

# Ancient Greek and Medieval Philosophy (PHIL 200)

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*Oxford College of Emory University, Fall 2015*

## Course Description

In this course we will explore important philosophical texts from the Ancient and Medieval periods. During these periods, philosophical investigation covered topics such as the existence and nature of the universe, God, the soul, the human mind, reason, emotion, and knowledge (i.e. metaphysics and epistemology). For the most part, these philosophers understood broader metaphysical and epistemological questions to have a direct bearing on ethical questions. Philosophy was concerned with how we ought to live our lives. In exploring these issues, we will have the opportunity to reflect on our own knowledge and beliefs and what this means for who we are and how we live.

The College has designated Ancient Greek and Medieval Philosophy (PHIL 200) as a writing rich course. We will dedicate a significant amount of class time to workshops and other activities to hone your writing skills. Because logical argumentation sits at the core of the discipline of philosophy, these activities will focus on building your ability to read, summarize, evaluate, and clearly present logical arguments.

Instructor: Dr. Andrew A. Robinson

Time: Mon. & Wed. 2:30 - 4:10

Location: Seney Hall 208

Email: [andrew.a.robinson@emory.edu](mailto:andrew.a.robinson@emory.edu)

Office: 804 Whatcoat St.

Office Hours:

Mon. & Wed. 4:30 - 5:30,

Tues. & Thurs. 2:00 - 3:00, and

By appointment.

## Learning Objectives

Through participating in this course students will:

- Gain an understanding of central theories and arguments of major figures in Ancient Greek and Medieval philosophy;
- Develop the creative and critical thinking necessary for reading, discussing, and writing philosophical texts:
  - Identify key concepts and arguments in philosophical texts;
  - Construct summaries of arguments orally and in writing;
  - Assess arguments (i.e. judge the strength of arguments, identify weaknesses, and evaluate the importance of weaknesses);
  - Develop objections to arguments orally and in writing;
  - Create responses to objections orally and in writing; and
  - Write a philosophical essay through a process of review and revision; and
- Gain an appreciation for the benefits of working collaboratively and receiving feedback from others.

## Assessments

### Writing Assignments (50%)

- One-Paragraph Argument Assignment (5)
- Précis-Objection-Response (15)
- Essay (30)

### Exams and Quizzes (35%)

- Quizzes (5)
- Mid-term (10)
- Final (20)

### Learning Community Engagement (15%)

- Writing Workshops #1-6 (2.5)
- Discussion Facilitation (5)
- Peer-Evaluations (2.5)
- Engagement (5)

**Detailed instructions for assignments and rubrics for assessment will be available on Blackboard as the semester progresses.**

## Required Texts

The following texts are required for the course. The Oxford College bookstore has all of these books in stock, and the library has placed one copy of each of them on course reserve. Further readings will be available on Blackboard/course reserve.

Hyman, Walsh, and Williams, eds. *Philosophy in the Middle Ages: The Christian, Islamic and Jewish Traditions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Hackett, 2010.

Irwin and Fine, eds. *Aristotle: Selections*. Hackett, 1995.

Plato. *Five Dialogues*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., trans. Grube. Hackett, 2002.

Students can find many of individual texts we will be studying in earlier editions, other books, or online for free. However, students will be responsible for any errors in their work that arise from discrepancies between these sources and the official sources listed above.

## Due Dates and Exams

09/02 One-Paragraph Argument

09/16 Précis #1

09/23 Précis #1 (2<sup>nd</sup> draft)

09/28 Objection #1

10/07 Objection #1 (2<sup>nd</sup> draft)  
and Response #1

**10/14 Mid-Term Exam**

10/28 Précis #2

11/04 Essay Proposal

11/18 Essay

12/07 Essay (2<sup>nd</sup> draft)

**12/14 Final Exam**

## Schedule of Readings, Workshops, and Due Dates

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Activities</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
Week 1	08/24	No class	No class	No class
	08/26		Introduction	
Week 2	08/31	Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i> , pp. 1-20	Facilitation Workshop #1  Writing Workshop #1	
	09/02		Reading Workshop #1	<b>One-Paragraph Argument (online)</b>
Week 3	09/07	No class	No class	No class
	09/09	Plato, <i>Apology</i> , 21-44	Facilitation Workshop #2  Writing Workshop #2: Précis writing	
Week 4	09/14	Plato, <i>Meno</i> (excerpts TBA)	Writing Workshop #3: Peer-Review of Précis	
	09/16	Plato, <i>Phaedo</i> (excerpts TBA)		<b>Précis #1 (online)</b>
Week 5	09/21	Aristotle, <i>De Anima</i> , pp. 169-185	Reading Workshop #2	
	09/23	Aristotle, <i>Metaphysics I</i> , pp. 221 – 233	Writing Workshop #4: Objections	<b>Précis #1 (2<sup>nd</sup> draft) (online and in-class)</b>
Week 6	09/28	Aristotle, <i>Metaphysics I, II, and IV</i> , pp. 233-241 and 244-250		<b>Objection #1 (online and in-class)</b>
	09/30	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics I</i> , pp. 347-365	Writing Workshop #5: Responses	
Week 7	10/05	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics II</i> , pp. 366-376		
	10/07	Epictetus, <i>The Enchiridion</i> , (Course Reserve)	Exam Preparation	<b>Objection #1 (2<sup>nd</sup> draft) and Response #1</b>

				<b>(online)</b>
Week 8	10/12	No class	No class	No class
	10/14		<b>Mid-Term Exam</b>	
Week 9	10/19	TBA		
	10/21	Augustine, <i>On Free Choice of the Will</i> , pp. 38-48	Student Facilitator(s)	
Week 10	10/26	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> , pp. 66-71 and <i>Free Choice of the Will</i> , pp. 55-57	Student Facilitator(s)	
	10/28	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> , pp. 72-81	Student Facilitator(s)	<b>Précis #2 (online)</b>
Week 11	11/02	Anselm, <i>Proslogion</i> , pp. 161-164 and 173-177	Writing Workshop #6: Essay Proposal	
	11/04	Ibn Sina, <i>The Salvation</i> , "Metaphysics," pp. 244-247 and "Psychology," pp. 256-261	Student Facilitator(s)	<b>Essay Proposal (online)</b>
Week 12	11/09	TBA	Student Facilitator(s)	
	11/11	Maimonides, <i>The Guide of the Perplexed</i> , 364-369	Student Facilitator(s)	
Week 13	11/16	TBA	Student Facilitator(s)	
	11/18	Aquinas, "On God," pp. 457-459 and 466-469	Student Facilitator(s)	<b>Argumentative Essay (online)</b>
Week 14	11/23	Aquinas, "Soul and Body," pp. 498-501; "Happiness," pp. 518-523	Student Facilitator(s)	
	11/25	No class	No class	No class
Week 15	11/30	Aquinas, <i>Natural Law</i> , 530-535	Student Facilitator(s)	
	12/02	Aquinas, <i>Human Law</i> , 536-538	Student Facilitator(s)	
Week 16	12/07		Review for Final Exam	<b>Argumentative Essay (2<sup>nd</sup> draft) (online)</b>

## Policies

### Attendance

The instructor will take attendance at the beginning of each class meeting. Students are expected to attend all classes. The instructor recognizes that illnesses or emergencies may lead to absences. For this reason no student will be penalized for her or his first two (2) absences in the semester. If possible, please notify me via email if you are going to miss a class. If any student misses a class in addition to the initial two absences, the instructor will deduct 1% from the student's final grade for each meeting she or he misses. The instructor will not penalize students for absences due to the observance of religious holidays, if and only if the student advises him of their plans by 5 pm on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015.

### Blackboard

Blackboard should be your first point of contact for this course. You can find a copy of this syllabus as well as any specific information about assignments and deadlines. You will also find any special announcements pertinent to the course. **All assignments will be submitted electronically through the Blackboard site, unless otherwise specified.** You can also use the chat and discussion functions to communicate with other students in the course.

### Email Policy

I strive to stay in touch with you outside of class hours, and will generally attempt to answer messages within 24 hours. Please note, however, that I will not answer messages received after 6 PM until the following day. Additionally, I will not respond to questions sent after 6 PM the evening before a scheduled test or exam. I also reserve the right to not respond to questions that can be easily answered by reading the syllabus or visiting the Blackboard site for the course. Finally, I do NOT discuss grades via email. Please make an appointment to see me if you would like to discuss any course grades.

### Office Hours

I have four hours reserved every week for meeting with students: Mondays and Wednesday from 4:30 to 5:30 pm and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00 to 3:00 pm. Please make use of these hours! If you have questions about course content or assignments, it is much easier for me to address them in person rather than by email. If possible, please send me an email to let me know that you are coming and when I can expect you. If you cannot make the scheduled hours, please contact me via email to arrange an alternative meeting time. My office is located at 804 Whatcoat St. in the little yellow house between the Oxford Mail Center and the USPS office.

### Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is extremely important, and so violations of the Oxford College Honor Code will not be tolerated. I will not hesitate to report any such violations to the Honor Council. Infractions of the Honor Code include plagiarism, cheating, seeking or giving unauthorized assistance, and lying related to academic matters. Further information on Honor Code infractions and procedures are available in the Oxford College Student Handbook, and online:

[http://oxford.emory.edu/audiences/current\\_students/Academic/academic-success/studenthonor-code/index.dot](http://oxford.emory.edu/audiences/current_students/Academic/academic-success/studenthonor-code/index.dot)

### Disability Access

I encourage any students with abilities that may impact their access to or performance in any component of this course to register with Oxford College's Office of Disability Services, and to let me know about necessary accommodations as soon as possible. The ODS is located in the Student Health/Counseling Center in Beta Hall of the East Village residence.