

PHH 4141 (SECT. 15E2, NO. 30389)
SEMINAR IN ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY - SOCRATES & THE STOICS
Instructor: Dr. John Palmer

Meetings & Classroom: MWF 6 (12:50-1:40 p.m.) in Leigh Hall 0242
Office: Griffin-Floyd 330A (tel. 273-1815, e-mail: palmerj@ufl.edu)
Office Hours: MF 9:00-10:00 a.m. (OBA)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Socrates is at once the patron saint of philosophy, an historical figure and a mythic character, a propounder of profound paradoxes, and an inspiring example of what it means to live the philosophical life. His unflinching commitment to rational inquiry and interrogation of the traditional values of his society made him the most popular intellectual of his day and yet ultimately led to his prosecution and execution by the citizens of the world's first democratic state. His commitment to pursuing philosophical questions in direct one-on-one conversations was such that he wrote no works of philosophy. As a result, all our knowledge of Socrates comes from the works of authors who undertook to provide a portrait of his character and activity. Socrates was fortunate that one of his portraitists – his pupil Plato – was also one of the greatest philosophers and writers ever to live. This course will begin by exploring the problem of our knowledge of the historical Socrates by comparing the portraits of Socrates in Aristophanes' *Clouds*, in Xenophon's *Recollections of Socrates* and *Apology of Socrates*, in Plato's own *Apology of Socrates*, and in certain of Plato's so-called 'Socratic' dialogues. These initial weeks will lay the foundation for our efforts to develop a general understanding of the ethical philosophy of Plato's Socrates as presented in several of Plato's earlier dialogues as well as in the *Euthydemus*, *Meno*, and *Gorgias*. The final phase of the course will explore the profound influence Socrates' thought had on Stoic ethics both via the medium of Plato's dialogues and via other conduits such as the Cynicism of Diogenes of Sinope.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students in this course will develop an in-depth understanding of the ethical thought of Socrates and the Stoics and of the influence of the former on the latter. In doing so, they will develop the higher-level critical and interpretative skills and the ability to assess complex historical evidence. These objectives will be achieved through (i) close reading and discussion of a broad range of texts that provide evidence for the views of Socrates and the Stoics, (ii) a set of papers on assigned topics prompting students to articulate and support their own views on central issues in Socrates' thought, and (iii) a longer final paper on the Socratic inspiration of Stoic ethics or on another topic developed by each student in consultation with the instructor. Each paper in the class will be evaluated according to the criteria laid out in the grading rubric wherein demonstration of competent command of the relevant material, organization and clarity, and the provision of cogent interpretations of that material supporting the major claims are central parameters of evaluation. The final paper for the course will be evaluated as a Model Paper, in accordance with the specifications for such a paper in the Philosophy Department's academic learning compact. Completion of the course with a grade of C or better partially satisfies the 4000-level course requirement for the Philosophy major.

REQUIRED TEXTS

C. D. C. Reeve. *The Trials of Socrates: Six Classic Texts*. Hackett. ISBN: 0872205894.

Xenophon. *Conversations of Socrates*. Penguin Classics. ISBN: 014044517X.

Plato. *Early Socratic Dialogues*. Penguin Classics. ISBN: 0140455035.

Plato. *Gorgias*. Hackett. ISBN: 0872200167.

Brad Inwood & Lloyd Gerson. *The Stoics Reader*. Hackett. ISBN: 9780872209527.

* Additional assigned readings indicated in the course schedule will be posted in the Files section of the course Canvas site. Several of these additional assigned readings will be from *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates*, ed. Donald Morrison (Cambridge, 2011), which is available through the UF Library as an e-text.

CANVAS E-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This course is supplemented by online content in the Canvas e-Learning environment. Log in to Canvas and access the course site at <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>. Students who encounter difficulties logging in or accessing any of the course content should contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-4537. Do not contact the course instructor regarding computer issues.

EVALUATION

- (i) Three 1000-1500 word essays on assigned topics throughout the first 10 weeks of the semester, each worth 20% of the course grade.
- (ii) A 4,000 - 5,000 word Final Paper, worth 40% of the course grade, on the Socratic inspiration of Stoic ethics or on another topic developed by each student in consultation with the instructor. (This paper will be evaluated as a model paper in conjunction with the Philosophy Department's Academic Learning Compact.)

Due dates for all essays and for the final paper are indicated on the course schedule below. No paper will be accepted after its due date except by 24-hour prior arrangement with the instructor. Failure to turn in a paper in class on its due date will result in a grade of "0" for that assignment.

Information on current UF policies regarding grade and can be found [here](#).

Grade Scale	Grade Value
100-93=A	A=4.0
92-90=A-	A-=3.67
89-86=B+	B+=3.33
85-82=B	B=3.00
81-79=B-	B-=2.67
78-75=C+	C+=2.33
75-72=C	C=2.00
71-69=C-	C-=1.67
68-66=D+	D+=1.33
65-62=D	D=1.00
61-60=D-	D-=0.67
59-0=E	E=0.00

ATTENDANCE. Students are expected to attend class and to do the assigned reading in advance. Failure to do so will adversely affect students' ability to perform well in this course. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. [Click here to read the university attendance policies.](#)

ACADEMIC HONESTY. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code.](#) If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center.](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

ON-LINE COURSE EVALUATION. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available [here](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students [here](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

- (1) W 1/5 – Course Introduction
- (2) F 1/7 – Dramatic reading of Aristophanes' *Clouds*

Week 2

- (3) M 1/10 – Dramatic reading of *Clouds* (cont.) + David Konstan, "Socrates in Aristophanes' *Clouds*" (in *CCS*)
- (4) W 1/12 – Plato, *Apology of Socrates* + A. A. Long, "How does Socrates' divine sign communicate with him?"
- (5) F 1/14 – Plato, *Apology of Socrates* + Gregory Vlastos, "Socrates' disavowal of knowledge"

Week 3

- M 1/17 – NO CLASS (MLK Jr. Day)
- (6) W 1/19 – Xenophon, *Apology of Socrates*
- (7) F 1/21 – Plato, *Euthyphro* + Gregory Vlastos, "The Socratic elenchus"

Week 4

- (8) M 1/24 – Plato, *Euthyphro* (cont.)
- (9) W 1/26 – Plato, *Laches* + Hugh Benson, "Socratic method" (in *CCS*)
- (10) F 1/28 – Plato, *Laches* (cont.)
- ASSIGNMENT FOR ESSAY 1 AVAILABLE IN CANVAS

Week 5

- (11) M 1/31 – Xenophon, *Memorabilia* I + Louis-André Dorion, "Xenophon's Socrates"
- (12) W 2/2 – Xenophon, *Memorabilia* II.1 and III; excerpts from Aristotle regarding Socrates
- (13) F 2/4 – Xenophon (cont.) + Gregory Vlastos, "Xenophon and Aristotle"
- DUE DATE FOR ESSAY 1

Week 6

- (14) M 2/7 – Xenophon, *Memorabilia* IV
- (15) W 2/9 – Louis-André Dorion, "The rise and fall of the Socratic problem" (in *CCS*)
- (16) F 2/11 – Plato, *Protagoras*, 309a-328d (PDF) + David Copp and Alan Sobel, "Some recent work in virtue ethics" (PDF)

Week 7

- (17) M 2/14 – Plato, *Charmides* 153a-164d
- (18) W 2/16 – Plato, *Charmides* 164d-171d
- (19) F 2/18 – Plato, *Charmides* 171d-end + Christopher Rowe, "Self-examination" (in *CCS*)

Week 8

- (20) M 2/21 – Plato, *Euthydemus* 271a-282e + Christopher Bobonich, "Socrates and eudaimonia" (in *CCS*)
- ASSIGNMENT FOR ESSAY 2 AVAILABLE IN CANVAS
- (21) W 2/23 – Plato, *Euthydemus* 283a-293a
- (22) F 2/25 – Plato, *Euthydemus* 293b-307c

Week 9

- (23) M 2/28 – Plato, *Gorgias* 447a-460a
- DUE DATE FOR ESSAY 2
- (24) W 3/2 – Plato, *Gorgias* 447a-460a (cont.)
- (25) F 3/5 – Plato, *Gorgias* 461b-480a

3/5 – 3/12: SPRING BREAK

Week 10

- (26) M 3/14 – Plato, *Gorgias* 461b-480a (cont.)

- (27) W 3/16 – Plato, *Gorgias* 480e-505c
(28) F 3/18 – Plato, *Gorgias* 480e-505c (cont.)

Week 11

- (29) M 3/21 – Plato, *Gorgias* 480e-505c (cont.)
(30) W 3/23 – Plato, *Gorgias* 506c-end
► ASSIGNMENT FOR ESSAY 2 AVAILABLE IN CANVAS
(31) F 3/25 – Plato, *Gorgias* 506c-end (cont.)

Week 12

- (32) M 3/28 – Ancient Cynicism
(33) W 3/30 – Stoic Natural Philosophy
► DUE DATE FOR ESSAY 3
(34) F 4/1 – Stoic Ethics

Week 13

- (35) M 4/4 – Stoic Ethics
(36) W 4/6 – Stoic Ethics
(37) F 4/8 – Stoic Ethics

Week 14

- (38) M 4/11 – Stoic Ethics
(39) W 4/13 – Stoic Ethics
(40) F 4/15 – Stoic Ethics

Week 15

- (41) M 4/18 – John Cooper, "Socrates and philosophy as a way of life"
(42) W 4/20 – Retrospective

► FINAL PAPER DUE W 4/27 AT 12:30 P.M.