Philosophy Department

KALAMAZOO COLLEGE
1200 Academy St. Kalamazoo, MI 49006

PHI 510

Ancient Philosophy

Fall 1997

Professor Ken Richman

Required texts:


Course goals:

This course will introduce you to some of the basic texts of ancient Greek philosophy. We will be focussing 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 these philosophers' 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. 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.

Requirements and grading:

Your grade will depend equally on three factors: a midterm paper, a final paper and a series of short quizzes. You are required to read the assignments on time, attend all class meetings and participate in class discussions. The frequency and quality of your class participation also count, especially if your average for the course falls between two grades. The midterm paper assignment will be distributed on or about 16 October. The paper will be due in class on 30 October, and should be 5 - 8 typed, double-spaced pages. You will be required to bring a rough draft to class for discussion on a day to be announced. The final paper will be due during the exam period. The final assignment will be distributed before classes end for the term. Late papers will be penalized at one letter grade per day or part thereof after the deadline that they arrive in my hand or at my office. The quizzes will consist of short questions such as definitions and true/false. Quizzes will not be announced, and there will be no make-up quizzes. Quiz grades will be on a percentage basis.
Students who miss quizzes because of true emergencies, illness or religious holidays will have their quiz grades computed as a percentage of a lower number of points, depending on how many points were on the quizzes missed.

**Readings**

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

Plato: *The Republic*, Books I - V (pp. 1-263) and Book X (pp. 341-359)

Aristotle: *Physics*, Books I and II

*Nichomachean Ethics*, Books I - X