementary reading TBA will be on reserve at the library.

Grading: **Note:** I do not grade on a curve. **Note, too:** Save all of your work until final grades are officially posted.

Homework/Quizzes (10): 20 points each, 200 points total (40% of the overall grade)

Papers (3): 50 points, 100 points, 150 points. (10%, 20%, and 30% of the overall grade, respectively)

500 points are available total for this class. The cutoff for an 'A' grade is 450 points; for a B, 400 points; for a C, 350 points, and for a D, 300 points.

Homework/Quizzes: 10 smaller assignments – a combination of quizzes and homeworks – will count toward 40% of your overall grade. These assignments will be given unannounced in class.

Quizzes: The quizzes will be short, true-false/multiple choice in format. If you approach me and explain you must miss class that day, and ask if you will miss anything “important”, and there is a quiz I will give that day, since they are unannounced, I will not tell you that you will miss a quiz – this would tend to destroy the element of surprise, you see. There will be 2 opportunities to re-take quizzes – one mid-way through the semester, a second opportunity the last week of the semester. You may re-take a quiz to replace either a low grade on, or a zero – it doesn’t matter why you want to re-take it: the opportunities are available to all. The make-up quizzes will be similar in content to the original quizzes, and you must re-take the quiz whose grade you seek to replace. The higher grade is what will count toward your overall average.

Homework: These will be short-ish (1-2 page) typed (not handwritten) assignments. If you have to miss a class where a homework assignment is given, then be sure to have a classroom buddy (not me!) whom you can contact to find out the assignment. As long as you can get the right assignment in on time (by the next class), then your absence on the day the assignment was announced will not count against you. I do not accept late homework. I do not accept emailed homework. You may turn the homework in *early*, however, by logging it into the philosophy department’s main office, in Mendocino 3032. Your work will be deposited into my mailbox by our staff. Be sure to follow the uncomplicated instructions for submitting your work in our main office. No matter how earnestly you swear you turned something in: if there is no record of its being introduced into the office, that work cannot be confirmed to exist.

Papers: There are 3 papers due for this course. The paper topics, and the specifics for how to execute them, will be posted on-line at least 2 weeks prior to their due dates. Your overall grade may drop by as much as 1/3 of a letter grade for every 3 grammatical and spelling errors. I will read and comment on the substance of drafts of your paper, but only if I receive your draft at least **72** hours before the paper is due. I will comment on drafts that are either printed (typed) or emailed. If you email me an early draft of your paper, please send it to me as either **.doc** (not **.docx** – my Mac cannot read these files) file, or as a plain-text file (such as **.rtf**).

The papers are due in class on the dates given below on the schedule. Late papers will be docked 1/3 of a letter grade for every 24 hours it is late, where the clock begins ticking immediately upon the completion of class in which the paper is due. Weekends and holidays are included. If you are unable to attend class that day, do not slide your paper under my office door, unless you are comfortable with my counting your paper’s turn-in time as the time at which I find it. Either ask a classmate turn your paper in during class, turn it in to me during office hours, or submit your paper at your earliest convenience to the philosophy department’s main office (MND 3032), and follow our log-in procedures there. Papers more than 2 weeks late are not accepted. Emailed final drafts of papers are not accepted.

For more information, see the department’s website for guidelines for writing philosophy papers (<http://www.csus.edu/phil/req/writing.htm>), and <http://www.csus.edu/phil/req/grading.htm> for the department’s grading standards, to which I adhere.

Final Exam: Haven’t I abused you enough? No final exam.

Cheating/plagiarism: By ‘cheating’ is meant the copying of another’s work, or the any unauthorized use of sources or notes for exams and quizzes. Plagiarism, specifically, is the submission of another author’s words (even if they’re from the internet) without attribution, as though they were your own, or paraphrasing some else’s ideas without attribution. Violations can result in an ‘F’ for the course.

Attendance: Regular attendance is expected. Yes, I take roll. Students absent two of the first four class meetings will be presumed to have dropped. Unexcused absences will be met by a maximum of a 2% reduction in overall grade. It is the students’ responsibility to ensure, if there is any doubt (e.g., because of being late) that I have counted him or her as present.

Chronic lateness and/or earliness in departure will also be met with a reduction in overall grade matching that for unexcused absences.

If you have needs that require you, on rare occasion, to leave class early, please alert me ahead of time and situate yourself near the door in order to cause as little disturbance as possible.

General etiquette: Be good. Be respectful. Be polite. Students unable to meet these basic requirements of classroom etiquette will be asked at first to leave for the remainder of that class meeting, and will receive an unexcused absence. Repeat offenders will be asked to leave the class permanently.

If you have a documented disability (visible or invisible) and require accommodation or assistance with assignments, tests, attendance, note taking, etc., please see me by the beginning of the third week of semester so that arrangements can be made.

Schedule (subject to change).

Week 1-2

Jan. 29- Feb 5-7 Introductions. *The Iliad* (skip book 2 lines 455 & onward; book 8, book 10, book 13, and book 15). *Troy*.

Week 3

Feb. 12-14 *Agamemnon* (handout). Irwin, chapter 2.

Week 4

Naturalism

Feb. 19 -21 Irwin, chapter 3. Fragments from Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Zeno (B&K pp. 8-30)

Week 5

Critics of Naturalism

Feb. 26-28 Irwin, chapter 4. Fragments from Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Democritus, Leucippus (B&K pp. 31-48)

Week 6

Socrates

Mar. 4-6 Irwin, chapter 5. *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito* (B&K pp. 65-99)

Paper 1 due March 4: Presocratics

Week 7

Plato

Mar. 11-13 Irwin, chapter 6. *Phaedo*, *Symposium* (B&K pp. 108-210)

Week 8

Mar. 18-20 Irwin, chapter 6. *Republic* books 1-4 (B&K pp. 210-249)

Week 9

Mar. 25-27 *Republic* books 5-7 (B&K pp. 249-283)

First make-up quiz opportunity

Week 10

Spring Break!

Week 11

Aristotle

Apr. 8-10 Irwin, chapter 7. *Physics* (B&K pp. 327-338 (skip 196b10-198a13)); *Metaphysics* (B&K pp. 338-363)

Paper 2 due April 8

Week 12

Apr. 15-17 *Metaphysics* continued; *On the Soul* (B&K pp. 364-369).

Week 13

Apr. 22-24

Nicomachean Ethics (B&K pp. 369-392)

Week 14

Apr. 29-

May 1

Epicureanism

Irwin, chapter 8. Epicurus (B&K pp. 458-481)

Paper 3 due May 1

Week 15

May 6-8

Stoicism

Irwin, chapter 9. Zeno of Citium, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius (B&K pp. 499-531).

Week 16

May 13-15

Wrap stoicism. Make-up quizzes, evals, etc.