

**Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology**  
**PHHS1050 History of Philosophy: Ancient**

**Fall 2019**

Instructor: John Thomas Mellein, O.P.

Office: East 207

Office Hours: Contact professor by email to schedule an appointment.

Telephone: 510-849-2030 E-mail: jmellein@dspt.edu (email is preferred mode of contact)

**Course Description**

This course will present the history of Greek philosophy from the pre-Socratics to Pseudo-Dionysius. The emphasis will be on Plato and Aristotle. Format: lecture/discussion.

Evaluation: class participation, midterm, final.

Intended audience: MDiv, MA/MTS. 3 units.

This course meets on Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:10 a.m.–9:30 p.m., DSPT Room 2.

**Required Texts:**

Aristotle, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Edited by Richard McKeon. New York: Modern Library, 2001.  
ISBN-13: 978-0375757990.  
Paperback. \$21.95.

OR

Aristotle. *The Complete Works of Aristotle (2 Volumes)*. Edited by Jonathan Barnes. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

ISBN: 9780691016504      \$62.50

ISBN: 9780691016511      \$62.50

Plato. *Plato: Complete Works*. Edited by John M. Cooper. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1997.

ISBN: 978-0-87220-349-5

MSRP: \$60.00

Inwood, Brad, and L. P. Gerson, Translators. *Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory Readings*. Second edition. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1988.

ISBN: 978-0-87220-378-5

MSRP: \$19.00

Kirk, G. S., J. E. Raven, and M. Schofield, Editors. *The Presocratic Philosophers*. Second edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

ISBN: 978-0-521-27455-5. High market price: \$40.00.

*Recommended text:*

Copleston, Fredrick. *A History of Philosophy*. Volume 1: Greece and Rome. New York, Image (Doubleday), 1962 [1993]. (Reprinted many times; any edition is fine).

ISBN–13 for the 1993 printing: 978-0385468435. MSRP: \$19.95.

Other course materials will include excerpts from Homer, Pseudo-Dionysius, and others. These materials are available on the Internet, and links will be provided by the Professor. Some texts will be posted on Moodle during the week of the assigned reading.

**Grade:**

Class Participation: 20%

Midterm: 40%

Final: 40%

Students are to abide by the the DSPT's policies regarding academic honesty as found in the *DSPT Student Handbook*. The grading policy as found in the student handbook, as well as the institutional assessment rubrics, will serve as the guideline for grading. We will review the policies at the beginning of the course.

**Course Requirements**

Philosophy is a habitual disposition to think in a certain way about particular questions. For that reason, the class will mostly be seminar-style discussion, with brief lecture components. Class participation will be evaluated based on the degree of participation, and the quality of the comments, during the seminar-style discussion. Students will be given guide questions (homework) to help focus their reading. During discussion, students will be expected to address the proposed questions, and to support their interpretation from the assigned readings. Students are to listen attentively to fellow students and to engage in genuine conversation.

**Course and Institutional Learning Goals**

The goals of the course are to learn the some of main ideas central to the different authors and schools of thought presented in the course; to gain knowledge of the historical context in which the philosophers are writing; and to gain critical skills in reading and discussing ancient philosophical texts. Students will be encouraged to evaluate the proposed philosophical views according to the three "C's": Is it Comprehensive? Is it internally Consistent? Does it Correspond with reality (common experience)?

The format of the course, especially the in-class discussions, will give students the opportunity to work toward the institutional learning goals: integrative thinking, intellectual humility, self-direction, and ability to collaborate. We will have a brief in-class discussion regarding the institutional learning goals, available here: <https://www.dspt.edu/our-mission>

**Outcomes**

Students will demonstrate knowledge of key themes in the course by their ability to express ideas of major authors or schools of thought, as well as the development of philosophical thought in this epoch. Students will demonstrate subject-appropriate critical thinking skills by being able to assess and compare various thinkers and their positions on relevant topics. Students will demonstrate mastery of the material in class discussion and in the examinations.

## **Class Outline**

Sept. 3

Topic: Introduction to the Course and to the Period.

Sept. 6

Ancient Wisdom: The Bible (selections)

Sept. 10

The Pre-Philosophical World view: Homer's *Iliad* Books I and V, and *Odyssey*, Book V

Sept. 13

Plato, *Meno*

Sept. 17

Plato, *Apology*

Sept. 20

Monists and Iconoclasts

Sept. 24

Pluralists and Sophists

Sept. 27

Plato, *Republic*, books 1 and 2

Oct. 1

Plato, *Republic*, books 4 and 5

Oct. 4

Plato, *Republic*, book 7 and 8

Oct. 8

Plato, *Republic*, books 9 and 10, and, *Phaedrus*, selection. On the Soul.

Oct. 11

Midterm

Oct. 15

Plato, *Symposium*

Oct. 18

Plato, *Timaeus*, *Philebus*, and Platonic Cosmology

Oct. 22 and Oct. 25: READING WEEK, NO CLASS

Oct. 29

Aristotle, *Physics*, *De Anima*

Nov. 1  
Aristotle, *Metaphysics*

Nov. 5  
Aristotle, *Metaphysics*

Nov. 8  
Aristotle, *Ethics*

Nov. 12  
Aristotle, *Ethics*

Nov. 15  
Aristotle, *Ethics*

Nov. 19  
Aristotle, *Politics*

Nov. 22  
Epicurus  
Stoics and Pyrrho of Elis

Nov. 26  
Cicero, Lucretius, Seneca, Epictetus

Nov. 29 Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 3  
Plotinus, *Enneads. On Beauty, I.6 and V.1*

Dec. 6  
Pseudo-Dionysius, *Mystical Theology; Divine Names*

Dec. 10  
Final Exam