

*PHIL 200W-1*  
*Ancient Greek and Medieval Philosophy*

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Office: 302 Bowden Hall  
Office hours: M/W: 1:30-2:30,  
and by appointment

Fall, 2019  
M/W: 11:30-12:45  
Bowden Hall 116

**Course Description:**

In this class, we will survey the major thinkers and movements of both Ancient Greek and Medieval Philosophy. We will begin by looking at the Presocratics, who are credited with first asking about the fundamental principles of the cosmos and thus with developing the first philosophical thought in the West. We will read these figures both in their own right and as setting the stage for the thought of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, whose work we will examine with an eye toward the question: “What is the good life?” In accordance with this concern, we will focus on the study of ethics, though, in the context of Ancient Greek thought, will also require that we familiarize ourselves with the thinkers’ ontological, epistemological, and political theories. The semester will conclude with a survey of the medieval debate between the realists and the nominalists, who will advance competing understandings of the mind in-/dependence of universals.

Please remember that this is a survey class; if there are thinkers or texts that you would like to study in greater detail, you should plan on taking more specialized courses in philosophy later on.

**Course Objectives:**

Students will be able to develop a thematic and historical approach to Ancient and Medieval theories of ethics. Additionally, since this is a Writing Requirement class, students will learn to treat writing as a *process* whereby they are given various opportunities to revise, edit, and rewrite their papers.

**Format:**

Lecture, presentation, and as much discussion as allowed by the class size.

**Readings:**

Please note that the books are available at the University Book Store. While you are not required to purchase the editions of the texts that I have ordered, I strongly encourage you to do so, as there are many editions and translations of the texts that we will be reading and I believe that those that I have ordered are the best amongst them; furthermore, you may find it difficult to follow along in class if your text has a different pagination than mine. All supplemental readings and readings listed as “provided by instructor” will be distributed in class, posted on Canvas, or will be available either through the library’s electronic reserve system or its online accessibility option.

- *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper, Hackett Publishing: 978-0872203495
- Aristotle, *Physics*, trans. Robin Waterfield, Oxford UP: 978-0199540280
- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Hippocrates G. Apostle, Peripatetic Press: 978-0911589030

### **Course Requirements:**

**Class Attendance:** You are expected to attend each class session and arrive on time. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. You will be allowed three absences for the term without your grade being affected; *for every subsequent absence, your grade for the class will be reduced by one full letter grade* (for example, a grade of an A- for the class will be reduced to a B- upon your fourth absence, a C- upon the fifth, and so on). Please note that I will take attendance at the beginning of class and only at the beginning of class; you must both be present at that time and throughout the duration of the class in order to be considered present for the day. Please also note that you do not receive points toward your final grade simply for attending class, though, again, you may lose points for failing to do so.

**Participation (10%):** A class is, or at least ought to be, an intellectual community within which each member has a responsibility both to him- or herself and to the other members of the community, and which can only thrive if every member takes an active role in it. Participation is, thus, a vital component of the success of the class as a whole and of your success individually. In order to achieve a good participation grade, you should come to class regularly, have read and be well-versed in the reading assignment for the day, demonstrate your familiarity with the text(s) by asking thoughtful questions about them and responding to questions posed both by me and your fellow students, and engage in active and constructive in-class discussions. Please note that participation and attendance are separate categories; as such, students will not be awarded participation points merely for attending class. If, for any reason (such as shyness or speech anxiety), you find it difficult to speak in public, please let me know immediately and I will do my best to make special arrangements for you.

**Biweekly Reading Questions (15%):** Every other week, you will be required to formulate 5 (five) specific and detailed clarification or discussion questions on the assigned readings. Unless otherwise specified, these must be submitted to the class's Canvas site no later than 5:00PM each Friday during weeks that the class meets. These assignments will be graded on a scale of 0-5: a grade of a 4-5 indicates that the questions were thoughtful, insightful, and well-constructed; a grade of 2-3 indicates that the questions showed a decent engagement with the assigned reading but either failed to address issues central to the text or addressed such issues in a superficial manner; a grade of a 0-1 indicates that the questions were either poorly formed or not formed at all, and/or that they demonstrated little to no engagement with the assigned material. If you fail to submit more than two (2) of these assignments, you will receive an F (0 points) for this portion of your grade. No extensions or make-ups will be given on these assignments. (NB—There will be only one quiz in this class. It will take place in the second week of class and will require you to write out, in correct order, the Greek alphabet and to transliterate ten Greek terms that I will provide. Your grade for this quiz will be included in this grading category.)

**Exegetical Papers (10%, 10%, 10%):** You will be responsible for writing three 2-3 page

exegetical papers over the course of the semester. Detailed instructions and topics will be posted on the class's Canvas site prior to each paper. In these papers you will be expected to draw on the course readings in order to provide an exegesis in response to a prompt that I will provide. These prompts will be handed out at least one week in advance of the paper deadlines. In addition to providing you with an opportunity to analyze a particular text or topic, these shorter papers will also serve as the building blocks of your longer, final paper.

**Final Paper** (30%): You will be required to write a 10-12 page (3000-3600 word) argumentative paper at the end of the semester. Ideally, this paper should build upon and incorporate ideas and material developed in one or two of your exegetical essays.

**Prefaces** (15% total): Because one of the major goals of the course is to develop your skills as an author, it is crucial that you consider not only the content of your writing but also the form of your writing. Thus, in addition to thinking about the argument that you are making in any given paper, or the exegesis that you are providing, you should also think about your use of grammar, syntax, structure, and style, and work to develop your authorial voice. In order to encourage you to actively think about these formal aspects of your writing, I will require you to include a one to two paragraph "preface" with each of your longer papers. In these prefaces, you will be required to reflect critically on the formal aspects of your writing. Because you are, in effect, writing about yourself, the topic of each preface will be yours to choose; however, it must, in each instance, address one of the aforementioned formal components of writing, i.e., grammar, syntax, structure, style, or voice. You could, for instance, discuss why you chose to use commas in the way that you did (this may seem to be utterly remedial, but comma usage can, at times, prove surprisingly tricky); why you chose to use a semicolon instead of a period or M-dash instead of a colon at a particular point in your essay; why you chose to write in the tense or tenses that you did; why you chose to use certain words rather than others or to arrange words in a particular order (perhaps you wanted to establish a certain cadence or rhythm, or perhaps you wanted to avoid such pretense); or you could discuss broader, more encompassing issues, such as why you chose to style a particular paper in the way that you did or how a given paper expresses your voice as an author. Each preface should address a different issue, or, if multiple prefaces address the same issue, the later one(s) should be dedicated to explaining what changes and progress you have made in regard to the given issue. These prefaces should 1) be included in the same document as your essay; 2) be positioned at the beginning of this document; 3) be one to two paragraphs long; and 4) not be counted toward the page-limit of the assigned essay.

Unless otherwise specified, all papers should be typed using 12 point Times New Roman. The body should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins all around. Please don't forget to use page numbers.

**Academic Integrity:** This course has a zero-tolerance plagiarism policy and cheating or plagiarizing on any assignment, major or minor, will result in an **F for the course**. If you are found to have plagiarized or cheated on any assignment, you will receive a zero for the assignment and for the course, and a letter will be sent to the appropriate university officials. For more details, you can read the Emory University's student initiated and regulated Honor code at:

[http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/policy/honor\\_code.html](http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/policy/honor_code.html)

Please note that it is very difficult to plagiarize on accident: it consists in copying papers or parts of papers from other people or services, regardless of whether money changes hands or it is a good will agreement. Plagiarism includes using Internet sites, including encyclopedia sites like Wikipedia, book reviews and journal articles, or “study aid” sites like Sparknotes, Cliffnotes, *if you do not cite them properly*. All work turned in must be solely your own. I can only award you a grade for the course given that *you* have done the work—in the event that you fail to do so, you shall have to try again in another semester.

**Writing Center:** Students are strongly encouraged to work on their writing with the Writing Center at any stage of their writing; for more information, see <http://writingcenter.emory.edu/>

**Health and Economic Hardship:** If you are suffering any issues related to health (mental or physical) or economic hardship that may impact your performance in the class, please feel encouraged to speak with me in order to try to work out an accommodation.

**Different Abilities** are welcome and will be accommodated in this class. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about access to any aspect of the course, please contact and register with ADSR (formerly ODS) at <http://www.ods.emory.edu/about.htm>.

**Classroom Etiquette:** I expect the classroom to be an atmosphere where the free and vital exchange of ideas is encouraged; respect for persons is fundamental to that atmosphere. This classroom will be an exercise in creating a public sphere where community responsibility for truth entails that the public sphere belongs not to opinion but to rational argument supported by evidence and research. For each contribution, be it an explanation, question, or speculation you should aim at engaging both the material *and* your classmates. Please also remember that the classroom is composed of students from diverse backgrounds. You will be expected to conduct yourself professionally and as a scholar in all situations.

**E-mail Etiquette:** Please be sure to use proper e-mail etiquette in all e-mails sent to me. This means that all emails should, at a minimum, contain the following three things: 1) a clear subject line indicating the class that you are in and the issue that you are writing me about; 2) a proper salutation, such as “Dear Professor Bell,” or “Hello, Professor Bell”; 3) a proper closing, such as “Sincerely,” followed by your full name. Additionally, please be sure to get to know someone in the class and obtain their contact info. In case you miss class, Canvas and your classmates are your primary resources to find out what you have missed. You are also responsible for checking your Emory e-mail regularly for assignments, reminders etc.; those e-mails will indicate where to go for resources and what has been posted on the class’s Canvas site.

**Technology:** Unless you have received permission from me, ADSR, or another relevant university department, please do not make use of computers, tablets, or other similar devices in the classroom. Use of cell phones or other mobile telecommunication devices during class time will result in an absence for that day.

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**Grading:** Grading will be based upon attendance (when applicable), writing assignments, and class participation. Unless otherwise specified, late assignments will be reduced a full letter grade (e.g., from an A to a B) per day; papers more than three days late will not be accepted.

**Grading Distribution and Rubric:**

Participation	10%
Biweekly Reading Questions	15%
Exegetical Papers (total)	30%
Final Paper	30%
Prefaces (total)	15%

100-94%	A	83-80%	B-	69-67%	D+
93-90%	A-	79-77%	C+	66-64%	D
89-87%	B+	76-74%	C	63-60%	D-
86-84%	B	73-70%	C-	59%	F

### **Reading and Assignment Schedule:**

Please note that, while we will attempt to follow it as closely as possible, this schedule is not intended to be binding. I am far more concerned that all students in the class develop an understanding of and appreciation for the texts that we will be reading than I am that we stick to the schedule. I will provide all reading and writing assignments either in class or online. If you miss a class, please contact me via email or contact one of your fellow students to get that day's assignment.

8.28: Syllabus; introduction to course.

9.2: LABOR DAY – CLASS CANCELLED

9.4: Presocratics. (Provided by instructor)

9.9: Plato, *The Apology*.

9.11: Plato, *The Apology*.

9.16: Plato, *The Apology*.

9.18: Plato, *The Apology*.

9.23: Plato, *Gorgias*.

9.25: Plato, *Gorgias*. **First Exegetical Paper Due**

9.30: Plato, *Gorgias*.

10.2: Plato, *Gorgias*.

10.7: Plato, *Republic*.

10.9: Plato, *Republic*.

10.14: FALL BREAK – CLASS CANCELLED

10.16: Plato, *Republic*.

10.21: Plato, *Republic*.

10.23: Plato, *Republic*.

10.28: Aristotle, *Physics*. **Second Exegetical Paper Due**

10.30: Aristotle, *Physics*.

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11.4: Aristotle, *Physics*.

11.6: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

11.11: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

11.13: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

11.18 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

11.20: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

11.25: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. **Third Exegetical Paper Due**

11.27: THANKSGIVING RECESS – NO CLASS

12.2: Medieval philosophy. (*Provided by instructor*)

12.4: Medieval philosophy. (*Provided by instructor*)

12.9: Medieval philosophy. (*Provided by instructor*)

Finals Week: **Final Paper Due**