

OXFORD COLLEGE  
HISTORY OF WESTERN THOUGHT I

Philosophy 250  
Fall 1998  
Dr. Ken Anderson  
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This course will examine the Ancient and Medieval traditions in Western thought with an emphasis on the issues of the True and the Good. How, we will consider, can one know the true or the real, how can one lead a good life, and what is the relation between the true and the good? We begin with the "natural philosophy" of the pre-Socratics and then study how the two great systems of ancient philosophy, Plato's idealism and Aristotle's realism, result from this intellectual ground and how these systems form the foundation of Western thought. We will then consider an often neglected, but influential, system of thought represented by Epicurus. Finally, with Augustine and Aquinas, we consider how the introduction of the Christian God into the West altered our understanding of the human relation to the world.

Texts:

*Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy*  
*The Epicurus Reader*  
Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*  
Aquinas, *On Law, Morality, and Politics*

Requirements:

- 1) Reading. Do all assigned readings. There will be up to seven short quizzes on readings. Quizzes will be announced at least one class in advance. Missed quizzes are made up only at the discretion of the professor.
- 2) Examinations. There will be three examinations of equal value. You will have the option of replacing exams with papers, the topic of which will be decided in consultation with me.
- 3) Class. Active participation in class is encouraged and will be taken into account in the final grade (though passive participation will not be penalized). Attendance is mandatory. More than three absences **will** negatively affect your grade.

