

Aristotle

Philosophy 101 – Winter 2017

Instructor: Blythe Greene

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Office hours: Wednesday 12-2, HSS 8004

Final Exam Date: Monday March 20th

Introduction:

Aristotle of Stagira (384 - 322 BCE) is perhaps the most influential philosopher in all of Western history; his influence can be felt in every area of philosophy, even today. In this course we will be looking at aspects of Aristotle's theoretical ethics, politics theory, logic, philosophy of language, and physics. There will be three main texts for our course: *The Nicomachean Ethics*, *The Politics*, and *The Physics*. We will read large selections of these texts as well as short sections of other texts. You will also have the option of doing independent research on one of the many other topics covered in the Aristotelian canon.

This course will involve active discussion and participation by all the students. I will not be lecturing all class; instead, every class we will have presentations by students, class discussions, and active reading of the texts together, in addition to some more traditional lecturing. This makes it important that everyone do the assigned reading ahead of time. Notetaking is encouraged, as are questions about the texts.

Course text: The Basic Works of Aristotle, Modern Library Edition, ed. R McKeon
ISBN-10:0375757996

Assessment:

Attendance: 10%

Discussion: 10%

Presentation: 15%

Short Responses: 15%

Paper: 20%

Final Exam or Research Paper: 30%

Course Goals:

- Learn how to read Aristotle as an author
- Learn how to extract philosophical arguments from a prose source
- Gain familiarity with core topics in ancient philosophy and Aristotle's responses
- Practice presenting and discussing philosophical arguments
- Gain facility in analyzing and critiquing philosophical arguments

Attendance and discussion: Because of the format of the course, attendance and discussion are both crucial to success, and their high weighting reflects this. You may miss one class without any penalty. This course will be focused around class discussions, and I expect everyone to participate regularly. If you anticipate that this will be a problem for you, please speak to me at the beginning of the quarter.

Presentations: You are required to do a class presentation on the readings. The presentation will involve approximately five minutes of you presenting the material to the class and five minutes of you leading discussion about your presentation and the class. Some visual component – e.g. handouts, powerpoints, use of the chalk board – is required. You may use an appropriate outside source so long as it is properly credited in your presentation and you get a copy to me ahead of time. You must discuss your presentation topic with me before class, either in office hours or by email.

Short Responses: You are responsible for writing ten short responses of 1-2 pages engaging with the reading material. You can explicate a complex argument, present a counterargument or problem, or even point out a difficult part of the text and reflect on what you don't understand about it. These responses must be emailed to me by midnight the day before the material is covered in class. They will each be graded pass/no pass and your grade will depend on how many passing grades you earn out of ten. 10 = 100%, 9 = 90%, etc. You will have the option to make-up NP responses by doing another response. Short responses should be emailed to me (bageene@ucsd.edu). The subject line should contain the name of the course and the number of the response: *ex.* Phil 101 Short Response 5.

Paper: There will be one mandatory essay for the class. Prompts will be disseminated later in the quarter. You may email me short questions about the prompts, but long questions or requests for me to read portions of your draft must be done during office hours.

Research paper: There is an OPTIONAL second paper which may be done in place of the final exam. This paper will involve doing independent research into an area of Aristotle's philosophy not covered in the class and looking into secondary work about this subject. If you choose this option you will need to submit a research topic suggestion by February 10 and a full proposal by February 27.

Late Policy: I will deduct three percentage points (approximately one-third of a grade) for every day an assignment is late. For the research paper topic and proposals, late entries will forfeit your chance to complete the project unless you speak to me ahead of time and get special clearance.

Email policy: Please put the course title in your subject line when you email me so that I know the question is from a student. You may email me at any time, but please make sure you give me at least 24-hours to respond. If I don't respond within 24-hours please send your email again, as I may have missed it. If I decide a question will be too time consuming to answer via email, I'll ask you to speak to me in person instead.

Week 1

M 1/9: Introduction to Aristotle.

Metaphysics I.1

W 1/11: An Introduction to Aristotelian Ethics

Read *Nicomachean Ethics* I.1-6

F 1/13: What is the Good for a Human Being?

Read *NE* I.7-13

Week 2:

M 1/16: MLK DAY – NO CLASS

W 1/18: The Happy Life

Read *NE* X.6-9

F 1/20: What is Virtue?

Read *NE* II

Week 3:

M 1/23: Moral Responsibility

Read *NE* III.1-5

W 1/25: A Survey of Virtues – **No presentations**

Skim *NE* III.6-12, *NE* IV

F 1/27: The Nature of Justice

Read *NE* V.1-5

Week 4:

M 1/30: More on Justice

Read *NE* V.6-11

W 2/1: Friendship

Read *NE* VIII

F 2/3: Friendship continued

Read *NE IX*

Paper prompts released

Week 5:

M 2/6: Political Associations

Read *Politics I*

W 2/8: Citizens and States

Read *Politics III.1-10*

F 2/10: Proper and Defective States

Read *Politics III.11-18*

Research Paper Topic Due

Week 6

M 2/13: The Ideal State

Read *Politics VII.1-10*

W 2/15: Civic Planning and Education

Read *Politics VII.11-17; VIII.1-3*

F 2/17: Review: Ethics and Politics

No reading

Paper Due

Week 7

M 2/20: PRESIDENTS' DAY – NO CLASS

W 2/22: The Instruments of Philosophy – Language

Read *De Interpretatione* 1-9

F 2/24: The Instruments of Philosophy - Logic

Read *Posterior Analytics* I.1-3, II.11 and II.19

Week 8

M 2/27: What is Nature?

Read *Physics* II.1-2

Research Paper proposal due

W 3/1: Cause and Chance

Read *Physics* II.3-7

F 3/3: Nature and Necessity

Read *Physics* II.8-9

Week 9

M 3/6: Bodies in Motion

Read *Physics* III.1-3

W 3/8: Space, Place, and Void

Read *Physics* IV.1-9

F 3/10: Time

Read *Physics* IV.10-14

Week 10:

M 3/13: *TBD*

W 3/15: *TBD*

F 3/17: Class Review