



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
Department of Philosophy

PHIL 401.02

Topics: A Classical Philosopher (Plato)

Winter, 2022

Monday and Wednesday, 15:30-16:45, PF2265

COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor Name: John A. Baker

Email: baker@ucalgary.ca

When emailing me please put “PHIL 401” in the subject line of the email.

Office: SS 1222

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 4:45 to 5:30

I am happy to hold zoom office hours outside these times. Please email me for an appointment.

Office Phone: 403-220-3167

Course Information

For a full appreciation of Plato’s influence and originality it is important to read the whole of certain of his most important and influential dialogues (e.g., the *Phaedo*, the *Republic*, the *Theaetetus*).

Accordingly, certain parts of the course will be devoted to a systematic examination of certain of his dialogues.

But it is equally important to take into account the fact that there are certain epistemological, metaphysical, ethical and political themes central to his thinking which, to be fully appreciated, need to be tracked across several dialogues – hence the importance of the fact that the edition of Plato’s dialogues I have chosen gives the Stephanus numbers (see below). Accordingly, certain parts of the course will be devoted specifically to these themes.

Similar remarks apply to Plato’s developing and changing views about the nature and value of philosophical inquiry. Accordingly we examine his views on these matters and we will track the changes in these views.

Prerequisites

Prerequisite(s): 6 units in courses labelled Philosophy including 3 units from [Philosophy 301](#), [303](#), [305](#), [307](#), [309](#), [311](#).

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Plato was, as Richard Kraut put it in his article “Plato” in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, “one of the most penetrating, wide-ranging, and influential authors in the history of philosophy” and yet, though he was not, again in Kraut’s words, “the first thinker or writer to whom the word ‘philosopher’ should be applied”, nevertheless “he was so self-conscious about how philosophy should be conceived, and what its scope and ambitions properly are, and he so transformed the intellectual currents with which he grappled, that the subject of philosophy, as it is often conceived—a rigorous and systematic examination of ethical, political, metaphysical, and epistemological issues, armed with a distinctive method—can be called his invention”. One of the goals of the course will be to bring the class to an appreciation of the truth of these statements whilst at the same time securing an appreciation of the fact that Plato and the participants in his dialogues were very definitely not “professors of philosophy at twentieth century British and American universities”. All of this said, it is nevertheless one of the goals of the course that the class come to appreciate that, despite the above, Plato’s theses and arguments need to be treated, in words of our late colleague Jack Macintosh, with “intellectual integrity, looking clearly at the strengths and weaknesses of the positions and arguments under discussion”.

Required/Recommended Textbooks, Readings And Materials

1. Required: *The Complete Works of Plato, edited, with Introduction and Notes by John M. Cooper*, Hackett Publishing Company, 1997. This is also available in e-book form.

Cooper's edition is outstandingly well produced. Very important is the fact that the Stephanus pages are provided in the margins: this enables exact references to passages in the Dialogues. The translations of the Dialogues chosen (or commissioned) by Cooper are by contemporary scholars and are uniformly excellent. Cooper's introduction to the volume is worth reading and for each Dialogue he provides a brief introduction and footnotes containing such background information as is needed for an understanding of what is being discussed in that Dialogue.

2. Recommended: In the last three or so years a variety of articles on Plato and his dialogues have been added to *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<https://plato.stanford.edu>). These articles are peer reviewed and updated regularly. As we go along, I will draw attention to any useful such articles.

Any other readings needed will be made available on D2L.

Course Assessment And Evaluation

Assignments and due-dates:

1. Two closed-book in-class tests – one on Wednesday, February 9th; the other on Monday, April 6th: Notes on the format of tests and lists of questions from which the questions on the tests will be chosen will be posted ahead of time on D2L.
3. A term paper (about 1500 words maximum, excluding footnotes and bibliography). Details will be posted in D2L. This should be submitted using the D2L dropbox. Due date: Friday, 22nd April.
4. There will be no registrar-scheduled examination.

Grading

1. *Ceteris paribus*, the first in-class test will be worth 35% of the final grade and the second will be worth 40%.
2. *Ceteris paribus*, the term paper will be worth 25% of the final grade.
3. The University requires us to state whether “writing and the grading thereof is a factor in the evaluation of a student's work.” It will be taken into account when assessing submitted work.
4. Later virtue will be allowed to redeem earlier sin.
5. Despite 4, except in very exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the instructor, a passing grade in the course will be received only if each of the two in-class tests and the term paper are submitted.
6. No late submissions will be accepted.
7. There is no particular component of the course for which a passing grade is required for the student to pass the course as a whole.
8. Percentages will be computed using the numbers set by the University as equivalent to the letter grades.

IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

The following information is MANDATORY. You may choose to include additional policies, to be reviewed by the Department Head during the approval process.

Academic Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. The student accommodation policy can be found at ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Student-Accommodation-Policy.pdf.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Accommodation-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Procedure.pdf. Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a protected ground other than disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

Absence or Missed Course Assessments

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable,

instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.

Student Support and Resources

Full details and information about the following resources can be found at ucalgary.ca/current-students/student-services

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success Centre
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

Academic Advising

If you are a student in the Faculty of Arts, you can speak to an academic advisor in the Arts Students' Centre about course planning, course selection, registration, program progression and more. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/current-students/undergraduate/academic-advising> for contact details and information regarding common academic concerns.

For questions specific to the philosophy program, please visit arts.ucalgary.ca/philosophy. Further academic guidance is available by contacting Jeremy Fantl (Undergraduate Program Director jfantl@ucalgary.ca) or David Dick (Honours Advisor dgdick@ucalgary.ca).

Writing Assessment and Support

The assessment of all written assignments—and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses—is based in part on writing skills. This includes correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.), as well as general clarity and organization. Research papers must include a thorough and accurate citation of sources. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services for assistance. For more information, and other services offered by the Student Success Centre, please visit ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success.

Required Technology

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote, and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone.

Responsible Use of D2L

Important information and communication about this course will be posted on D2L (Desire2Learn), UCalgary's online learning management system. Visit <https://ucalgary.service-now.com/it> for how-to information and technical assistance.

All users of D2L are bound by the guidelines on the responsible use of D2L posted here: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/commitment-to-the-responsible-use-of-d2l/>. The instructor may establish additional specific course policies for D2L, Zoom, and any other technologies used to support remote learning. Instructional materials, including audio or video recordings of lectures, may not be posted outside of the course D2L site. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the [University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy](#).

Media Recording

Please refer to the following statement on media recording of students: https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP_FINAL.pdf

Academic Misconduct/Honesty

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which will be an F on the assignment or an F in the course, and possibly a disciplinary sanction such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html.

Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about referencing, please consult your instructor.

University Policies

The Instructor Intellectual Property Policy is available at ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Intellectual-Property-Policy.pdf

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act, as outlined at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/access-information-privacy>. The instructor (or TA) must return graded assignments *directly* to the student UNLESS written permission to do otherwise has been provided.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Acceptable-Use-of-Material-Protected-by-Copyright-Policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>).