

PHIL 310: Ancient Greek Philosophy

Instructor: J. H. Leshner
appointment

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Course Description: PHIL 310 explores the emergence of philosophical thinking in ancient Greece during the 6th century BCE and its development down to the end of the classical period. The major figures studied are the Presocratic philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The goal of the course is to become acquainted with the main features of ancient Greek thought and with the ways in which ancient ideas helped to shape the philosophy, science, art, and literature of later centuries.

Required Text: Cohen, Curd, and Reeve, *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, 3rd edition. (Earlier editions contain different readings and should not be purchased; some used copies of the 3rd edition may be available.)

Schedule of Readings and Examinations (Note: In order to achieve a satisfactory understanding of the assigned materials you will need to read through them several times. It will help if you read the assigned material at least once before hearing it discussed in class.)

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| Part I: | <u>The Presocratic Philosophers (Jan 24-Feb 22)</u> |
| Jan 25 | Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes (see <i>Readings</i> , pages 1-14) |
| Jan 30 | Xenophanes of Colophon (21-23) |
| Feb 1 | Pythagoras of Samos (15-20) |
| Feb 6-8 | Heraclitus of Ephesus-2 sessions (24-34) |
| Feb 13-15 | Parmenides of Elea-2 sessions (35-41) |
| Feb 20 | Some Images Relating to the Presocratics |
| Feb 22 | <u>First Hour Exam on the Presocratics</u> |
| Part II | <u>Socrates and Plato (Feb 27-Apr 24)</u> |
| Feb 27 | 'The Socratic Question': Plato's <i>Apology</i> (115-140) |
| Mar 1 | Socrates on Civil Obedience: Plato's <i>Crito</i> (141-153) |
| Mar 6 | The Socratic Elenchus: Plato's <i>Euthyphro</i> (97-114) |
| Mar 8 | Socrates' Contributions to Western Thought (handout) |
| Mar 13 | Plato's <i>Meno</i>: the search for essential definitions (203-228) |
| Mar 15 | Knowledge as 'Recollection': Plato's <i>Meno</i> (203-228) |
| Mar 27 | Does Justice Pay? Plato's <i>Republic</i> (360-364, 430-445, 591-603) |
| Mar 29 | Plato's Political Theory: the Ideal State (453-476) |
| Apr 3 | Plato's 'Feminism' (445-465) |
| Apr 5-10 | Plato's Theory of Knowledge and Reality (471-528) |
| Apr 12 | Plato's Theory of Love; the <i>Symposium</i> (282-330) |
| Apr 17 | Plato's <i>Parmenides</i> (604-613) |
| Apr 19 | Some Images Relating to Socrates and Plato |
| April 24 | <u>Second Hour Exam on Socrates and Plato</u> |
| Part III | <u>Aristotle (Apr 26-May 10)</u> |

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| Apr 26 | Aristotelian Science: Main Features and Limitations (645-654, 676-693, 707-709) |
| May 1 | The Pursuit of Happiness: the <i>Ergon</i> Argument (832-845) |
| May 3 | Aristotle's Ethical Theory: Some Pros and Cons (845-852) |
| May 8 | The Search for Substance: Aristotle's <i>Metaphysics</i> (771-780) |
| May 10 | Aristotle's God: <i>Metaphysics</i> (800-808) |

(Final exam: Information on day and time is not yet available, but the final will be cumulative—i.e. it will cover the entire semester's readings and topics.)

Grading Policy: There will be two hour-exams and the final exam. Review questions will be handed in advance of each exam—be sure you get a copy. Each of these three grades will represent one-third of your semester grade. If the resulting average is on or near a borderline, some consideration will be given to class attendance and the extent of your participation in class discussions (within limits, more participation is better than less).

Office Hours: I have listed the hour immediately following this class as my official office hours but I would be happy to meet with you at any mutually convenient time. Please e-mail me at jlesher@umd.edu so we can find a day and time to meet.

Academic Integrity: In accordance with current University policy you will need to write the following signed statement on each piece of written work you submit in this course: 'I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination.'

Excused Absences: If you have special needs, or plan to be absent from class on a particular date, please send me an e-mail in advance to explain your situation. Otherwise, you are expected to attend each and every class and to take the exams as scheduled.

Web page: I have recently updated the web page for this course, but for the near future it will be limited to providing copies of the materials distributed in class as handouts. You can gain access to it at:

<http://www.philosophy.umd.edu/Faculty/JLeshner/PHIL310/>

In addition, you might wish to look at the web page on ancient Greek philosophy created by Professor Marc Cohen, one of the editors of our anthology. You can find it at:

<http://faculty.washington.edu/smcohen/320/index.html> (Just copy this address into your favorite web browser.)