

History of Ancient Philosophy

Syllabus - Fall 2024

Institution: Sichuan University - Pittsburgh Institute

Course Schedule: Thursdays 7:20-9:55 pm

Location: The Building of Liberal Arts 104 (Jiangan Campus)

Instructor Information

Name: Yixin Wei, 魏奕昕

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-4 pm, The Building of Liberal Arts 308, Wangjiang Campus (望江文科楼 308), or by appointment

Course Description

Western philosophy owes its birth to the ancient Greeks. In their care, many of the fundamental questions in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, political philosophy, and the philosophy of mind were raised for the first time and developed in striking and sophisticated ways. This course will focus on the philosophical thoughts of **Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle**. We will delve into their philosophical doctrines and understand their arguments. More importantly, we will **treat them as fellow philosophers and evaluate their views**, attempting to determine whether we can accept their frame of questions and answers even from now.

Course Objectives

1. Provide a comprehensive understanding of the historical context and development of ancient Greek philosophy.
1. Engage in critical analysis of philosophical texts and arguments presented by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.
2. Foster an appreciation of the foundational issues in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, political philosophy, the philosophy of language, and the philosophy of mind.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and clarify arguments in ancient Greek philosophy
2. Understand major positions in ancient Greek philosophy
3. Evaluate their arguments from a modern perspective

Required Textbook

Cohen, Curd & Reeve (eds.). (2016). *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy* (Fifth Edition). Hackett Publishing.

Course Website

All course materials and announcements will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Evaluation

- Participation: 20%
- Final Exam: 80%

Technology Policy

NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE ALLOWED IN CLASS. Notes should be taken on paper. This is for your own benefit. Research shows that using laptops, tablets, and phones in class is bad for both you and your classmates. Class slides will be shared on Blackboard.

Students with Disabilities

Students requiring accommodations should contact the instructor for further assistance.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism — the practice of intentionally or unintentionally using someone else's writing without properly acknowledging the source — WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Course Schedule

Weeks 1-3: Socrates

- Week 1: Introduction to ancient Greek philosophy
- Week 2: Piety and Death: *Euthyphro*, *Apology*
- Week 3: Law and Justice: *Crito*, *Gorgias*

Weeks 4-9: Plato

- Week 4: Form, Soul, and Knowledge: *Meno*, *Phaedo*
- Week 5: Love and Desire: *Symposium*, *Phaedrus*
- Week 6: Justice and Social Class: *Republic* I-IV
- Week 7: Philosophy and Cave: *Republic* V-VII
- Week 8: City and Person: *Republic* VIII-X
- Week 9: Cosmos and Pleasure: *Timaeus*, *Philebus*

Weeks 10-16: Aristotle

- Week 10: Natural Philosophy: *Physics*
- Week 11: Logic and Epistemology: *Posterior Analytics*
- Week 12: Metaphysics: *Categories*, *Metaphysics*
- Week 13: Metaphysics: *Metaphysics*
- Week 14: Psychology and the Philosophy of Mind: *De Anima (On the Soul)*
- Week 15: Ethics: *Nicomachean Ethics*
- Week 16: Ethics and Politics: *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Politics*

Week 17: Final Exam

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Any modifications will be announced in class or posted on Blackboard.