

# History of Ancient Philosophy

## Fall 2009

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Office: McKee 323

Office Hours: MWF 12:20–1:10 p.m.\*

Messages: 351-1561

### Course Objectives

This course is designed as an introduction to the history of ancient philosophy from the time of the Presocratics (beginning around 600 BCE) through the end of the Hellenistic period (around 30 BCE). Specifically, we will be making a study of the thought of the Presocratics, the Sophists, Sokrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Epicureans, the Sceptics, and the Stoics.

### Texts

The following books, the texts for the course, are available at The Book Stop, the book store located at the corner of 16th Street and 10th Avenue:

Aristotle. *Introduction to Aristotle*. Second edition revised & enlarged. Richard McKeon, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974. ISBN: 0226560325.

Long, A. A. *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, 2nd ed. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986. ISBN: 0520058089.

McKirahan, Richard D., Jr. *Philosophy Before Socrates: An Introduction with Texts and Commentary*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1994. ISBN: 0872201759.

Plato. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*. Hamilton, Edith, and Huntington Cairns, eds. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. ISBN: 0691097186.

If you find yourself wanting more information on any of the philosophers or topics covered in this course, I recommend, first of all, *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Paul Edwards, ed., 8 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1967). Our library has two copies: one in the reference room and one in the stacks. Frederick Copleston's *A History of Philosophy* (New York: Image Books, 1962) is a very good general work on the history of Western philosophy—including, of course, the history of ancient philosophy. I recommend it highly, but for a good first treatment of almost any subject that might be of interest to you in connection with this course, it's hard to do better than *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Another historical treatment worth mentioning is W.K.C. Guthrie's six volume work: *A History of Greek Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1962–81). Guthrie's work, which covers the Presocratics, Socrates, Plato, and a good bit of Aristotle, is much more detailed than anything you'll find in either of the first two works mentioned above, and if detail is what you want, it's very good indeed. Finally, you might find it useful in certain contexts to consult the *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, Robert Audi, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995). Previous dictionaries of philosophy have been rather disappointing affairs. This one's pretty good. Finally, a number of on-line resources, some quite good, are accessible *via* links on the class Web site at <http://www.unco.edu/philosophy/current/260-004.html>.

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\*And, of course, by appointment.

### Course Requirements and Grades

#### *Reading Assignments and Quizzes:*

There will be daily reading assignments (see the course outline), and on these assignments, there will be online quizzes. You should expect to spend a good deal of time on the readings—they're challenging, serious texts that require extensive study and reflection.

#### *Class Participation and Contributions to the Class's Online Forum*

On most days, meetings of the course will involve a combination of lecture and discussion. You're required to attend class regularly and encouraged to involve yourself actively in class discussion. Just coming to class will earn you a "C" (75%) for participation. Higher grades will require active participation. For each of the three participation periods (Aug. 24–Sept. 25, Sept. 28–Oct. 30, Nov. 2–Dec. 4), your grade will be docked five points for each unexcused absence. Contributions to the class's online forum at <http://www.unco.edu/philosophy/current/forums/>—the main venue outside class for class discussion—can help make up for any unexcused absences and can also serve to enhance your overall participation grade just as active participation in class will do. Your participation grade will therefore reflect both the quantity and the quality of your contributions to our in-class and online discussions.

#### *Papers:*

You'll also be doing three short papers—philosophical essays of 1,000 to 1,500 words each—topics to be determined. You'll be writing and revising all three essays on the class wiki (accessible via Blackboard). The due dates for the papers will be Oct. 2, Nov. 6, and Dec. 10. First drafts will be due two weeks earlier in each case—on Sept. 18, Oct. 23, and Nov. 24. All three essays are to be done in accordance with all the applicable guidelines contained in Joseph Gibaldi and Phyllis Franklin, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed. (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003; ISBN: 0873529863). Copies of the *MLA Handbook* are almost certain to be available at both The Book Stop and Barnes and Noble in the UC. A useful online compendium of the MLA guidelines is available at the *OWL at Purdue's* "MLA Formatting and Style Guide" at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>.

#### *Midterm and Final:*

Finally, there'll be an online midterm and an online final examination, each consisting entirely of objective questions. You're to take the midterm, which will cover the Presocratics and Plato, by the end of the day (midnight) on Friday, Oct. 16. You're to take the final, which will cover Aristotle and the Hellenistic philosophers, by the end of the day (midnight) on Thursday, Dec. 10.

#### *Determination of Grades and Related Rules and Regulations:*

Your grade will be determined by your quiz average (worth 10%), the quality and quantity of your class participation (worth a total of 25%), the quality of your papers (worth a total of 45%), and the grades you receive on the midterm and final (worth a total of 20%). To receive credit for the course, you must submit all three papers and take both the midterm and the final. Zeros will be recorded for missed quizzes (which may not be made up if missed). The penalty for late papers will be a reduction by one letter grade for each class day or day of finals week the work is late.

### Is This Your First Course in Philosophy?

If it *is* your first course, it's going to require your doing two different things at once (which is always a bit tricky): you'll have to master the course content, and while you're doing that, you'll also have to get your bearings with respect to the nature of the philosophical enterprise itself. This is by no means impossible, but it can make the course a very challenging one. I don't teach this course as an introductory course. Instead, I assume that everyone in it already has a reasonably solid working knowledge of what doing philosophy itself involves. If you don't, then early on in the semester, you should plan to spend extra time with me or with other students in the class who have already been around the block talking and thinking about what philosophy is. If you'd like to look at a book on the subject, you might try Jay F. Rosenberg's *The Practice of Philosophy*, 3rd ed. (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1996). You should be able to find a reasonably inexpensive used copy online. If you decide after a few days that you'd do well to take an introductory course first, I'd be glad to try to help you get into one.

### Detailed Course Outline

We'll follow this schedule closely. If anything, you should get *ahead* in your reading. *Don't get behind.*

Aug.	M	24	Introduction.	
	W	26	McKirahan, pp. 1–22. Preliminaries. The Beginnings of Greek Philosophy and Science.	
	F	28	McKirahan, pp. 23–78. Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Xenophanes.	
	M	31	McKirahan, pp. 79–115. Puthagoras and the Pythagoreans.	<i>Add Deadline</i>
Sept.	W	2	McKirahan, pp. 116–150. Herakleitos.	
	F	4	McKirahan, pp. 151–195. Parmenides and Zenon.	<i>Drop Deadline</i>
	M	7	<i>no class</i>	<i>Labor Day</i>
	W	9	McKirahan, pp. 196–231. Anaxagoras.	
	F	11	McKirahan, pp. 232–291. Empedokles.	
	M	14	McKirahan, pp. 292–352. Melissos, Leukippos, Demokritos, and Diogenes of Apollonia.	
	W	16	McKirahan, pp. 353–389. Early Greek Moral Thought and the Fifth-Century Sophists.	
	F	18	McKirahan, pp. 390–413. The <i>Nomos-Phusis</i> Debate.	
	M	21	Aristophanes. <i>Clouds</i> (supplied on Blackboard).	
	W	23	Plato, pp. 4–26. <i>Apology</i> ; Xenophon, <i>Apology</i> (supplied on Blackboard).	
	F	25	Plato, pp. 216–228; 170–185; <i>Ion</i> , <i>Euthyphro</i> .	
	M	28	Plato, pp. 309–352. <i>Protagoras</i> .	
	W	30	Plato, pp. 354–384. <i>Meno</i> .	
Oct.	F	2	Plato, pp. 527–574. <i>Symposium</i> .	<i>First Paper Due</i>
	M	5	Plato, pp. 576–614. <i>Republic</i> I–IIa (368c).	
	W	7	Plato, pp. 614–688. <i>Republic</i> IIb–IV.	
	F	9	Plato, pp. 688–737. <i>Republic</i> V–VIa (502c).	
	M	12	Plato, pp. 738–772, <i>Republic</i> VIb–VII.	
	W	14	Plato, pp. 772–844. <i>Republic</i> VIII–X.	
	F	16	No assignment.	<i>Midterm Examination / Withdrawal Deadline</i>
	M	19	Aristotle, pp. ix–lii: Introductory.	
	W	21	Aristotle, pp. 122–144; 255–266. <i>Physics</i> II, <i>On the Parts of Animals</i> I, i.	
	F	23	Aristotle, pp. 277–307. <i>Metaphysics</i> I; on line: <i>Metaphysics</i> IV and VI.	
	M	26	Aristotle, readings on line: <i>Metaphysics</i> VII.	
	W	28	Aristotle, readings on line: <i>Metaphysics</i> VIII–IX.	
	F	30	Aristotle, pp. 308–330. <i>Metaphysics</i> XII.	
Nov.	M	2	Aristotle, pp. 346–385. <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> I–II.	
	W	4	Aristotle, pp. 385–399; 461–464 <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> III, i–v; VI, i–ii.	
	F	6	Aristotle, pp. 464–480; 567–581. <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> VI, iii–xiii.; X, vi–ix.	<i>Second Paper Due</i>

	M	9	Aristotle, pp. 155–189. <i>On the Soul</i> I, II, i–iii.	
	W	11	Aristotle, pp. 189–216. <i>On the Soul</i> II, iv–xii.	
	F	13	Aristotle, pp. 216–245. <i>On the Soul</i> III.	
	M	16	Long, pp. 1–74. Epikuros and Early Epicureanism; Epikuros, on line. <i>Principal Doctrines, Letters</i> .	
	W	18	Long, pp. 75–106. Pyrrhonism and Academic Skepticism.	
	F	20	Long, pp. 107–121. Early Stoicism; Kleanthes, on line. <i>Hymn to Zeus</i> .	
	M	23	Long, pp. 121–147. Early Stoicism: Stoic Logic.	
	W	26	<i>no class</i>	
	F	28	<i>no class</i>	<i>Fall Break</i>
	M	30	Long, pp. 147–178. Early Stoicism: Stoic Physics.	
Dec.	W	2	Long, pp. 179–209. Early Stoicism: Stoic Ethics; Epiktetos on line, <i>Enchiridion</i> .	
	F	4	Long, pp. 210–248. Later Developments in Hellenistic Philosophy. Still Later Influences.	
	Th	10	Final Class Period: 8:00–10:30	<i>Final Examination; Final Paper Due</i>

### Reading Load

This course involves a fairly heavy reading load, but not a killing one. Here’s the breakdown, week by week (indeed, day by day) as to how many pages you’re going to have to read. My hope is that this information will help you effectively budget your study time.

- Week I: 78 pp. [0 + 22 + 56] (McKirahan)
- Week II: 117 pp. [37 + 35 + 45] (McKirahan)
- Week III: 96 pp. [Labor Day + 36 + 60] (McKirahan)
- Week IV: 122 pp. [61 + 37 + 24] (McKirahan)
- Week V: ≈ 185 pp. [≈ 125 + 40 + 29] (*Clouds*, two *Apologies*, *Ion* and *Euthyphro*)
- Week VI: 157 [78 + 31 + 48] (*Protagoras*, *Meno*, *Symposium*)
- Week VII: 162 [48 + 65 + 49] (*Republic* I-VIa)
- Week VIII: 107 [35 + 72 + 0] (*Republic* VIb-X)
- Week IX: 139 pp. [44 + 35 + 60] (McKeon, *Physics* II, *Parts of Animals* I,i, *Metaphysics* I, IV, and VI)
- Week X: 91 pp. [38 + 30 + 23] (*Metaphysics* VII-IX, XII)
- Week XI: 91 pp. [40 + 19 + 32] (*Nicomachean Ethics* I-III.v, VI, X.vi-ix)
- Week XII: 92 pp. [35 + 28 + 30] (*On the Soul* — complete)
- Week XIII: ≈ 151 pp. [≈ 104 + 32 + 15] (Long plus some on-line readings)
- Week XIV: ≈ 27 pp. [27] (Long)
- Week XV: 128 pp. [32 + ≈ 57 + 39] (Long plus some on-line readings)

In the table above, the symbol “≈”—used in estimates of the length of on-line texts—should be read as meaning “roughly” or “approximately.”

Bear in mind that because Aristophanes’ *Clouds* and Plato’s dialogues are dramatic works—works the texts of which represent dialogue—the pages in those works often include a fair amount of white space. Not only that. Aristophanes’ *Clouds* goes down like water. Aristotle’s texts, on the other hand, make for pretty tough going at least at times, so 90 pages of Aristotle can easily take as long to absorb as 120 or 150 pages of Plato, if not longer. Therefore Week V really isn’t as horrible a week as it might appear to be. Also, Long’s book reads pretty quickly.

### Grading Scale

Any letter grades given on assignments will be converted to numerical grades (percentages) as follows: A+ = 98; A = 95; A- = 92; A-/B+ = 90; B+ = 88; B = 85; B- = 82; B-/C+ = 80; C+ = 78; C = 75; C- = 72; C-/D+ = 70; D+ = 68; D = 65; D- = 62; D-/F = 60; F = 55. The grading scale used in the class to convert numerical averages to letter grades at the end of the semester will be as follows: 93–100 = A; 90–92 = A-; 87–89 = B+; 83–86 = B; 80–82 = B-; 77–79 = C+; 73–76 = C; 70–72 = C-; 67–69 = D+; 63–66 = D; 60–62 = D-; 0–59 = F. I reserve the right to assign semester grades higher than those dictated by students' overall mathematical averages, but except in cases involving academic dishonesty, no one will be assigned a grade lower than that dictated by his or her overall mathematical average.

### Policy on Academic Dishonesty

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's *Student Handbook* (see [http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/academic\\_expectations.html](http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/academic_expectations.html)). Violations of those policies and/or the *UNC Honor Code* (see below) will *not* be overlooked. Honesty is a cornerstone of the academic community. Penalties for academic dishonesty on quizzes and/or plagiarism (*i.e.*, copying either the ideas and/or the words of another without proper attribution) in any of your other work will be severe and may result in a failing grade for the course. See the *Student Code of Conduct* ([http://www.unco.edu/dos/student\\_code\\_conduct/](http://www.unco.edu/dos/student_code_conduct/)).

### The UNC Honor Code

All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely way.

### Disclaimer

I will stick to this syllabus as closely as I can, but I reserve the right to make revisions if necessary. Changes will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.