



Course Syllabus

Course	PHIL 3322: <i>Ancient Philosophy</i>
Professor	Dr. Andy Amato
Term	Fall 2022
Meetings	Tuesday and Thursday 4 - 5:15pm ATC 1.305

Professor Contact Information

The best way to contact me is by email: andy.amato@utdallas.edu I will check email periodically throughout the day, Monday through Friday. **Before emailing, please consult the syllabus** to see if it addresses your concern, then, if it doesn't, feel free to contact me. When sending an email make sure you: a) *properly address and sign it*, b) *include your name, class, and section information*, and c) *try to be as clear and concise as possible*. If a student sends an email asking a question that is answered by the syllabus, I will simply refer the student to the syllabus. My office hours will be on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2-3pm and by appointment.

Course Description for PHIL 3322: *Ancient Philosophy*

What is truth? Freedom? Beauty? Friendship? What is the best form of government? Do the gods exist? What are the basic building blocks of the universe? Ought we to trust reason over experience? What is happiness and how can we attain it? The ancient philosophers of the Mediterranean world asked all the great questions, many of which continue to haunt us even now. Their questions, accounts, and systems of thought helped lay the foundation for western civilization. We will attempt to retrieve the wisdom—at once both strange and familiar—of these ancient philosophers from Anatolia, Greece, and Rome. To facilitate and ground this exploration we will study select primary texts. We will begin with the poetic and mythic traditions of Hesiod and Homer, which will contextualize the arrival and development of philosophy as such. We will then read a selection of Presocratics, alerting us, in part, to the concept of *logos* (reason) and the desire to give a “true” account of the cosmos. We will then embark upon a sustained engagement of Plato, firmly establishing many of the major questions of philosophy for centuries. Aristotle's influential *Ethics* will then follow, before our last few weeks have us turn to the influential Hellenistic traditions of Cynicism, Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Neoplatonism.

Required Texts (*You need physical copies of these specific translations/editions*)

Plato, *Plato: Complete Works*, eds. Cooper and Hutchinson (Hackett Publishing, 1997) ISBN: 978-0872203495

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. J. A. K. Thomson (Penguin Classics, 2004) ISBN: 978-0140449495

Robert Dobbin, ed., *The Cynic Philosophers: From Diogenes to Julian* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2013) ISBN: 978-0141192222

Lucretius, *The Way Things Are*, trans. Rolfe Humphries (Indiana University Press, 1968) ISBN: 978-0253201256

Seneca, *Selected Dialogues and Consolations*, trans. Peter J. Anderson (Hackett Publishing, 2015) ISBN: 978-1624663680

Recommended Primary Text

Patricia Curd, ed., *A Presocratic Reader: Selected Fragments and Testimonia*, trans. Richard D. McKirahan (Hackett Publishing, 1996) ISBN: 978-0872203266.

Recommended Secondary Texts

*David Roochnik, *Retrieving the Ancient: An Introduction to Greek Philosophy* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2004) ISBN: 978-1405108621. Roochnik reads Greek philosophy through a continental philosophical lens helping students to correlate ancient ideas to contemporary projects.

*Stephen Clark, *Ancient Mediterranean Philosophy: An Introduction* (Bloomsbury, 2013) ISBN: 978-1441123596. Clark provides a wide picture of the Mediterranean world and its various religious and proto- and parallel philosophical traditions, historically contextualizing ancient philosophy.

*W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greek Philosophers: From Thales to Aristotle* (Harper & Row, 1975) ISBN: 978-0061310089. Guthrie provides a succinct and accessible overview of the pre-Socratics, Plato, and Aristotle. Highly recommended.

Richard Kraut, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Plato* (Cambridge University Press, 1992) ISBN: 978-0521436106. An edited anthology containing essays on Plato ranging from introductory in nature to highly specialized.

Émile Bréhier, *The Hellenistic & Roman Age*, trans. Wade Baskin (University of Chicago Press, 1965) ISBN: 978-0226072210. Bréhier's expansive multivolume *History of Philosophy* series is a nice alternative to Copleston's, providing entries on almost every major school, development, and figure up through the early twentieth-century.

R.W. Sharples, *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics: An Introduction to Hellenistic Philosophy* (Routledge, 1996) ISBN: 978-0415110358. Sharples slim volume on Hellenistic philosophy is well-regarded; interestingly organized around fundamental questions rather than major schools or figures.

Anthony Gottlieb, *The Dream of Reason* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2016) ISBN: 978-0393352986. Gottlieb provides a clear and useful introductory narrative account of philosophy from the Presocratics to the Renaissance, and does so without being overly "academic" or pedantic.

Note: Students should review these recommendations and consider obtaining one or more of them in order to become better situated to the texts, figures, and schools we are covering. I've placed an **asterisk* next to three highly recommended general introductions to Ancient Mediterranean/Greek Philosophy. For those interested in a historical approach to the ancient Greek world, I strongly suggest the work of M. I. Finley, especially *The World of Odysseus* and *The Ancient Economy*.

Additional Resources

Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, ed. James Miller, trans. Pamela Mensch (Oxford University Press, 2020) ISBN: 978-0197523391. Ancient text from the third century CE/AD, offering historical and apocryphal anecdotes and sayings from the Presocratics to the Hellenistic philosophers. Great edition to your library.

F. E. Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms: A Historical Lexicon* (New York: New York University Press, 1967) ISBN: 978-0814765524. This lexicon provides readers with most of the major Greek terms commonly referenced in philosophy, giving various definitions, specific uses, and textual instances. Student familiar with Greek should obtain the *Liddell & Scott* Greek-English Lexicon.

Two excellent **online resources**: *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (plato.stanford.edu) and *Perseus Digital Library* (perseus.tufts.edu). The former has reliable entries on every major philosophical school, movement, figure, and concept, while the latter has collected classical Greco-Roman works of history, literature, and philosophy in both the original language and in translation.

Note: Students should seriously consider obtaining and familiarizing themselves (if only passingly) with Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, the Odes of Pindar, the major plays of the great tragedians—Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides—Herodotus' *The Histories*, and Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, and various other primary Greek and Roman works.

COURSE CALENDAR

I

Poets, Presocratics, Sophists

WEEK 1

8/23 & 8/25

Topics, Activities, & Assignments

The Ancient World and The Poetic Tradition

- Syllabus Review
- Books and Resources
- Remarks on The Ancient Mediterranean World and The Homeric & Hesiodic traditions (Myth & Reason)
- The Ionians and Italians (the Presocratics)
- The Sophists
- Key Greek Terms
- Form 3-Person Small Discussion Groups

Weekly Readings

Required

- Excerpts from Hesiod, Pindar, Sophocles, and Thucydides (pdf/handout)

Recommended

- Guthrie, ch. 1; Roochnik, ch. 1; Clark, chs. 1-2
-
- Simone Weil, *The Iliad, Or, The Poem of Force*

WEEK 2

8/30 & 9/1

The Presocratics

- Thales (as proto-empiricist) vs vs Anaximander (as proto-rationalist)
- Pythagoras' mystical rationalism
- Heraclitus (becoming) vs Parmenides (being)
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation: *The Poetic Tradition***
- **Reader Response 1 DUE 11:59pm on 9/1 (elearning)**

Required

- *A Presocratic Reader* (pdf/handout) Thales, Anaximander, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, and Parmenides

Recommended

- Empedocles, Democritus, The Sophists (see *Presocratic* pdf/handout)
-
- Guthrie, chs. 2-3; Clark ch. 3
-
- Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* and *What I Owe the Ancients*
- Heidegger, *Early Greek Thinking*

II

Socrates & Plato

WEEK 3

9/6 & 9/8

Plato's Early Dialogues

- What is piety? What do the gods love and why?
- The unexamined life is not worth living
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation: *The Presocratics***

Required

- Plato, *Euthyphro* and *Apology*

Recommended

- Guthrie, ch. 4; Roochnik, ch. 2; Clark, ch. 4; Kraut, chs. 1-2, 4

WEEK 4

9/13 & 9/15

Plato's Early Dialogues

- What is our obligation to the laws? What about injustice?
- What is friendship? Why is it important?
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation: *The Sophists***
- **Reader Response 2 DUE 11:59pm on 9/15 (elearning)**

Required

- Plato, *Crito* and *Lysis*

WEEK 5
9/20 & 9/22

Plato's Early Dialogues

- What is virtue? Can it be taught?
- Are there many virtues or just one?
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation:** *Socratic Method (elenchus)*

Required
• Plato, *Protagoras*

WEEK 6
9/27 & 9/29

Plato's Middle Period

- What is justice? Is it profitable?
- Does the soul (*psyche*) have a proper function?
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation:** *Socratic virtue (areté)*
- **Reader Response 3 DUE 11:59pm on 9/29** (*elearning*)

Required
• Plato, *Republic* Bk I

Recommended
• Guthrie, chs. 5-6; Roochnik, ch. 3;
Clark, ch. 5

WEEK 7
10/4 & 10/6

Plato's Middle Period

- What is love? What role does it play in society?
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation:** *Plato's Idea of Love (erós)*

Required
• Plato, *Symposium*

Recommended
• Kraut, chs. 7-8

WEEK 8
10/11 & 10/13

Plato's Middle Period

- What does a just society look like? Or a just person?
- How does art, wealth, and democracy lead to tyranny?
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation:** *Plato's Critique of Democracy*
- **Reader Response 4 DUE 11:59pm on 10/13** (*elearning*)

Required
• Plato, *Republic* Bk II: **357a-361d**, 368a-373e, **381a-385c** • Bk III: 386a-394d, 401a-402a, 404e-405b, **411c-d**, 414b-417b • Bk IV: 419a-426c, **443a-444a** • Bk V: 451d-455e, **459a-460c**, 475c-476c • Bk VI: **488a-489c**, **496b-e**, 504b-506a, **509a-b** • Bk VII: **514a-519a** 522c, 526c, 527d, 532b-c, 535d-537a • Bk VIII: **557a-558c**, 562a-564b • Bk IX: 590d-592b • Bk X: **614b-621d**

Recommended
• Kraut, chs. 9-10
—
• Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy* chs. 13-15; *The Gay Science* aphs. 340, 372; *Twilight of the Idols*, “The Problem of Socrates” and “How the ‘Real World’ at last Became a Myth”
• Peter Sloterdijk, *Rules for the Human Zoo*

WEEK 9
10/18 & 10/20

Plato's Middle Period

- Art and beauty reconsidered
- Memory, writing, knowing
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation:** *Plato's Palinode for Art*

Required
• Plato, *Phaedrus*

Recommended
• Kraut, ch. 11
—
• Derrida, *Plato's Pharmacy*

III
Aristotle

WEEK 10
10/25 & 10/27

Aristotle

- What is the Object of Life?
- What is Happiness?
- Is Virtue a Mean?
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation:** *Aristotle's virtues*
- **Reader Response 5 DUE 11:59pm on 10/27** (*elearning*)

Required

- Aristotle, *Ethics* Bk I: i-vii, ix-x; Bk II: i, v-viii

Recommended

- Guthrie, chs. 7-8; Roochnik, ch. 4; Clark, ch. 6; Gottlieb, ch 12

WEEK 11
11/1 & 11/3

Aristotle

- Does Knowledge in Different Ways?
- Happiness & Contemplation
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation:** *The Role of Friendship & Contemplation in Political Life*

Required

- Aristotle, *Ethics* Bk VI: i-viii; Bk VIII: i-iv, viii-x; Bk X: i, iv-vii

Recommended

- Aristotle, *Politics* and *Poetics*

IV
Hellenistic Schools

WEEK 12
11/8 & 11/10

Cynicism

- *nomos* vs *physis*
- Self-Discipline & Self-Mastery
- Free Speech as Critical Speech (*parrhesia*)
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation:** *Cynicism as Critique*
- **Reader Response 6 DUE 11:59pm on 11/10** (*elearning*)

Required

- Dobbin, *The Cynic Philosophers* ch. "Diogenes"

Recommended

- Clark, ch. 7; Sharples, ch. 1; Gottlieb, 13
-
- Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, aph. 125 "The Madman"
- Michel Foucault, *Discourse and Truth: The Problematicization of Parrhesia*

WEEK 13
11/15 & 11/17

Epicureanism

- Atomistic Materialism
- Enlightened Hedonism
- The Swerve & Novelty
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
-
- **Thursday Group Presentation:** *Ethical Hedonism*

Required

- Lucretius, *The Way Things Are* Bk I & II, and pp. 86-89, 115-6, 147-152, 163-4, 191-5

Recommended

- Bréhier, ch. III
-
- Deleuze, *Lucretius and The Simulacrum*
- Marcuse, *On Hedonism*
- Stephen Greenblatt, *The Swerve*

WEEK 14
11/22 & 11/24

Fall Break & Thanksgiving Holiday
NO CLASS

WEEK 15

11/29 & 12/1

Stoicism

- Providence & Reason (*logos*)
- Propriation (*oikeiōsis*), or, What Properly Belongs to You
- Apathy (*apatheia*), or, How to Achieve Equanimity
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion

- **Literature Review DUE 11:59pm on MON 11/28** (elearning)

Required

- Seneca, *On The Happy Life* and *On the Shortness of Life*

Recommended

- Epictetus, *The Enchiridion*
- Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*
- Bréhier, ch. II
- Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* aphs. 276 & 341
- Elizabeth Grosz, “The Stoics, Materialism, and the Incorporeal” in *The Incorporeal*

WEEK 16

12/6 & 12/8

Neoplatonism

- Vision of Beauty
- Tuesday Small Group Discussion
- Concluding Remarks

- **Paper DUE 11:59pm on MON 12/12** (elearning)

Required

- Plotinus, *Beauty* (pdf/handout)

Recommended

- *Gospel of St. John*
- Clark, chs. 8-10; Bréhier, ch. VII

Course Requirements & Evaluations Criteria:

Four factors will be used to determine students’ final grade: 1) Six **Reader Responses** (eLearning), 2) One **Group Presentation** (in-class), 3) One **Literature Review** (eLearning), and 4) One **Paper** (eLearning). Students can earn a maximum of **1,000 points** in the course:

Reader Responses (6)	30%	300 points (50 points possible for <i>each</i> Reader Response)
Group Presentation	20%	200 points
Literature Review	20%	200 points
Paper	30%	300 points

Grade Scale/Key:

Letter	Percentage	Points Earned
A+	100%	1,000 + points
A	90-99%	900-999 points
B+	89%	890-899 points
B	80-88%	800-889 points
C+	79%	790-799 points
C	70-78%	700-789 points
D+	69%	690-699 points
D	60-68%	600-689 points
F	00-59%	000-599 points

Note: The final grade (point total) will be rounded up at .5

Example: A total of 795 points, or 79.5%, will be rounded up to 80%, or “B”

More Information about Assignments:

- 1 **Reader Responses.** Students will write **SIX Reader Responses** and submit them via eLearning. These are short, five-hundred-word essays, in which students simply “respond” to the readings. The topic of these reader responses is up to each student as long as the topic—be it an argument, concept, practice, etc.—comes from any reading we’ve done for the course since the previous reader response (thus keeping each reader response more or less current with the material we’re covering when each one is due). As “responses” to the readings, students do not have to make any formal arguments, they must rather simply reflect on what stood out to them and attempt to explain why. Directly citing the material does **not** count toward the five-hundred-word length requirement. **Each response will be turned in via eLearning every other Thursday before 11:59pm** (see the Course Calendar above for specific due dates). Each response is worth up to 50 points, with all six being worth up to 300 points (30% of final grade).
- 2 **Group Presentation.** On the first or second day of class we will form **three-person discussion groups**. We will try to take about ten minutes of class time every Tuesday for these groups to discuss that week’s readings. Each group will give **ONE** short **FIVE MINUTE Group Presentation** over a pre-selected topic. These are “no-nonsense” presentations in which each group simply 1) uses the required primary texts and recommended secondary sources of the course (or other appropriate scholarly resources), 2) organizes the central and salient features of the listed topic, and 3) gives a brief presentation (five minutes) that clearly and succinctly outlines and explains the topic. We will take a few minutes (usually no more than five) to ask questions or discuss the presentation. Presentations will occur each Thursday, beginning on week two and continuing until week thirteen. Each group will sign up to present on a particular topic on a particular day (see the course calendar above). Each group submit an artifact to the professor (a single typed page should suffice), outlining the presentation and what every group member’s particular contribution. The Group Presentation is worth up to 200 points (20% of final grade).
- 3 **Literature Review.** The **Literature Review** will serve as an opportunity for students to articulate their understanding of 5 selected readings (or groups of readings) from the class up through the 15th week of the semester (they will be chosen by the professor, but students will have some ability to customize these selections as suits their interests). Students will be given a prompt—a very generalized theme and/or problem—around which concise “rehearsals” (or critical précis) of the readings to date can be fashioned. Students will compose a **minimum of 5-6 double-spaced typed pages** (approximately 1,250-1,500 words). The intent here does not turn upon exhaustive or meticulous detail, rather upon defensible interpretations and cogent articulations of the major themes and arguments of the selected readings. Students **must reference the material** they are writing about (citation), using the specific editions required for the course, but should avoid excessive quotations. The Literature Review essay must follow MLA or Chicago Style rules for formatting and citation. **The review must be submitted in eLearning BEFORE 11:59pm on Monday 11/28.** The Literature Review is worth up to 200 points (20% of final grade).
- 4 **Paper.** Students will write a **7-9pp. paper** at the end of the semester. Students have three options for their paper: a) *an exploration of a single theme or concept discussed in three of the assigned texts*; b) *a comparative analysis of two of the assigned texts*; or c) *a close and careful reading of a single assigned text*. Each student should consult with the professor before choosing an option. The essay must be approximately 2,000 words, typed, double-spaced, use a standard 12pt. font, and follow MLA or Chicago Style. **The paper must be submitted in eLearning BEFORE 11:59pm on Monday 12/12.** Students must reference the relevant assigned materials and are strongly encouraged to make use of the recommended secondary sources. The Paper is worth up to 300 points (30% of final grade). *Make sure to proofread your paper!*

Please Note: Plagiarism or any form of cheating on any of the assignments will be a violation of the student code of conduct and will be reported. Students found guilty of plagiarism or any form of cheating will **automatically fail the course**. What you turn in must be your own work. *There are no exceptions.*

Missed Work: A student may request to write one Additional Reader Response worth up to 50 points. The professor will decide which reading (or group of readings) the student will respond to. If a student experiences prolonged illness or a family emergency, they may request a second additional response also worth up to 50 points. **The request must be received before 11:59pm on 11/17** (although this request can be made earlier). This response follows the same guidelines as the normally assigned Reader Responses. Unlike regular assignments, a **physical copy of the Additional Reader Response must be turned in at the start of our last class session on 12/8.** *Late responses will not be accepted.* The class policies on plagiarism and cheating apply here as well.

NOTE: Unless a student has been granted an accommodation by the OSA, **the use of electronic devices during class is prohibited**—no phones, laptops, e-readers, etc. After one warning, students will be considered in violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

ALSO NOTE: *This syllabus may be revised at any time to reflect beneficial or necessary adjustments and/or corrections. Students will be alerted if any such adjustments or corrections are made and a revised syllabus will be posted and made available for them.*

ATTENDANCE: With the exceptions of serious illness and family emergencies, students who miss 6 or more class sessions will have their final grade reduced by one letter. Students who miss 11 or more class sessions will automatically fail the course.

So, In a Nutshell...

HOW THIS COURSE WORKS

- You are expected to obtain physical copies of all the **required texts** for this course and read them (as well as any pdfs or handouts) in accord with the dates outlined in the Course Calendar above where the readings for each week are specified, along with assignments.
- You are expected to **attend class**, be on time, having **completed the assigned reading**, with the **appropriate text in hand**, and non-electronic note-taking materials.
- There will be **Six Reader Responses** (1-2pp.), **One Group Presentation** (5 min), **One Literature Review** (5-7pp.), and **One Paper** (7-9pp.)—*you are responsible for completing these assignments!*
- To get full credit for assignments you must **follow the instructions** for each assignment (see above) and **complete each one before it is due**.
- If you have **any questions**, **check the syllabus first** to see if it has what you're looking for. If you need to contact me, please follow the **email protocol** outlined above under Professor Contact Information.
- Keep an eye out for announcements from the professor and check your email regularly.

Additional Resources

Student Code of Conduct

<https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

<https://studentaccess.utdallas.edu>

Students in Recovery

<https://recovery.utdallas.edu>