

COURSE OUTLINE

(1) GENERAL

UNIVERSITY / Department	• NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS / Department of History and Philosophy of Science		
STUDY LEVEL	Postgraduate		
COURSE CODE	1S001	SEMESTER OF STUDY	2nd
COURSE TITLE	Ancient Philosophy		
INSTRUCTOR(S)	Voula Tsouna		
TEACHING ACTIVITIES	TEACHING HOURS PER WEEK		ECTS
Lectures, readings, seminar discussion	3		10
COURSE TYPE	General Background		
PREREQUISITE COURSES	–		
LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and EXAMINATIONS	English		
COURSE OFFERED TO ERASMUS STUDENTS	Yes		
COURSE WEBSITE (URL)			

(2) LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning Outcomes
This course introduces students to major figures, texts and problems in Ancient Greek philosophy. It examines the emergence of philosophy in the Presocratic period, the intellectual and cultural movement of the Sophists, the philosophical breakthrough associated with Socrates, and central themes in Plato's Republic. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to understand the development of early Greek philosophy, reconstruct and assess the views of Presocratic thinkers, explain the significance of the nomos–physis debate, analyse the philosophical method and ethical commitments of Socrates, and critically engage with Plato's treatment of justice, the soul, the city, education, knowledge, Forms and political degeneration in the Republic.
General Skills
Upon successful completion of the course, students will have developed their abilities and be in a position to: - understand the emergence of philosophy in ancient Greece - interpret and discuss primary philosophical texts in translation - reconstruct arguments from fragmentary and dialogical sources - compare cosmological, metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and political questions in early Greek philosophy - analyse Socratic and Platonic methods of argument - critically assess ancient theories of justice, virtue, knowledge, the soul and the city

- write structured philosophical essays on ancient philosophical texts and problems

(3) COURSE CONTENT

The course examines central themes and figures in Ancient Greek philosophy, combining material from early Greek philosophy, the Sophists, Socrates and Plato.

Part 1: Early Greek Philosophy and the Presocratics

Introduction to sources and methods for studying early Greek philosophy.

The Milesians: Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes.

Xenophanes of Colophon and early rational theology.

Heraclitus of Ephesus.

Greek philosophy in Magna Graecia.

Parmenides of Elea.

Empedocles of Acragas.

The early atomists: Leucippus and Democritus.

These thinkers mark the earliest phase of philosophy in Europe and the beginnings of cosmology, metaphysics, rational theology, epistemology, ethics and political theory.

Part 2: Sophists and Socrates

The Sophistic movement in fifth-century BCE Greece.

Protagoras, Gorgias and Antiphon.

Relativism, rhetoric and the *nomos*–*physis* debate.

The question whether one should follow convention or nature in order to live a good life.

The shift from cosmology to ethics.

Perceptions of Socrates in Xenophon, Plato and the Socratic tradition.

Plato's Apology: the charges against Socrates, the Socratic mission, self-examination, virtue, religion and death.

Plato's Crito and Euthyphro.

The beginning of Plato's Republic and the immoralist challenge.

Part 3: Plato's Republic

The course also introduces Plato's Republic as one of the most influential works in the history of philosophy. The Republic is formally concerned with justice and with showing that justice is among the greatest goods in itself and independently of its consequences. In the course of that inquiry, the dialogue addresses ethics, psychology, political philosophy, education, metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of religion and aesthetics.

Indicative topics include:

Book 1: Cephalus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus.

The immoralist challenge of Glaucon and Adeimantus.

The classification of goods.

The city of pigs and the corrupt city.

Education of the Guardians.

Mimēsis and its effects on the soul.

The analogy between soul and state.

Knowledge, belief and their objects.

The realizability of the ideal city.

The philosopher and the corrupt city.

The theory of Forms.

The analogies of the Sun, the Line and the Cave.

Mathematics and dialectic.

Defective constitutions and souls: timocracy, oligarchy, democracy and tyranny.

The criticism of poetry in Republic 10.

The myth of Er.

(4) TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS – ASSESSMENT

TEACHING FORMAT	Lectures in class combined with discussion of primary texts and secondary literature.	
USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES	Use of the e-class online platform and electronic distribution of additional material	
TEACHING STRUCTURE	Activity	Semester Workload
	Lectures	39
	Studying on one's own	261
	Total (30 hours of work per credit unit)	300
STUDENT EVALUATION	Student evaluation may include written essays, participation in class discussion and/or a final written examination. The assessment may involve essay questions requiring students to reconstruct and critically assess ancient philosophical arguments. Assessment criteria include understanding of ancient texts and concepts, ability to reconstruct philosophical arguments, familiarity with relevant scholarship, clarity of writing, critical engagement and argumentative structure.	

(5) RECOMMENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cohen, S. M., Curd, P., and Reeve, C. D. C. *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy: From Thales to Aristotle*. 5th ed. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2016.

McKirahan, R. *Philosophy Before Socrates: An Introduction with Texts and Commentary*. 2nd ed. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2011.

Guthrie, W. K. C. *Socrates*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Plato. *Republic*. Translated by G. M. A. Grube, revised by C. D. C. Reeve. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett, 1992.

Annas, Julia. *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*. Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press, 1981.

Pappas, Nickolas. *The Routledge Guidebook to Plato's Republic*. London: Routledge, 2013.

Ferrari, G. R. F., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Santas, Gerasimos, ed. *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.

Sedley, David. "An Introduction to Plato's Theory of Forms."

Scott, Dominic. "Plato's Critique of the Democratic Character."

Scott, Dominic. "Eros, Philosophy, and Tyranny."

Tsouana, Voula. "Mimēsis and the Platonic Dialogue."