

**Plato and Aristotle**  
PHIL 201  
Fall 2016

Prof. Lisa Tessman

Office: Library Tower 1215

Office hours: Wed 12:30-1:30 and Thur 8:45-9:45 or by appointment.

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**Required Texts:**

Plato, *Five Dialogues* (Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo). Hackett. ISBN-13: 978-0872206335

Plato, *Symposium*, trans. Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff. Hackett. ISBN-13: 978-0872200760

Plato, *Republic*, trans. Grube, revised by Reeve. Hackett. ISBN-13: 978-0872201361

*The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon. Modern Library; Reprint edition (2001). ISBN-13: 978-0375757990

Please buy traditional books rather than electronic versions for all of the texts, because you will be permitted to bring the books to exams, but not permitted to bring electronic devices.

**Course Description:**

This course is an introduction to ancient Greek philosophy through the reading, in translation, of some of the primary works of two important ancient Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. We will practice understanding and interpreting philosophical arguments and ideas. We will discuss questions such as: What are the interesting insights that these philosophers had and what are their interesting mistakes? What methodologies did these philosophers develop? Where are the inconsistencies in the texts and how should we interpret a text given such inconsistencies? How are the philosophers' metaphysical and epistemological beliefs tied to their ethical and political beliefs? We will also consider in what ways the thinking of these ancient Greek philosophers may still be relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Course Requirements:**

**1) Preparation and participation.** Prepare for each class meeting by completing the assigned reading, taking careful notes, and jotting down any questions that you may have. Students' level of preparation will be checked with frequent **quizzes**. Quizzes are graded on a credit/no credit basis, and each student is permitted to skip two quizzes without penalty (save these for times when you are out sick!). Most quizzes are closed-book but open-notes (hand-written notes only, unless you have special permission). Class meetings will include both lectures and discussions; because there are no separate discussion sections, students are expected to participate actively in regular class meetings. If you miss a quiz for any reason, it may not be made up for credit. An exam, paper revising workshop, or paper presentation may be made up only with a documented medical excuse. If you miss a class, you are still completely responsible for knowing what was covered in class that day. **Quizzes are worth 20% of the final grade.**

Please take notes by hand during class, and do not use any electronic devices during class. Most people learn better by taking hand-written notes, because doing so prevents us from writing down too much of a lecture verbatim; it instead forces us to summarize ideas or at least choose which points are the most important ones to write down, and this requires *thinking*. There are exceptions to this generalization, so if you have a particular reason for needing to take notes on an electronic device, please see me ahead of time for permission.

This course is a 4-credit course, which means that in addition to participating in classes, students are expected to do at least 9 ½ hours of course-related work *outside of class* each week during the semester. This includes time spent completing assigned readings, taking notes on the readings, preparing questions and comments on the readings to bring to class, reviewing material before exams, and writing and revising papers.

**2) Two 1,000-1,500 word papers, one on Plato and one on Aristotle.** A list of paper topics will be handed out for each paper. For each paper, a hard copy of a full-length draft will be due one class meeting before the final draft of the paper is due; you will work with the preliminary draft in an in-class revising workshop. The final draft must be submitted via turnitin before class time on the day that it is due. On the day that the final draft is due, students will do paper presentations in small groups. **Each paper is worth 20% of the final grade.**

**3) Plato Exam and Aristotle Exam.** You will be permitted to bring books and hand-written notes to the exam, but not permitted to use electronic devices or printed notes (unless you have special permission). **Each exam is worth 20% of the final grade.**

There is no final exam.

### **Course Objectives:**

- To familiarize students with some of Plato's and Aristotle's major texts.
- To have students learn and practice philosophical skills, such as: understanding difficult texts; analyzing, constructing, and responding critically to arguments; engaging in conceptual thinking; developing, articulating, and defending their own positions both verbally and in writing; thinking in complex and original, but still disciplined, ways.
- Learning Outcome: This course satisfies the Humanities General Education Requirement; thus in this course, "students... will demonstrate an understanding of human experience through the study of literature or philosophy."

**Disability-related equal access accommodations:** I am happy to make accommodations (e.g. extended time, quiet environment, etc.) for any student with a documented need for it. Please talk with me *by Thur Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>* if you are requesting accommodations for the first exam. If you are unsure about whether or not you need, or qualify for, accommodations, I encourage you to visit the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office: <http://www.binghamton.edu/ssd/>.

**Academic Honesty:** I follow the Philosophy Department policy on academic honesty (below). Students are responsible for being familiar with, and abiding by, the Student Academic Honesty Code.

### **Philosophy Department Guidelines on Academic Honesty**

The Philosophy Department considers plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty to be serious breaches of the code of ethics governing academic life. They are also violations of Harpur College and Binghamton University policies.

In order to contribute to a culture of Academic Honesty within both the Department and the University, the Philosophy Department has agreed on the following guidelines:

- 1) Instructors will include a statement describing their policy regarding Academic Honesty on all course syllabi.
- 2) When a student commits an act of academic dishonesty, the instructor will formally bring the violation to the attention of the Harpur College Academic Honesty Committee by either:
  - a. submitting an Admission of Dishonesty Form that has been signed by the student,
  - or*
  - b. initiating a hearing before the Harpur College Academic Honesty Committee.
- 3) When a student commits an act of academic dishonesty, the instructor for the course will not give the student credit for the assignment, whether or not the student re-submits honest work.
- 4) Instructors will decide what further grade consequences are appropriate in response to the dishonesty at their own discretion; the typical consequence is a grade of 'F' for the course.

## Schedule:

### **Week 1**

Thursday, Aug. 25  
Introductions.  
Pre-Socratic Philosophy.

### **Week 2**

Tuesday, Aug. 30  
Plato: Euthyphro.

Thursday, Sept. 1  
Plato: Apology.

### **Week 3**

Tuesday, Sept. 6  
Plato: Crito.

Thursday, Sept. 8  
Plato: Meno.

### **Week 4**

Tuesday, Sept. 13  
Plato: Phaedo.

Thursday, Sept. 15  
Plato: Symposium (through 201C, i.e. through Socrates' questioning of Agathon).

### **Week 5**

Tuesday, Sept. 20  
Plato: Symposium (from 201D on).

Thursday, Sept. 22  
Plato: Republic: Book I; Book II through 377d.

### **Week 6**

Tuesday, Sept. 27  
Plato: Republic: Book III from 412a to end; Book IV.

Thursday, Sept. 29  
Plato: Republic: Book V from 472a to end; Book VI from 504d to end; Book VII through 524d.

### **Week 7**

Tuesday, Oct. 4  
NO CLASS.

Thursday, Oct. 6  
Plato exam.

### **Week 8**

Tuesday, Oct. 11  
Full-length draft (hard copy) of Plato paper due; revising workshop during class.

Thursday, Oct. 13

Final draft of Plato paper due via turnitin before class; paper presentations in groups.

**Week 9**

Tuesday, Oct. 18

Aristotle:

Categories, chapters 1-5;  
Prior Analytics, Book I chapters 1-4;  
Posterior Analytics, Book II.

Thursday, Oct. 20

Aristotle: Physics, Book II chapters 1-9; Book III chapters 1-3; Book VII chapter 1; Book VIII chapters 5-6.

**Week 10**

Tuesday, Oct. 25

Aristotle:

On the Soul, Book I chapters 1, 4; Book II chapters 1-4; Book III chapters 9-13.  
On the Generation of Animals: Book I chapters 1, 17-18, excerpt from 20, 21-23.

Thursday, Oct. 27

Aristotle: Metaphysics, Book  $\Delta$  (V) chapters 4, 8; Book Z (VII) chapters 1-8.

**Week 11**

Tuesday, Nov. 1

Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, Book I and Book II.

Thursday, Nov. 3

Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, Book III.

**Week 12**

Tuesday, Nov. 8

Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, Book VI, chapters 2, 5; Book VII.

Thursday, Nov. 10

Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, Book VIII and Book IX.

**Week 13**

Tuesday, Nov. 15

Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, Book X.

Thursday, Nov. 17

Aristotle: Politics, Book I.

**Week 14**

Tuesday, Nov. 22

Aristotle: Politics, Book III.

Thursday, Nov. 24

NO CLASS.

**Week 15**

Tuesday, Nov. 29

Aristotle exam.

Thursday, Dec. 1

Full-length draft (hard copy) of Aristotle paper due; revising workshop during class.

**Week 16**

Tuesday, Dec. 6

Final draft of Aristotle paper due via turnitin before class; paper presentations in groups and/or extra-credit Plato/Aristotle conversations.

Thursday, Dec. 8 – no class (University on a Monday schedule).