

Philosophy 102: Hellenistic Philosophy

Professor Don Rutherford

York 4080A
MW 5:00-6:20 pm

Office hours: MW 3:30-4:30 or by app't (HSS 7010)

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The term “Hellenistic philosophy” is usually taken to refer to three schools of philosophy—Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Skepticism—that flourished in the period between the death of Aristotle in 322 BCE through the second century CE. While differing widely in their methods and doctrines, the Hellenistic schools were united in having a strong ethical orientation. Each offered itself as a “way” to the attainment of the best sort of human life, one in which we enjoy lasting happiness, untroubled by fear or anxiety. Although not as well known today as the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, Hellenistic philosophy exerted an important influence on the views of later philosophers such as Descartes, Spinoza and Locke. The past 25 years have witnessed a revival of interest in Hellenistic philosophy and a new appreciation of its richness and appeal.

I. Texts:

Required

Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory Readings, 2nd ed., ed. Brad Inwood and L.P. Gerson (Hackett, 1997)

Cicero, *On Moral Ends*, ed. Julia Annas, tr. Raphael Woolf (Cambridge, 2001)

Epictetus, *The Handbook*, tr. Nicholas White (Hackett, 1983)

Seneca, *Dialogues and Essays*, tr. John Davie (Oxford, 2008)

Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*, tr. Martin Ferguson Smith (Hackett, 2001)

Recommended

Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*, tr. Robin Campbell (Penguin, 1969)

The above are available in the bookstore in Price Center and will be on reserve in Geisel Library. Other materials will be made available through the class TED site.

II. Requirements

1. Concept analysis (5%). One page, double-spaced; due in class on April 10.
2. Midterm exam (30%). Given in-class on Thursday, May 3; will cover the introductory readings on Epicureanism, Stoicism, and Skepticism.
3. Collaborative oral presentation (15%). In-class between May 6 and June 8.
4. Term paper, in lieu of a final exam (40%). 2500-3000 words. The paper will be due to me during the scheduled exam time, Friday, June 14, 7-10 pm. **No late papers will be accepted.**
5. Participation (10%): Consistent attendance and the completion of reading assignments are required. Class discussion is encouraged. If you feel uneasy about speaking in class, you can demonstrate your engagement with the course by coming to office hours or raising issues by e-mail.

III. Reading Assignments (subject to revision)

Week 1

M	4/1	Philosophy as a Way of Life
W	4/3	Introduction to Epicureanism (IG 3-19, 28-31, 40-44)

Week 2

M	4/8	Cicero, <i>On Moral Ends</i> , bk. I
W	4/10	<i>On Moral Ends</i> , bk. II

Week 3

M	4/15	Introduction to Stoicism (IG 103-111, 132-141, 190-203; optional: 203-232)
W	4/17	<i>On Moral Ends</i> , bk. III

Week 4

M	4/22	<i>On Moral Ends</i> , bk. IV
W	4/24	Introduction to Pyrrhonian Skepticism (IG 285-297, 302-308)

Week 5

M	4/29	Review
W	5/1	Midterm exam

Week 6

M	5/6	Living as an Epicurean: Epicurus, <i>Principal Doctrines</i> , <i>Vatican Sayings</i> (IG 32-40)
W	5/8	Living as a Stoic: Epictetus, <i>Handbook</i>

Week 7

M	5/13	Living as a Skeptic (IG 387-397)
W	5/15	Seneca, "On the Tranquility of the Mind"

Week 8

M	5/20	Seneca, "Consolation to Marcia"; "Consolation to Helvia"
W	5/22	Seneca, "On the Happy Life"

Week 9

M	5/27	Memorial Day Holiday – No Class
W	5/29	Lucretius, <i>On the Nature of Things</i> , bks. I-III

Week 10

M	6/3	<i>On the Nature of Things</i> , bk. IV-V
W	6/5	<i>On the Nature of Things</i> , bk. VI

Other Important Information

- Extensions on any assignment will only be given to those who present evidence of a valid excuse in a timely manner. Note that computer or printer failure does **not** constitute a valid excuse, so be sure to take all necessary precautions to safeguard your work. If at any time you believe you have a legitimate claim to an extension or make-up, bring it to my attention as soon as possible (e.g., if you are going to be out of town for a legitimate purpose, such as a university-sponsored concert performance, athletic event, conference, or the equivalent).
- If accommodations are needed for a disability or for religious reasons, please discuss the matter with me as soon as possible.
- Students should familiarize themselves with the UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship: <http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html>. There is a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism in this class. Anyone who is found to plagiarize work will receive an automatic F for the course. Additional disciplinary penalties may be assigned by the UCSD administration. Receipt of this syllabus constitutes an acknowledgement that you are responsible for understanding and acting in accordance with UCSD guidelines on academic integrity.