# Course Outline

# PHIL 2140-01 Ancient Greek Philosophy (0.5 credits)

# Fall 2023

# University of Guelph

# Department of Philosophy

# Lectures:

T/TH 10:00 - 11:20 AM

All classes are in person

Please consult Courselink for the classroom location.

# Instructor:

See WebAdvisor for instructor information.

Office: 330 Mackinnon

Office Hours: 1:00–2:20 T/TH or by appointment

# Course Information and Policies

## Calendar Description

A survey of the beginnings of Western philosophy, this course will focus on themes such as the nature of reality, the ways we might come to have knowledge, and the good life for human beings. This course will typically consider such thinkers as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Epictetus, although the specific course content will vary with the instructor.

Prerequisite(s): 2.00 credits or (1 of PHIL\*1000, PHIL\*1010, PHIL\*1030, PHIL\*1050)

## Course Description

Ancient Greek philosophy is an independent starting point for philosophy in world history. It shapes all ensuing philosophy in Europe and the Islamic world from the medieval period to today. Science, theology, and the arts in these geographical areas are all heavily indebted to the philosophical movement in ancient Greece. But ancient Greek philosophy is not simply influential; it is also great on its own terms and worth studying for its (often misunderstood) insights.

This course will introduce the basic concepts of ancient Greek philosophy through careful reading of the original texts in English translation. Three units of the course will cover, first, the early (so-called ‘pre-Socratic’) Greek thinkers who pioneered Greek philosophy (end of 7th century to early 5th century BCE), Socrates and Plato (about 470–347 BCE), and Aristotle (384-322 BCE). We will develop an appreciation for the historical context of the thinkers that shape their distinctive approach to philosophy. Assessments will emphasize mastery of the concepts developed by each thinker to convey their distinctive understanding of reality and the place of human beings within it. We will aim for a robust sense of the range of ancient Greek philosophical thinking in its contributions to the philosophy of science, metaphysics, ethics, and political philosophy.

# Learning Goals

This course will introduce you to the background knowledge needed to understand the arguments of ancient Greek philosophers. You will gain skills in interpreting the texts, with a view to grasping the important concepts they contain and appreciating the arguments ancient Greek philosophers make.

1. Textual interpretation: By the end of the course, you should be able to read ancient Greek philosophical texts in translation with understanding. You will learn key Greek terms and how they differ in meaning from the English terms that are often used to translate them.
2. Knowledge: By the end of the course, you will have extensive background knowledge concerning ancient Greek society, history, and beliefs to enable you to approach ancient Greek philosophy with understanding.
3. Critical thinking: By the end of the course, you will be able to critically evaluate arguments made by ancient Greek philosophers. You will encounter various methods of reasoning, including analogy, inference to the best explanation, and deductive arguments, and learn how to identify and evaluate these arguments.

## Required Texts

There is one required text for this course, and it must be accessed through Perusall, which is an online social annotation platform. Your graded reading assignments will be completed through Perusall, so it is necessary that you acquire the text through Perusall to complete the assignments.

*Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy: From Thales to Aristotle*, Fifth Edition, Cohen, Curd, & Reeve (eds.) Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

To access Perusall, navigate to: app.perusall.com, create an account, and enter code HACKER-WRIGHT-QJKLA to enroll in the course.

## Assignments and Evaluation

### Reading Engagement (30%)

Complete the readings according to the Schedule of Readings and Due Dates (below). Reading assignments are due before the class for which they are assigned, with a cut-off at 10:00 AM (see late policy below). For each reading, you may get full credit only if you complete the reading and make at least two comments on the reading. The responses will be marked qualitatively. You will receive full credit only for high-quality responses. Those comments may be questions, but they should engage thoughtfully with philosophically important issues in the text. Each reading assignment will be assessed out 10 points on the following standard. A machine-learning algorithm will assist with the marking under the instructor's supervision according to the following criteria:

**Meets expectations** (7.5–10 points out of 10): Annotations reveal a working interpretation of the text, a provisional attempt to understand what it means and what is at stake in the text. It demonstrates an understanding of concepts. Responses to others’ work are thoughtful, with explanations, substantiated claims, and/or concrete examples. Questions reflect the issues at stake in the text.

**Improvement needed** (5–7 points out of 10): There is some failure to elaborate on one’s thoughts about the text. The comment demonstrates superficial reading without a working interpretation. Responses to others demonstrate some thought but do not address the question.

**Deficient** (Below 5 points out of 10): Annotations have no real substance and do not demonstrate any thoughtful reading or interpretation of the text. Questions do not explicitly identify points of confusion. Moreover, annotations are not backed up by any reasoning or working interpretation.

These assignments will develop your ability to interpret and critically assess the texts.

### Take-Home Exams (40%)

There will be three take-home exams, one for each unit. See Schedule of Readings and Due Dates. The exams will be multiple choice and completed through Courselink (under “Quizzes”) by the due date. I will open the exam one week before the due date, and you must complete it by the due date. There will be no more than twenty multiple-choice questions with an option to add a sentence or two to explain your response. You are allowed and encouraged to use your textbook and notes.

The exams will assess your knowledge of the covered material.

Note the following due dates for the exams:

**Take-home Exam 1: October 19**

**Take-home Exam 2: November 14**

**Take-home Exam 3: December 11**

## Late Policy

Exams must be completed by the due date unless there are grounds for academic consideration.

I will drop the two lowest reading assignment grades, but they must be done by the due date unless there are grounds for academic consideration.

## Academic Misconduct

All work submitted must be your own: your own words and your own thoughts. Thoughts derived from ChatGPT do not count as your own. When referring to or quoting the thoughts of others, you must acknowledge this fact, and ensure that I can find your source by including the name of the author, the work, and relevant publication information. Failure to do so will result in a charge of academic misconduct, which has consequences for your outcome in this course.

For further information on the University’s Academic Misconduct policies see:

https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/

## Standard Statements

See here for policies that apply to all courses taught at the University of Guelph:

https://www.uoguelph.ca/ada-cbs/instructors/resources/course-and-university-policy-statements

# Schedule of Readings and Due Dates

# PHIL 2140, Fall 2023 Hacker-Wright

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Topic/Reading | Assignments due |
| Week 0  Class 1  Sept 7 | Unit I: Early Greek Philosophy  Course Introduction: Review Course Outline / Who Were the Ancient Greeks? |  |
| Week 1  Class 2  Sept 12 | Thales | Reading Assignment 1 on Perusall (Thales) |
| Class 3  Sept 14 | Anaximander and Anaximenes | Reading Assignment 2 on Perusall (Anaximander and Anaximenes) |
| Week 2  Class 4  Sept 19 | Heraclitus | Reading Assignment 3 on Perusall  (Heraclitus) |
| Class 5  Sept 21 | Parmenides | Reading Assignment 4 on Perusall  (Parmenides) |
| Week 3  Class 6  Sept 26 | Zeno | Reading Assignment 5 on Perusall  (Zeno of Elea) |
| Sept 28 | No class meeting (instructor attending a professional conference) |  |
| Week 4  Class 7  Oct 3 | The Atomists: Leucippus and Democratus | Reading Assignment 6 on Perusall  (The Atomists) |
| Class 8  Oct 5 | The Sophists | Reading Assignment 7 on Perusall  (The Sophists) |
| Week 5  Oct 10 | Fall Break: no class meeting |  |
| Class 9  Oct 12 | Review of Unit I | **Take home exam 1 released** |
| Week 6  Class 10  Oct. 17 | Unit II: Socrates and Plato  Introduction | Reading Assignment 8 on Perusall  (Plato’s Apology) |
| Class 11  Oct 19 | Plato’s Theory of Forms | **Take home exam 1 due** |
| Week 7  Oct 24 | Plato’s Phaedo | Reading Assignment 9 on Perusall  (Plato’s Phaedo) |
| Oct 26 | Plato’s Republic Book 1 | Reading Assignment 10 on  Perusall  (Plato’s Republic Book 1) |
| Week 8  Oct 31 | Plato’s Republic Books 2 & 3 | Reading Assignment 11 on Perusall  (Plato’s Republic Books 2 & 3) |
| Nov 2 | Plato’s Republic Books 4 & 5 | Reading Assignment 12 on Perusall (Plato’s Republic Books 4 & 5 |
| Week 9  Nov 7 | Plato’s Republic Books 6 & 7 | Reading Assignment 13 on Perusall (Plato’s Republic Books 6 & 7)  **Take Home Exam 2 Released** |
| Nov 9 | Unit III: Aristotle  Aristotle’s Physics, Book 2 | Reading Assignment 14 on Perusall  (Aristotle’s Physics Book 2) |
| Week 10  Nov 14 | Aristotle on Substance | **Take Home Exam 2 Due** |
| Nov 16 | Aristotle’s Metaphysics Book 7 | Reading Assignment 15 on Perusall  (Aristotle’s Metaphysics) |
| Week 11  Nov 21 | Aristotle’s Posterior Analytics | Reading Assignment 16 on Perusall (Aristotle’s Posterior Analytics) |
| Nov 23 | Aristotle’s On the Soul (De Anima) | Reading Assignment 17 on Perusall  (Aristotle’s De Anima) |
| Week 12  Nov 28 | Aristotle’s Ethics | Reading Assignment 18 on Perusall:  (Aristotle’s Ethics) |
| Nov 30 | Aristotle’s Politics | Reading Assignment 19 on Perusall: (Aristotle’s Politics) |

**Take-home Final Exam Released December 4, 9:00 AM; Due December 11, 9:00 AM**