Course Goals

This course will introduce you to some of the basic texts of ancient Greek philosophy. We will be focusing on the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, which are among the most influential in all of Western culture. We will pay particular attention to the relationships between the different aspects of each philosopher's works. For instance, we will look at how Plato's theory about what the physical world is like affects both his theory of knowledge and his ethics. No previous work in philosophy is required for this course, although some previous work in philosophy would be helpful. Classical studies majors will be encouraged to apply their knowledge of ancient Greek in their papers.

By the end of this course, you should be familiar with the questions addressed by philosophers of the ancient period, and have a thorough acquaintance with the ways that the philosophers we read answer these questions. You should also have improved your ability to interpret difficult texts by recognizing and analyzing the arguments presented in them. This improvement should be evident in your writing and in your ability to participate in discussions of academic material.

Required Texts


(These texts will be supplemented with handouts and readings on closed reserve.)

Requirements and Grading

There will be two take-home essay exams. They should each be 9 - 12 pages and will count for approximately one third of your grade. There will also be several in-class quizzes counting together for approximately one third of your grade. Attendance and participation in class discussion will also affect your grade.
The take-home assignments must be typed, double-spaced. Some of the ideas you write about will be your own, and some will belong to the philosophers whose work we will be reading. Whenever you write about an idea belonging to someone else, you must acknowledge this by putting the bibliographic information either in footnotes or in parentheses immediately following the sentence or paragraph in which you discussed these ideas. The bibliographic information should be arranged as it appears in the list of required books above. Indicate page numbers at the end of each citation. Keep copies of your exams. I cannot be responsible for lost work.

Late Policy: Exam grades will be lowered one letter grade for every day past the deadline the exam arrives (in my hand or in my mailbox). No credit will be given to missed in-class quizzes, and there will be no make-ups.

Readings
You will be responsible for the following readings. I will announce reading assignments each week, which may add up to a little bit more or less than what is listed here.

Supplemental readings from the pre-socratic philosophers.

Plato: *The Euthyphro*, the *Meno*, the *Apology*, the *Crito*, and the *Phaedo*

Aristotle: *Physics*, Books I and II

*Nichomachean Ethics*, Books I - X

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This page currently maintained by Ken Richman.

Please direct any questions or comments to the Chair of the Department.

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