

PHILOSOPHY 102: HELLENISTIC PHILOSOPHY

UCSD 2017 Spring
MWF 12-12:50pm
SOLIS 111

Professor Monte Johnson
H&SS 7058 Office hours: M 1-2pm, W 11am-12pm
monte@ucsd.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The works of the founders of the major schools of Hellenistic philosophy, the Epicureans, Stoics, and Sceptics, have been lost, but their ideas survive in fragments quoted in later authors, and in extant works of Roman writers. We will read some of the fragments of the Greek philosophers of the Hellenistic period, and ethical and political writings of Cicero and Seneca in order to get an idea of the range of Hellenistic ethical theories, as well as their approach to some more concrete ethical problems, such as the relationship between ethics and physics and logic, the relative value of pleasure and virtue, consolation and the control of emotion, and the methods of obtaining of tranquility and happiness.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at UCSD Bookstore)

- *Hellenistic Philosophy: introductory readings* / translated with introduction and notes by Brad Inwood and L. P. Gerson. Second edition. Indianapolis, 1997.
- *Cicero: On Moral Ends*. Translated by R. Woolf. Cambridge, 2001.
- *Seneca: Dialogues and Essays*. Translated by J. Davie. Oxford, 2007.

OBJECTIVES

1. Learn how to read, interpret, discuss, cite, quote, and paraphrase the fundamental doctrines of the Epicureans, Stoics and Sceptics in English translation.
2. Learn the ways that Greek philosophy was transformed by Roman writers for their own purposes, and to appreciate Cicero and Seneca as literary archetypes for later legal, ethical, and social-political discourse. Appreciate the enduring influence of Hellenistic philosophy on the history of philosophy and science.
3. Conduct original research on Hellenistic Philosophy in relation to your own interests. Learn to utilize both primary and secondary sources in representing and criticizing philosophical views. Present your ideas to your peers, and give and receive helpful criticism from them.

EVALUATION (see separate evaluation form, which must be completed and submitted)

This course uses a method of evaluation called *specifications grading*. All modules for the course are graded pass/fail on the basis of the written specifications for each module. Final grades (including P/NP grades) are computed on the basis of the number of modules completed. All written work for the entire course, including copies on which feedback has been written, must be retained and submitted as a package at the end of the final exam (June 8, 2016, 2:30pm, no early or late submissions accepted). Attendance at all 30 meetings is mandatory and participation in the discussion is graded. See evaluation form for policy on absence and late submission of work.

PHILOSOPHY 102: HELLENISTIC PHILOSOPHY

SCHEDULE

Note: All readings are in the required textbooks unless otherwise noted. All readings should be done prior to the meeting during which they will be discussed. Please bring your textbooks to class, and be prepared to ask questions or make comments about the material. If possible, consult alternate translations and editions.

Meeting (2017) Topics, Readings, and Deadlines

Week 1

1. April 3 Syllabus and Evaluation
2. April 5 Historical and Philosophical overview
3. April 7 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I (Handout)

Week 2

4. April 10 Cynics
Reading: Diogenes of Sinope (Handout)
5. April 12 Cyrenaics
Reading: Aristippus of Cyrene (Handout)
Student Information Form Due!!!
6. April 14 Pyrrhonian sceptics
Reading: Pp.302-324 and 387-398 of *Hellenistic Philosophy*.

Week 3

7. April 17 Introduction to Epicureans
Reading: pp.3-45 of *Hellenistic Philosophy*
8. April 19 Epicurean Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 1
9. April 21 Criticism of Epicurean Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 2

PHILOSOPHY 102: HELLENISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Week 4

10. April 24 Introduction to Stoics
Reading: pp. 110-178 of *Hellenistic Philosophy*
Scholar Assignment Due.

11. April 26 Stoic Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 3

12. April 28 Criticism of Stoic Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 4

Week 5

13. May 1 Academic Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 5

14. May 3 Discussion
Draft 1 of Research Essay Due.

15. May 5 Debate
Students will divide into groups of Stoics, Epicureans, and Academics, and debate the relative merits of their philosophical Schools.
Scholar Assignment Revision Due (electronic copy).

Week 6

16. May 8 Scholar Presentations

17. May 10 Scholar Presentations

18. May 12 Scholar Presentations

PHILOSOPHY 102: HELLENISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Week 7

19. May 15 Introduction to Seneca
Reading: Seneca, *On the Happy Life*
20. May 17 Tranquility
Reading: Seneca, *On Tranquility of Mind*
21. May 19 Shortness of Life
Reading: Seneca, *On the Shortness of Life*
Draft 2 of Research Essay Due.

Week 8

22. May 22 Consolation
Reading: Seneca, *Consolation to Marcia*, *Consolation to Helvia*
23. May 24 Anger
Reading: Seneca, *On Anger III*
24. May 26 Mercy
Reading: Seneca, *On Mercy*

Week 9

25. May 29 Philosophers in elite circles
Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* (selections; handout)
26. May 31 Philosophers in popular culture
Performance of Lucian's play, *Philosophers for Sale!*
Students can earn participation credit by reading out the parts.
27. June 2 Discussion of Marcus Aurelius and Lucian

Week 10

- June 5 MEMORIAL DAY—NO CLASS
28. June 7 Final Debate and Discussion
29. June 9 **Final Written Examination**

Finals Week

30. June 14 (W) 11:30am-2:30pm
Final Examination—Final Research Presentations
Draft 3 of Research Essay due.