

University of Central Oklahoma
College of Liberal Arts
Department of Humanities & Philosophy
Spring 2017

PHIL 2153: Ancient Philosophy
CRN: 26963
T,Th 2:00 - 3:15 PM
Liberal Arts Rm. 124

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Office Hours: M,W 2:00-4:00PM; T 1:00-2:00PM

Course Description:

Ancient Philosophy is a survey of the history of Western philosophy from its beginnings to the end of the ancient period. Particular emphasis will be placed on the contributions of the Greeks to the core areas of philosophy.

We will divide the course into three main areas: Epistemology, Physics & Metaphysics, and Ethics. In each section we will examine several approaches to certain questions, namely:

- What sort of knowledge, if any, are humans capable of, and what is the source of that knowledge?
- What is the basic make-up of the material world, and is there anything beyond it?
- What is ultimately valuable, and how do we lead a worthwhile, fulfilling life?

Our primary focus will be exegetical, i.e. to interpret our texts in the most plausible, most charitable way we can. We will try to understand as best we can why each author would approach the topic as they. This will involve, among other things, observing how one author develops their theory in response to what others have done.

Prerequisites: ENG 1113 and 3 hours of philosophy

Course Objectives: In this course students will read classics of ancient Greek philosophy across a number of authors and genres. Students will seek to answer, using critical reasoning, a series of questions about these issues as raised by the course readings, with particular focus on how to provide, defend, and critique the most plausible interpretations of difficult and strange-seeming philosophical positions. In addition, students will engage each other in sustained discussion of these issues. The following are the outcomes a successful student will attain by the end of this course: (1) identify and define key philosophical terms studied in the course, (2) distinguish among the philosophic views studied in the course, (3) identify major points and arguments of various philosophic essays, (4) critically analyze and evaluate philosophic arguments, and (5) provide rationally persuasive arguments in defense of their own beliefs about a variety of controversial issues in philosophy.

Student Learning Objectives:

- 1) Students will begin the process of developing ethical and critical thinking skills necessary for interpreting the self in relation to culture and society.
- 2) Students will read, analyze, and synthesize major texts from the history of philosophy and communicate about them in writing.
- 3) Students will analyze, appraise, and formally symbolize arguments.

Transformational Learning Outcomes: The University of Central Oklahoma is a learning-centered organization committed to Transformative education through active engagement in the teaching-learning interchange, scholarly and creative pursuits, leadership, global competency, healthy lifestyles, and service to others. Transformative learning goals (the “Central Six”) have been identified as: *Discipline Knowledge*; *Leadership*; *Research*; *Scholarly and Creative Activities*; *Service Learning and Civic Engagement*; *Global and Cultural Competencies*; and *Health and Wellness*.

This course addresses four of the University’s transformative learning goals:

Discipline Knowledge, by investigating some core questions and subfields of philosophy

Global and Cultural Competencies, by performing a sustained investigation of another culture

Course Materials

There are no required books for this course. Instead, I have carefully (and laboriously!) selected a range of relevant free- and fair-use materials, from academic journal articles and book chapters to blog posts and interviews. These works are available in two settings:

1. A course pack, available at [R.K Black Office](#), located at Nigh University Center Rm. 146. This is a **required text** for class: you must bring your hard copy of the reading to class *every* session (and I recommend you use it for studying as well).
2. Online, on D2L. I have posted pdfs of each text, with the relevant date in the file name. Note that these files are posted for your convenience and accessibility. They are not a substitute for the course pack!

In addition to this primary course material, I will also post a number of handouts and other material to D2L. Most important are the *Daily Reading Handouts*, one-page supplements to each day’s reading that give background context, highlight key points, and suggest study questions. Daily Reading Handouts are also **required texts**: material introduced there are fair game for quizzes and papers. My advice is to read the Daily Reading Handouts *first*, then the day’s material, then the Handouts again.

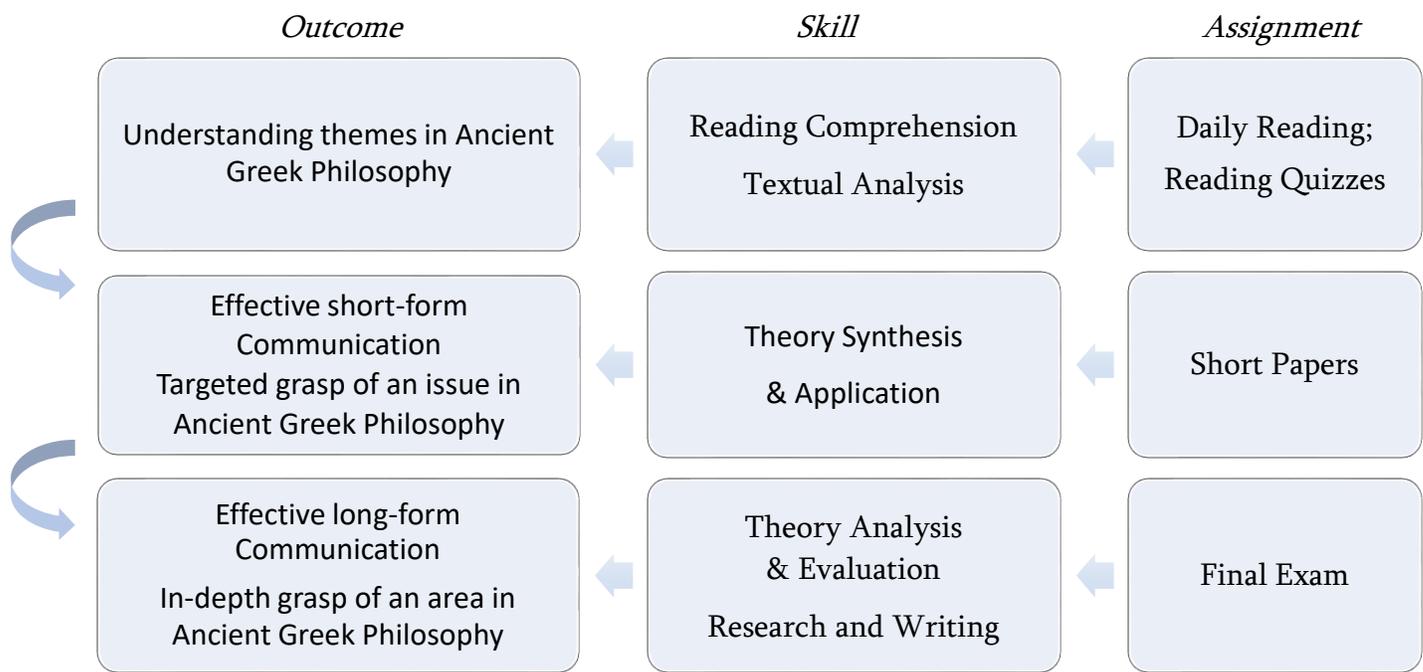
If you wish to own physical copies of our texts, we will be using the Hackett translations almost exclusively, which have the advantage of being inexpensive and often have a large number of used copies. I’ve put together a [list on Amazon](#) that covers most of what we’ll read, if you are so inclined.

FYI, because we’ll only be reading English translations, we need to have a single text that we can all refer to. This means that translations other than the ones I provide shouldn’t be used in the class. But do feel free to check with me if you already have a copy of a particular text.

Other Resources

[Guide for Reading Philosophy](#) (Jim Pryor, NYU) [Guide for Writing Philosophy](#) (Jim Pryor, NYU)
[Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) (various) [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) (various)

Assignments & Learning Outcomes



Reading

I've done my best to keep the readings short and targeted: the maximum required reading for a single class is 21 pages, and the average is about 14 pages. I've done everything I can to keep the assignments short, accessible and wholly relevant, and I will tell you when you can occasionally skim, so you won't waste your time reading pages that don't matter. But that also means if it's included, it's important, so you have to read it carefully.

Daily Reading Quizzes

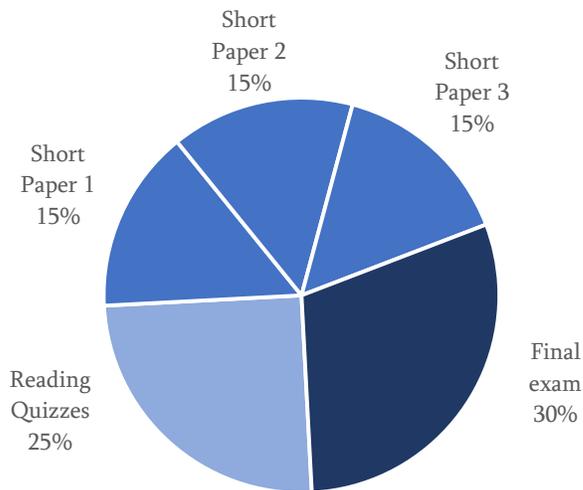
We will have low-stakes reading comprehension quizzes in class almost every day. These quizzes will use a variety of short-answer questions (multiple choice, True/False, etc), and will test whether you're keeping up with the reading and paying attention in class. These should be easy points that you earn simply by doing the minimal required work. Conversely, if you're doing poorly on these quizzes, this shows that you need to change your study habits. If you find yourself in this position, come talk to me about study strategies.

Short Papers

You'll be asked to write three short papers (3-5 pp.) throughout the course, one on each of our three topics. You may write about any of the material we've covered. Your aim will be to (i) summarize your chosen view, and (ii) make a critical observation about the material. For example, you can show how the view avoids a problem present in a rival view, or presents a problem to a rival view, or even shows how to make progress in contemporary philosophy. You will be evaluated primarily on (a) clarity and concision in exposition and (b) philosophical acumen. I'll provide a handout with a rubric and more details closer to the first due-date.

Final Exam

The culmination of this class will be a final exam where you write short essays to demonstrate your grasp of the material covered in class, with an emphasis on comparisons and trends across ancient Greek philosophical schools.



Grade Scale:

100.0-90.0 = A

89.9-80.0 = B

79.9-70.0 = C

69.9-60.0 = D

59.9 - 0.0 = F

Quizzes: There will be 29 total class meetings, and roughly 27 class meetings when we have in-class quizzes. Each quiz will be worth 1 point total, which equals 1% of your total grade. I will only count your highest 25 quizzes, which means you can miss two quizzes worth of questions with no penalty (either by missing the quiz, or by getting questions wrong on a quiz you attempted). Conversely, you can only get a maximum 25 possible points out of the 27 quizzes. In other words, you will get more than 25 chances to earn 25% points, which is like a curve but better, because it rewards people who regularly attend class but don't always ace the quizzes.

Attendance: Attendance is not, as such, part of your grade, and I will not take attendance in class. But since we have quizzes every day, your quiz grade functions as a *de facto* attendance grade, because you will get 20% on each quiz just for showing up

Short Papers: Each short paper is worth 15 pts = 15% of your total grade

Final Exam: Your paper will be worth 30 pts = 30% of your total grade (held Thursday, May 3rd)

R&R Policy: If you get less than an 80% on a short paper that you submitted on time, you can revise and resubmit it to earn up to an 80%. To do this, you will have to both revise the paper to fix its shortcomings, and to write a cover letter detailing, for each point you lost on the paper, (i) what exactly you failed to do correctly, and why you did this, and (ii) what specifically you did to fix. (I will give you a handout about how to do this later).

Rounding: The letter grade cut-off for, e.g. an A is 90.0, not 89.5 or 89.9. But I may choose to round up in exceptional cases, if (i) I feel you've done better or worked harder than your score suggests, and (ii) your grade is not due to excessive incomplete or missing assignments. This is a courtesy, not an entitlement.

Appeals: I am more than happy to talk to you about low grades, and regrade your assignment if merited (but note the risk that the second grade could be lower). However, I consider asking for a grade increase for non-performance reasons (e.g. to keep a scholarship or prevent your parents from being mad) to be academic misconduct, because you are asking for me to give you a grade you did not earn. So don't ask.

Late Work & Make-Ups

Daily Reading Quizzes will be administered in class, usually in the first few minutes (though I reserve the right to hold them at any point in class). If you arrive to class late and miss the quiz, you may not make it up. Likewise, if you skip class that day, you may not make up the quiz, because there is a built-in allowance of missed quizzes before you grade starts to be impacted. A 1-point late penalty will be deducted once every 24 hours after the submission deadline for Short Papers.

Short Papers will also be submitted online, and instructions will be circulated well in advance, so there should be no need for make-ups, barring exceptional circumstances (e.g. a prolonged illness). If you find yourself in such circumstances, it is your responsibility to get in contact with me ASAP to work something out.

There will be no make-up for the Final Exam. If you cannot take the exam during the scheduled time (e.g. because of an Excused Absence), it is your responsibility to make alternative arrangements.

Excused Absences

The exception to the Late/Make-Up policy listed above is excused absences. The University considers absences for the following reasons excused:

- travel considered part of the instructional program of the university
- invited participation in activities directly and officially sponsored by the university
- jury duty or military obligations
- serious illness, medical condition, pregnant and parenting students' rights (as outlined in Title IX), accident, or injury
- death or serious illness in immediate family
- religious observances. *Note: a list of religious observances must be submitted to the instructor the first two weeks of the semester of which the observance will be held.*

Academic Honesty

Given that much of this course is devoted to intellectual and moral virtues, it should be no surprise that it also has high standards for academic conduct. You are expected to consult and understand the University's Academic Dishonesty Policy (<http://sites.uco.edu/academic-affairs/files/aa-forms/StudentInfoSheet.pdf>); participation in this class constitutes an agreement to follow this policy.

My own policy is this: it is always better to ask for help than to cheat. Always. Cheating takes more work, with worse results, than simply attempting the assignment, even if you phone it in. If you are confused at any point about whether something constitutes academic dishonesty, ask. I am here to help. However, if you are caught engaging in academic misconduct, I will pursue whatever maximum penalties the University may apply, from a 0 to an assignment to an F for the course to expulsion from the University. Don't try it.

Note that UCO subscribes to the Turnitin.com plagiarism prevention service. Students, by taking this course, agree that all required assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com restricted access reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such assignments. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com website. Turnitin.com is just one of the various plagiarism prevention tools and methods that may be utilized by your instructor during the semester. The UCO Student Handbook describes the process for contesting allegations of plagiarism.

Tech Policy

Computers, tablets, e-readers, etc., will not be allowed during class time. I know it sounds paternalistic (it is) and lame (it isn't), but computers in class do [much more harm than good](#).

Three main reasons for this policy:

- 1) You might think you can multi-task well. [You are incorrect](#). Even if you were miraculously among the 2% of good multi-taskers, you would still distract those around you.
 - 2) Electronic texts are much [less effective](#) than paper for the kind of reading we'll be doing.
 - 3) [It is well-documented that taking](#) notes by hand is much more effective than typing. If you want a digital version of your notes, scan them or, better, type them out after class.
- So, unless you have an accommodation from DSS (see below), no electronic devices in class.

Reasonable Accommodations Policy

Any student who needs extra time or resources to do their best work due to a physical, cognitive or emotional condition may qualify for academic accommodations. You should consult Disability Support Services for further information: <http://sites.uco.edu/student-affairs/dss/>

The University of Central Oklahoma complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations must make their requests by contacting Disability Support Services, at (405) 974-2516 (V/TTY). The DSS Office is located in the Nigh University Center, Room 305. Students should also notify the instructor of special accommodation needs as soon as possible.

A bit of advice: *do not let shyness or embarrassment or pride stop you from getting the services you deserve*. I've seen too many students allow their grades to suffer because they didn't speak up to claim the accommodations they were entitled to. I will do everything I can to make sure that your accommodations stay between you, me, and DSS.

Title IX

The University of Central Oklahoma complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations must make their requests by contacting Disability Support Services, at (405) 974-2516. The DSS Office is located in the Nigh University Center, Room 305. Students should also notify the instructor of special accommodation needs as soon as possible. Per Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), pregnant and parenting students may request adjustments by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, at (405) 974-3377 or TitleIX@uco.edu. The Title IX Office is located in the Lillard Administration Building, Room 114D. For more information about your options, including reporting and confidential resources, please visit: <http://www.uco.edu/central/title-ix/index.asp>.

Physical and Mental Health

College can be a very stressful time, emotionally, socially, and academically. You don't have to face these stresses alone. There are numerous resources on campus to help, including:

<http://sites.uco.edu/student-affairs/scc/>

<http://sites.uco.edu/wellness/shc/>

Student Information Sheet

More important info here: <http://sites.uco.edu/academic-affairs/files/aa-forms/StudentInfoSheet.pdf>

Schedule (Subject to Revision)

- 1.09 - Syllabus; Adamson (2017) "All 20 'Rules of the History of Philosophy'"
- 1.11 - McKirahan (2010) *Philosophy Before Socrates*, Ch. 2; Burkert (2009)
- 1.16 - Parmenides *Fragments*; Plato, *Euthydemus* 285e-287a; Epicurus *Fragments*
- 1.18 - Sextus Empiricus: *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* IV-XIII, XV, XXII-XXVII
- 1.23 - Protagoras, *Fragments*; Pyrrho, *Fragments*
- 1.25 – Hippocrates, *Ancient Medicine*
- 1.30 - Plato, *Cratylus* 438d-440a2, *Meno* 80c-86c, *Phaedo* 73a-76e
- 2.01 – Plato, *Republic* 475d-480a, 523a-534b
- 2.06 – Aristotle, *Metaphysics* A.1-2, *Nicomachean Ethics* VI.3,6 / *Posterior Analytics* A.1-3, 30-31
- 2.08 – Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*.A.8, 33, B.19 / *De Anima* II.12, III.8
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- 2.13 – Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, *Fragments*
- 2.15 – Heraclitus, *Fragments*
- 2.20 – Parmenides, *Fragments*
- 2.22 – Empedocles, *Fragments*
- 2.27 – Democritus & Lucretius, *Fragments*
- 3.01 – Plato, *Republic* 507a-517c, 595a-98d
- 3.06 – Plato, *Timaeus*. 31b-36d, 47e-57d
- 3.08 – Aristotle, *Generation & Corruption* II.1-5
- 3.13 – Aristotle, *Metaphysics*. Θ.1-2, 5-9
- 3.15 – Aristotle, *Metaphysics*. Λ
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- 3:20 – SPRING BREAK
- 3.22 – SPRING BREAK
- 3.27 – Cyrenaics, *DL* II.8.65-97
- 3.29 – Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*, *Maxims*
- 4.03 – Socrates, *Laches* 192a-201b; *Charmides* 164d-176d
- 4.05 - NCUR
- 4.10 – Plato, *Republic* 435b-448e
- 4.12 – Plato, *Philebus* 20b-22d, 59c-67a
- 4.17 – Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I.1-3,5,7-11; *Politics* VII.1
- 4.19 – Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* II.1,3,6-9; X.6-8
- 4.24 – Stoics, *Enchiridion*
- 4.26 – Stoics, *Fragments*
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- 5.03 - FINAL EXAM