1. Introductions
2. Aristotle background
   1. Born in Stagira in around 384 BCE
   2. Moved to Athens at the age of 17 to study at Plato’s Academy
   3. Was known as the “brain of the academy”
   4. Touched on basically everything
      1. Invented or discovered logic
      2. Advanced well beyond what in many ways what was to become natural science
   5. And, did a great deal on questions in what he calls “ethics”
3. “Ethics”
   1. This word translates ἠθικός
   2. Also, was translated into Latin as *ethicus*
   3. So, you can see why that’s the word we use
   4. One big question we will pursue in this course is, what is Aristotle’s Ethics
      1. That is, what project is he pursuing here
      2. And, how does it related to what gets called “Ethics” nowadays
   5. There seem to be obvious differences between what he is doing and what, say, deontologists or consequentialists have focused on since the 19th century
      1. Those in many ways engage the question “what makes actions right or wrong”
      2. And while Aristotle does seem to talk a lot about how one ought to act in one sense of “ought to” it’s not clear he is concerned with the same project
   6. A recent (i.e. post 1950s) resurgence in attempt to return to the ethics as practiced by Aristotle is something we will pay particular attention to, though at the end, once we have Aristotle’s theory in view
      1. In fact, many people think that “virtue ethics” is the way that pretty much every did ethics for all of history except for a brief blip in the 19th to present (with virtue ethics being absent only for a little bit)
   7. Some people, and I might be one of them, think that it might be best to view the project of the Ethics as providing a manual for succeeding at being a human being
      1. In a sense, at being awesome at being a human being
      2. Now you might think that this leads to severe egoism or selfishness, but Aristotle seems to think that, in order for a human being to be awesome at being a human being, that person has to be virtuous in a somewhat conventional sense; temperance, wisdom courage are there, but also justice, benevolence and generosity seem required
      3. So, in one sense, you might say, we can have manuals that tell you how to be a good carpenter, doctor, sailor, perhaps even parent, friend etc.
      4. Perhaps the ethics is a manual for saying how to be a good human being
4. Words on syllabus
   1. Getting clear on how best we should understand them
   2. General issues on translation/interpretation
5. Textual tradition
6. Reading Aristotle
7. Syllabus