
Course Syllabus

Course Information

PHIL 1301 INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Charles Bambach

SPRING 2023 Tues/Thurs. 10:00 AM-10:50 AM Site: MC 2.410

Professor Contact Information

My office hours, in JO 5.416, are from 3:00 PM-4:00 PM on Thursday and by appointment. My e-mail address is: cbambach@utdallas.edu

TAs: Joey Turner, email: joey.turner@utdallas.edu

Zachary Meyer, email: Zachary.Meyer@utdallas.edu

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

None

Course Description

In this course we will consider some of the most fundamental questions raised within the Western philosophical tradition. Questions about justice, freedom, equality, the nature of truth, the essence of language, the meaning of being, and foundation of human rights. By reading literary and philosophical texts with care, we will learn to think about language in a radically different way. But our focus will not merely be formal or structural. Rather, we will explore the tensions/aporias that haunt the very language that we employ to pursue these issues. In the first part of the semester, we will focus on the Greek world by looking at the tensions between nature and culture (*physis* and *nomos*), between justice and power, between ethics and political expediency. In the second part of the term we will shift ground and turn to modern concerns about law, political freedom, power, human rights, and ethical dwelling. Ultimately, our aim will be to read texts slowly and with care---noticing how alterations, inflections, repetitions and interrogations can change the very meaning of a work for both authors and/or readers/audience.

Since I believe an undergraduate education is rooted in an understanding of the classical world, we will start there. However, we will situate our readings philosophically in terms of problems of human identity that concern our own inability to properly confront the uncanny dimensions of human existence.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Students will learn interpretive skills in reading texts with care, improve their writing ability, and gain a rudimentary knowledge of modern continental philosophy.

Required Textbooks and Materials

The following editions are REQUIRED. You may find them at the UTD Book Store, Off Campus Books, and commercially. It is imperative that you purchase the EXACT editions of these texts and NOT just any translation of these works.

- Plato, *THE REPUBLIC* (translation by Sterling & Scott) Norton & Co. **ISBN-10:** 0393314677 **ISBN-13:** 978-0393314670
- Sophocles, *Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone* (University of Chicago Press) trans. David Grene University of Chicago Press various editions **ISBN-10:** 9780226311517 **ISBN-13:** 978-0226311517
- Thucydides, *The Essential Thucydides: On Justice, Power, and Human Nature* (Hackett Publishing) **ISBN-10:** 1647920159 **ISBN-13:** 978-1647920159
- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. Quentin Skinner & Russell Price (Cambridge University Press) **ISBN-10:** 1316509265 **ISBN-13:** 978-1316509265
- Martin Heidegger *POETRY, LANGUAGE, THOUGHT* **ISBN-10:** 9780060937287 **ISBN-13:** 978-0060937287
- Jacques Derrida, *Acts of Religion* **ISBN-10:** 0415924014 **ISBN-13:** 978-0415924016

Suggested Course Materials

F.E. Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms*

Martin Heidegger, *What is that-Philosophy?* (trans. Joan Stambaugh)

Jacques Derrida, "Declarations of Independence" in: *Negotiations*, pp. 46-54

Anne Carson, *Antigonick*

Simon Critchley, "Black Socrates" https://www.radicalphilosophyarchive.com/wp-content/files_mf/rp69_article2_blacksoocrates_critchley.pdf

Assignments & Academic Calendar

17-19 JANUARY: Course introduction ANAXIMANDER FRAGMENT (on elearning)

24-26 JANUARY: HERACLITUS FRAGMENTS (PDF elearning)

31 JANUARY -2 FEBRUARY: Plato, *The Republic* (Book One)

7 FEBRUARY-9 FEBRUARY: Plato, *The Republic* (Book Two & Book Five)

14-16 FEBRUARY: Plato, *The Republic* (Book Six & Book Seven)

21-23 FEBRUARY: Plato, *The Republic* (Book Ten)

23rd FEBRUARY: FIRST TAKE-HOME ESSAY DUE 2-3 pages.

28 FEBRUARY- 2 + 7 MARCH: Sophocles, *Antigone*

9-21 MARCH: Thucydides, *The Essential Thucydides: On Justice, Power, and Human Nature*, pp.1-12 and 60-73.

WEEK OF MARCH 14TH SPRING BREAK

23-28 MARCH: Thucydides, *The Essential Thucydides: On Justice, Power, and Human Nature*, pp. 110-146 and 163-173.

WEEK OF MARCH 28 SECOND PAPER DUE 2-3 pages.

30 MARCH+ 4-6 APRIL: Machiavelli, *The Prince*

13 APRIL: Nietzsche, “The Greek State” in *On the Genealogy of Morality*, pp.176-186.

18 APRIL: Nietzsche, “Homer on Competition” in *On the Genealogy of Morality*, pp. 187-194.

20 APRIL: Friedrich Hölderlin, “In lovely blueness” (copy on elearning)

20-25 APRIL: Martin Heidegger, “poetically man dwells...” in: *Poetry, Language, Thought*, pp. 209-227.

27 APRIL + 2 MAY: Jacques Derrida, “The Force of Law” in: *Acts of Religion*, pp. 228-258.

THURSDAY 4TH MAY FINAL ESSAY DUE 4-5 pages

Grading Policy

Course requirements include **THREE ESSAYS** –the first 25%; the second 30 %; the third 35% + discussion section participation 10%

ATTENDANCE WILL BE NOTED AND STUDENTS WHO MISS 6 OR MORE CLASSES WILL BE DROPPED AT LEAST A FULL GRADE. Students will be expected to read the texts for each class and be prepared to discuss them. Since we will be discussing the language and form of each text we read, **STUDENTS WILL BE EXPECTED TO BRING THEIR TEXTS TO CLASS FOR EACH SESSION.**

Grades are assessed on a 4.0 scale as described in the undergraduate catalog.

Course & Instructor Policies

You cannot hope to pass this class if you do not attend it and complete all of the required work. This course will be conducted according to strict codes of academic honesty. All cases of plagiarism will be fully investigated and the deliberate instances reported to the Dean of Students. Penalties for deliberate cheating may include failing the assignment in question, failing the course, or suspension and expulsion from the University. Students are expected to know the University's policies and procedures on such matters, as well as those governing student services, conduct, and obligations.