

History of Ancient Philosophy

Syllabus - Fall 2025

Institution: Sichuan University - Pittsburgh Institute

Course Schedule: Thursdays 7:20-9:55 pm

Location: 江安 1 教 A 座 A207

Instructor Information

Name: Yixin Wei, 魏奕昕

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-4 pm, 望江文科楼 116, or by appointment

Course Description

Western philosophy owes its birth to the ancient Greeks. In their care, many of the fundamental questions in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, political philosophy, and the philosophy of mind were raised for the first time and developed in striking and sophisticated ways. This course will focus on the philosophical thoughts of **Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, Epicurus, and Stoics**. We will delve into their philosophical doctrines and understand their arguments. More importantly, we will **treat them as fellow philosophers and evaluate their views**, attempting to determine whether we can accept their frame of questions and answers even from now.

Course Objectives

1. Provide a comprehensive understanding of the historical context and development of ancient Greek philosophy.
1. Engage in critical analysis of philosophical texts and arguments presented by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.
2. Foster an appreciation of the foundational issues in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, political philosophy, the philosophy of language, and the philosophy of mind.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and clarify arguments in ancient Greek philosophy
2. Understand major positions in ancient Greek philosophy
3. Evaluate their arguments from a modern perspective

Required Textbook

Cohen, Curd & Reeve (eds.). (2016). *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy* (Fifth Edition). Hackett Publishing.

Course Website

All course materials and announcements will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Evaluation

- Participation: 20%
- Mid-term Exam: 35%
- Final Exam: 45%

Students with Disabilities

Students requiring accommodations should contact the instructor for further assistance.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism — the practice of intentionally or unintentionally using someone else's writing without properly acknowledging the source — WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

Course Schedule

Weeks 1-2: Socrates

- Week 1: Piety and Death: *Euthyphro*, *Apology*
- Week 2: Law and Justice: *Crito*, *Gorgias*

Weeks 3-7: Plato

- Week 3: Form, Soul, and Knowledge: *Meno*, *Phaedo*
- Week 4: Love and Desire: *Symposium*, *Phaedrus*

- Week 5: Justice and Social Class: *Republic* I-IV
- Week 6: Philosophy and Cave: *Republic* V-VII
- Week 7: City and Person: *Republic* VIII-X

Weeks 8: Mid-term

Weeks 9-14: Aristotle

- Week 9: Natural Philosophy: *Physics*
- Week 10: Metaphysics: *Categories, Metaphysics*
- Week 11: Metaphysics: *Metaphysics*
- Week 12: Psychology and the Philosophy of Mind: *On the Soul*
- Week 13: Ethics: *Nicomachean Ethics*
- Week 14: Ethics and Politics: *Nicomachean Ethics, Politics*

Week 15-16: Hellenistic Philosophy

- Atoms and Pain: Epicurus
- Virtue and Free Will: Stoics

Week 17: Final Exam

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Any modifications will be announced in class or posted on Blackboard.