

Ancient Greek Philosophy (PHIL 1110-601, CLST 1501-601)

University of Pennsylvania: Spring 2024

Instructor: Caleb Zimmerman

Class Time: Tuesdays 5:15pm-8:14pm

Class Location: Claudia Cohen Hall (COHN) 392

Office hours: arrange by email

Email: calebzim@sas.upenn.edu

CRNs: 23308, 23309

Course Description: What is philosophy? How does it differ from science, religion, literature, and other modes of human discourse? This course traces the origins of philosophy as a discipline in the Western tradition, looking to thinkers of Ancient Greece and Rome. We will examine how natural philosophers such as Thales, Anaximander, and Heraclitus distinguished their inquiries from the teachings of poets such as Homer and Hesiod; how ancient atomism had its origins in a response to Parmenides' challenge to the assumption that things change in the world; how Socrates reoriented the focus of philosophy away from the natural world and toward the fundamental ethical question, how shall I live? We will also examine how his pupil, Plato, and subsequently Aristotle, developed elaborate philosophical systems that address the nature of reality, knowledge, and human happiness. Finally, we will examine the ways in which later thinkers such as the Epicureans and Stoics transformed and extended the earlier tradition.

Course Learning Goals: This course is designed to introduce students to the practice of philosophy through the study of questions and arguments central to the ancient Greek philosophy, as represented by a selection of mostly primary and some secondary readings. Students will learn basic principles of good reasoning, including how to understand arguments, represent them clearly and fairly, and evaluate them for cogency. Students will also learn to develop their own arguments and views regarding the philosophical questions studied in the course. In these ways the course aims to develop students' own reasoning and communication skills in ways that will be useful in any further study of philosophy they undertake as well as beyond the bounds of philosophy.

Prerequisites: This course has no prerequisites. It is accessible to undergraduates with a variety of interests and backgrounds.

Course Texts: All texts will be available online either through Canvas or Penn Libraries.

Grading Scale:

A: 94-100%	C: 74-76%
A-: 90-93%	C-: 70-73%*
B+: 87-89%	D+: 67-69%
B: 84-86%	D: 64-66%
B-: 80-83%	D-: 60-63%
C+: 77-79%	F: 59% and below

Assignments:

- 3 précis of an original text (best two précis grades count for 15% each)

- Final paper proposal (15%)
- Final paper presentation (15%)
- Presentation evaluations (15%)
- Final paper (25%)

Late assignment policy: Students may submit any assignment up to 48 hours late for any reason without excuse and without notifying me. If you feel that you will need to submit an assignment more than 48 hours late, let me know in advance and we can discuss.

Academic Honesty: Students are expected to be familiar with and comply with Penn's Code of Academic Integrity, which is available in the Pennbook or online at <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>. I generally have a zero-tolerance policy for cheating, and all violations will result in substantial penalties. If you have any doubts or questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): You are welcome to use generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Dall-e, Bard, etc. only when such use is outlined in assignment instructions, or in any of these ways: for brainstorming and refining your ideas, fine-tuning your research questions, finding information on a topic, and checking grammar and style. Otherwise, the use of generative AI tools is forbidden. You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (i.e., for ensuring that it does not violate intellectual property laws or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to conform to university policies on academic honesty. Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways will receive an grade of 0. When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification. My policy on artificial intelligence is informed by and consistent with the views of Jonathan Zimmerman (no relation), published here: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/08/29/ai-student-policy-chatgpt-college/>.

Attendance Policy: You may miss up to 3 classes for any reason without notifying me. But if you miss a fourth class, you will fail the course.

Canvas: Canvas will be used to post readings, upload most assignments, record grades, and make class announcements: e.g., changes to the reading schedule and meeting cancelations. Please check Canvas regularly.

Laptops and phones: You may use electronic devices only to take notes and access readings. I reserve the right to fail a student who uses electronic devices in other ways during class.

Disabilities and Accommodations: This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. All are welcome. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second week of classes.

Participation: Please read each assignment and prepare thoughts and questions before each class.

Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities Policy: It is the policy of the University of Pennsylvania "to maintain and encourage freedom of inquiry, discourse, teaching, research,

and publication and to protect any member of the academic staff against influences, from within or without the University, which would restrict him or her in the exercise of these freedoms in his or her area of scholarly interest." This includes when "speaking or writing as an individual." With this freedom, however, comes responsibilities as well: "As a person of learning and a member of an educational institution, the teacher should remember that the public may judge the profession and the institution by his/her utterances. Hence the teacher should at all times show respect for the opinions of others and should indicate when he or she is not speaking for the institution."

Tentative Assignment and Reading Schedule:

Week 1 (January 23): Introduction

Week 2 (January 30): Pre-Socratics 1 (Thales, Anaximander, Heraclitus, Democritus)

Week 3 (February 6): Pre-Socratics 2 (Parmenides, Zeno, Empedocles, Pythagoras)

- DUE February 9: Précis #1

Week 4 (February 13): Socrates (*Apology, Euthyphro, Meno*)

Week 5 (February 20): Socrates (*Symposium, Crito*)

- DUE February 16: Précis #2

Week 6 (February 27): Plato (*Republic*)

Week 7: SPRING BREAK (no class)

Week 8 (March 12): Plato (*Phaedo, On Virtue, Rival Lovers*)

Week 9 (March 19): Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics, Eudemian Ethics*)

- DUE March 22: Précis #3 (optional)

Week 10 (March 26): Aristotle (*On the Soul, Poetics, Rhetoric, Categories, Metaphysics, On Sleep*)

Week 11 (April 2): Stoics (on philosophy, knowledge; *Lives of the Stoics*; ethics of Cicero, Seneca)

Week 12 (April 9): Epicurus, Plotinus, Neo-Platonism

- DUE April 12: Final Paper Proposal

Week 13 (April 16): 5 presentations, contemporary development of ancient Greek philosophy

Week 14 (April 23): 8 presentations, contemporary development of ancient Greek philosophy

Week 15 (April 30): 12 presentations

- DUE May 3: Presentation Evaluations

Final Paper due May 10