

HISTORY OF ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 270 – 01
Fall 2020

Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice 223A
Tues. & Thurs. 2:30–3:50pm

Turner C. Nevitt, PhD
Temporary Module 234
tnevitt@sandiego.edu

Office Hours: via Zoom, Wednesdays
10:00am–3:00pm, & by appointment
<https://sandiego.zoom.us/j/4536920189>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys Greek and Roman philosophy in the ancient world (fifth century BC to fifth century AD). Philosophy during this period was above all *a way of life*. Each ancient school of philosophy represented a distinctive choice of life in a community, motivated by certain experiences, imitating certain exemplars, practicing certain spiritual exercises, and teaching and learning certain doctrines, all in pursuit of a shared ideal for human life and happiness. We will focus on five major schools: Platonism, Aristotelianism, Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Scepticism. We will study and practice each school's way of life in order to see what it might contribute to our own life and wellbeing.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

So, by the end of this course you should be able to:

- (1) provide general description of chief characteristics of and indigenous problems in the Classical periods of Western philosophy;
- (2) provide more detailed exposition of Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies on at least two shared areas of philosophical concern for them;
- (3) demonstrate analytic and critical capability when considering theories and issues pertaining to this period of thought.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Pierre Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). ISBN: 978-0674013735

Plato, *Five Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo*, 2nd ed., trans. G. M. A. Grube, rev. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002). ISBN: 978-0872206335

The Basic Works of Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Modern Library, 2001). ISBN: 978-0375757990

Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*, trans. Ronald Melville (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). ISBN: 978-0199555147

Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, trans. Robin Hard (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). ISBN: 978-0199573202

Sextus Empiricus, *Selections from the Major Writings on Scepticism, Man, & God*, ed. Philip P. Hallie, trans. Sanford G. Etheridge (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1985). ISBN: 978-0872200067

You do not need to buy these books. All the required readings are available on Blackboard.

FINAL GRADE ALLOTMENT

Participation: 20%	Midterm Exam: 25%
Journals: 30%	Final Project: 25%

EXPLANATION OF GRADES

A	93–100	4.00	Excellent, honors-level work, outstanding
A-	90–92	3.67	Still excellent
B+	87–89	3.33	Very good, high level of performance
B	83–86	3.00	Good, solid and above average level of performance
B-	80–82	2.67	Good, still above average
C+	77–79	2.33	Average level of performance
C	73–76	2.0	Satisfactory, acceptable level of performance
C-	70–72	1.67	Minimally acceptable
D	60–70	1.00	Passing, but unsatisfactory, below average performance
F	59–0	0.00	Failure, inferior performance

ATTENDANCE

You should try to attend every class. Please arrive before class begins and leave after it ends. If you are unable to attend class for a serious reason (e.g. religious holiday, illness, death of family, etc.), you should watch the Zoom recording and follow up with me in office hours.

PARTICIPATION

You should do each reading before class and, if we return to class in person, bring a hard copy of it with you to class. Failure to do so will adversely affect your participation grade.

There will be a short assignment on each reading due the day before the class on that reading. Each assignment will be submitted on Blackboard and graded for completion.

During class discussions, please listen attentively to others and do not interrupt them. Please offer all your comments and questions in a spirit of care and respect for yourself and others.

The rubric for the evaluation of participation is available on Blackboard.

JOURNALS

You will complete six journals of exercises worth a combined 30% of the final grade (Introductory worth 4%, Platonism worth 6%, Aristotelianism worth 6%, Epicureanism worth 5%, Stoicism worth 5%, Skepticism worth 4%). Their due dates are on the schedule below. They will be submitted on Blackboard and graded \checkmark (85%), $\checkmark+$ (95%), or $\checkmark-$ (75%). The rubric for the evaluation of journals is available on Blackboard.

MIDTERM EXAM

You will have a take-home midterm exam worth 25% of the final grade. Its due date is on the schedule below. I will explain the exam format in class and give you a review sheet at least a week beforehand. The exam will be submitted and graded on Blackboard.

FINAL PROJECT

In lieu of a final exam, you will complete a final group project worth 25% of the final grade. Its due date is on the schedule below. I will present the project in class a couple weeks before it is due. The final project will be submitted and graded on Blackboard.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

A version of the University of San Diego's Academic Integrity Policy is available here: <http://catalogs.sandiego.edu/undergraduate/academic-regulations/integrity-scholarship/>. The first assignment that shows evidence of a violation of this policy will earn you an F for the assignment, or for the course. It may also earn you probation, suspension, or expulsion, at the discretion of the administration. Ignorance of what counts as a violation of this policy is no excuse. If you are unsure, please contact me. I will explain how to cite sources in class.

ELECTRONICS

If we return to class in person, electronics will not be allowed. Studies show that we learn better by taking notes by hand. Using electronics in class will affect your participation grade. If you need an accommodation to this policy because of a disability, please contact me.

SPECIAL NEEDS

If you require accommodations for special needs, please contact the Disability and Learning Difference Resource Center. I am happy to accommodate you however they recommend.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Do all the readings. Take notes on them. Complete all the assignments. Attend all the classes. Speak up in class. Take notes in class. Review your notes regularly. Outline, draft, and revise your papers. Get to work on your final project early. Contact me often. I'm here to help!

TENTATIVE READING SCHEDULE

Unit One: Introduction

- 8/18 (T) Syllabus
Hadot, "Introduction"
- 8/20 (R) Hadot, "Philosophy Before Philosophy,"
Hadot, "The Inception of the Idea of 'Doing Philosophy'"

Introductory Journal Due 8/22*Unit Two: Platonism*

- 8/25 (T) Plato, *Euthyphro*
- 8/27 (R) Plato, *Apology*
- 9/1 (T) Hadot, "Plato and the Academy"
- 9/3 (R) Plato, *Meno*
- 9/8 (T) Plato, *Phaedo* 57a–84b
- 9/10 (R) Plato, *Phaedo* 84c–108c & 113d–118a

Platonism Journal Due 9/12*Unit Three: Aristotelianism*

- 9/15 (T) Hadot, "Aristotle and His School"
Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I, 1–2
- 9/17 (R) Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I, 1–5 & 7–8
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* X, 6–8
- 9/22 (T) Aristotle, *Categories* 1–5 & 12–14
Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I, 6 & 9
- 9/24 (R) Aristotle, *Physics* I, 7–9
Aristotle, *Physics* II, 1–3
Aristotle, *Physics* VIII, 1 & 6
- 9/29 (T) Aristotle, *De Anima* I, 1
Aristotle, *De Anima* II, 1–3, 5–6, & 12

10/1 (R) Aristotle, *De Anima* III, 1–8

Aristotelianism Journal Due 10/3

10/6 (T) Midterm Exam Due

Unit Four: Epicureanism

10/8 (R) Hadot, “The Hellenistic Schools,” 91–108 & 113–126

10/13 (T) Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe* I, 1–634
Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe* II, 1–580

10/15 (R) Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*, III

10/20 (T) Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*, V

Epicureanism Journal Due 10/24

Unit Five: Stoicism

10/22 (R) Hadot, “The Hellenistic Schools,” 126–139

10/27 (T) Epictetus, *Handbook*

10/29 (R) Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, Books 1–4

11/3 (T) Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, Books 5–8

Stoicism Journal Due 11/7

Unit Six: Skepticism

11/5 (R) Hadot, “The Hellenistic Schools” 108–113 & 142–145
Sextus Empiricus, *Selections*, 31–44 & 78–87

11/10 (T) Sextus Empiricus, *Selections*, 44–78

11/12 (R) Sextus Empiricus, *Selections*, 112–128, 131–146, & 175–178

Skepticism Journal Due 11/14

11/19 (R) Final Project Due
(Final Exam, 11:00am–1:00pm)