I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The study of ancient Greek philosophy is essential to examining the Western intellectual tradition, i.e., the artistic, scientific, philosophical and religious literature appropriated, critiqued, revised, and transformed within Hellenistic, Roman, Christian, Jewish, Islamic, European, and European-American traditions. It also provides an excellent foundation for further philosophical study.

There are different ways of approaching ancient Greek philosophy. What is unique about this course is its revolutionary account of the nature of philosophy: we interpret philosophy, as conceived by Ancient Greeks, not as the production of rational treatises, but as the practice of spiritual exercises. More precisely, this course defends an interpretation of ancient philosophy as forms of spiritual asceticism geared towards the acquisition of virtue and wisdom. In this approach, ethics occupies a foundational role, from which other branches of philosophy, especially psychology, metaphysics and epistemology, emerge. As a result, some of the traditional philosophical problems receive a fresh interpretation (and resolution) in light of the radical metaphilosophical orientation of this class.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are:

- to provide exposure to the main texts, figures, and movements in philosophy in the ancient Greek and Hellenistic world.
- to develop student critical reasoning and analytical skills, improve reading comprehension and writing skills.
- to understand fundamental philosophical issues and texts in their historical contexts.
- to instill an appreciation of the diversity and richness of the ancient and Hellenistic philosophical traditions and its influence on Jewish, Christian and Islamic thought as well as on the later philosophical eras.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student is expected to:

1. Understand key features, themes, and issues of ancient Greek and Hellenistic thought.
2. To know and distinguish different philosophical traditions and schools within the classical period.
3. Have experience reading key texts of prominent ancient philosophers.
IV. TEXTS

Reeve & Miller, *Ancient Greek & Roman Philosophy (AGRP).*
Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy? (WiAP).*
Other required reading assignments will be posted on iLearn.

V. REQUIREMENTS

Class attendance and participation are required and count for 10% of the grade (based on the attendance record). There will be two tests. The first is an in-class test and counts for 50% and the second is a take-home essay test and counts for 40% of the grade. There will also be an optional essay assignment to enhance the midterm grade. I will discuss that in class after the midterm.

VI. TEACHING ASSISTANTS

The names and the availability of the teaching assistants will be announced in the first class and on iLearn.

VII. WRITING ASSISTANCE

There are two free writing assistance centers on campus. Use the links below for more information.
1-Community Access & Retention Program (CARP): http://www.sfsu.edu/%7Ecarp1
2-Learning Assistance Center (LAC): http://www.sfsu.edu/%7Elac

VIII. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Academic accommodation is available for students with disabilities. Please see the DISABILITY PROGRAMS AND RESOURCE CENTER (HTTP://WWW.SFSU.EDU/~DPRC) in the Student Services Building 110 and talk to the instructor as soon as possible to discuss any accommodation that you may need for the course.

IX. PLAGIARISM

All work submitted for the course must be your own. Plagiarism will result in disciplinary action. For more details see: http://www.sfsu.edu/~collhum/plagiarism.html.

X. SCHEDULE: This schedule is subject to revision.

1. Aug 28: What is Ancient Philosophy?


3. Sept 11: Socrates: The Ethical Turn
   Texts: *AGRP,* *Apology,* pp. 57-73; *WiAP,* “The Figure of Socrates,” pp. 22-39.

4. Sept 18: No Class
Ancient Philosophy
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5. Sept 25: From Socrates to Plato: Writing a Refutation

6. Oct 2: Plato’s Erotics

Text: AGRP, excerpts from *Republic VI-VII*, pp. 192-211.

October 16: Midterm Review and Exam


Texts: AGRP, *De Anima*, pp. 276-286 (excerpts from bk. 1, 2, 3, 10, & 11); Alfarabi, “On the Intellect,” on iLearn.


11. Nov 13: Epicureanism & Stoicism

12. Nov 20: Academic vs. Pyrrhonian Skepticism

November 27: No Class. Fall Recess

13. Dec 4: Neoplatonism and the School of Alexandria

14. Dec 11: Philosophy and Philosophical Discourse

December 11: Final Prompt SUBMITTED to students.
December 19: Final DUE, by noon in my office (HUM 361).