

A Lost Work of Greek Philosophy: Aristotle's *Protrepticus*

PHIL 87 (Section ID: 916132)
2017 Fall, Mondays, 12:00-12:50pm, weeks 1-8
Location: HSS 8025

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Course Description

We will read together an experimental reconstruction and translation of a lost work of Greek philosophy: Aristotle's *Protrepticus* (*Exhortation to Philosophy*).

Requirements and Evaluation

Any student seeking credit for the seminar must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Read the entirety of the reconstruction of Aristotle's *Protrepticus* (edited and translated by D. S. Hutchinson and M. R. Johnson and available at www.protrepticus.info) by week 2. Re-read the specific pages assigned before each meeting.
2. Attend all eight meetings of the seminar. For each meeting, write out a question about the reading to be discussed by the seminar. The question may be a clarification, a possible objection, a counterexample, an alternative interpretation, a juxtaposition with another passage, or other kinds of questions.
3. For any absence, a student must submit, by the beginning of the next class, a 600-word essay on the assigned reading for the day missed. The essay must include the following elements (1) a proper citation of a passage within the assigned reading; (2) an interpretation and explanation of the argument of the passage, using your own examples; (3) a consideration of a possible objection or objections to the argument. No late assignments accepted—the student will fail the

course if the make-up assignment is not handed in by the beginning of the next class (e.g. if two or more classes in a row are missed).

Schedule

Oct. 2: Introduction and Orientation.

Read the entire booklet, and we will focus the discussion on the front matter and pp.1-7.

Oct. 9: The ideals of theoretical and mathematical philosophy.

Read pp.8-16.

Oct. 16: The charge that theoretical philosophy is useless.

Read pp. 17-19.

Oct. 23: Successes of theoretical philosophy that must be acknowledged.

Read pp.20-27.

Oct. 30: The value of both general and specialized education.

Read pp.28-36.

Nov. 6: Arguments from common conceptions in favor of theoretical philosophy.

Read pp.37-43.

Nov. 13: A teleological argument for the intrinsic value of theoretical philosophy.

Read pp.44-51.

Nov. 20: The instrumental value of theoretical philosophy for political science and personal success.

Read pp.52-60.