



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 401.2 Lec 1 – “A Classical Philosopher: Plato”

Winter Term 2014

Course Outline

Lectures: TuTh, 5:00-6:15pm, Education Classroom Block (EDC), Room 287

Instructor: Jeremy Fischer

Office: Social Science 1212

Phone: 403-220-5989

Email: jfischer@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: Fridays, 11:00-1:00pm, and by appointment

Course Description

This course provides a detailed examination of four of Plato’s greatest dialogues: the *Apology*, *Crito*, *Republic*, and *Phaedrus*. A large part of this course focuses on Plato’s masterpiece, the *Republic*, with the aim of understanding the relation between the many subjects investigated (including metaphysics, epistemology, moral psychology, ethics, political philosophy, philosophy of education, aesthetics, and philosophy of religion), and Plato’s views on each subject. Our study of the *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedrus* will emphasize both the full range of topics in these dialogues as well as the ways in which some of Plato’s views appear to shift from dialogue to dialogue.

Required Texts

- (1) *A Plato Reader: Eight Essential Dialogues*, edited by C.D.C. Reeve (Hackett Publishing, 2012).

Evaluation

1. 13 weekly homework assignments: 50% of the final grade.
 - a. Each assignment will be posted on Blackboard approximately one week before it is due.
 - b. Homework assignments will consist of reconstructing and/or evaluating arguments or passages from the assigned text for the class on which they are due. Most assignments will require about one page of writing.
 - c. Assignments must be typed, double-spaced in a 12-point font, printed out, and ready to submit at the beginning of the class on which they are due.
 - d. During lecture you may correct by hand any errors you have made in your typed assignment for that day, and you will receive partial credit of up to 50% for these in-class corrections.
 - e. One purpose of these assignments and the grading policy described in (1d) is to have you engage with the lecture in a more sophisticated way and participate in class. To this end, you must submit your assignments in person. Emailed assignments and assignments submitted by a classmate will not be accepted.
 - f. Since these assignments will be of varying length and difficulty, some will be worth more than others towards your final grade. Each assignment will be worth between 3% and 8% of your final grade.
 - g. You may not collaborate with others on any homework assignment.
2. One short essay assignment, of approximately 2000 words, due via Blackboard by March 28th: 20% of the final grade.

3. One open-book take-home final examination, due via Blackboard by April 11th: 20% of the final grade.
4. Class Participation: 10% of the final grade.
 - a. Class participation includes participating in classroom discussions, visiting office hours, and corresponding with me via email about the material of the course. You should aim to participate in some way at least once every two weeks, on average.
5. (There will not be any Registrar-scheduled final examination.)
6. A passing grade on each of the three main components of the course—homework assignments, essay, and exam—is essential if the student is to pass the course as a whole.
7. Writing and the grading thereof is a factor in the evaluation of your work for this course. For further explanation, see the University Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

Grading Method

Conversion of percentage of 400 total points to letter grade:

95-100% = A+	85-87 = B+	75-77 = C+	64-67 = D+
92-94 = A	82-84 = B	72-74 = C	59-63 = D
88-91 = A-	78-81 = B-	68-71 = C-	< 59 = F

Students close to the borderline of a higher grade will be bumped up only if they have completed all assignments and the final exam reflects the higher score.

Policy on Late Assignments

Late assignments will not be accepted except in the event of a personal emergency.

Academic Honesty

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offence, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment, an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw from the University. See the relevant sections on 'Academic Misconduct' in the current University Calendar. 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 correct referencing, consult your instructor.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a permanent disability or temporary impairment who may require academic accommodation, you must first register with the Student Accessibility Resource Office located in MacEwan Student Centre 452; phone 403-220-8237; email access@ucalgary.ca. Students who have not registered with the Student Accessibility Office are not eligible for academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course. Go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/> for further information.

Blackboard Help

Go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/computersupport/onlineservices/blackboard> for Student Help and FAQs about Blackboard. Troubleshooting tips and a tutorial are available at <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/blackboard/students>.

Student Advising and Information Resources

- General Academic Concerns and Program Planning— Have a question but not sure where to start? The Faculty of Arts' Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts. Drop in at SS110, call 403-220-3580, or email artsads@ucalgary.ca. Advisors in the PIC Office can also provide assistance and advice in planning your program through to graduation. You can visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undersgraduate> for detailed information on common academic concerns.

- **Advice on Philosophy Courses** - You may find answers to your more specific questions about a philosophy degree on the Department of Philosophy's website <http://phil.ucalgary.ca> or contact one of Philosophy's current Undergraduate Advisors (see below)
- **Registration Overload/Prereq Waivers** – If you are seeking to register in a Philosophy course that is full or to get permission to waive the prereqs for a course, email the instructor of the course.

Protection of Privacy

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor.

Student Ombudsperson and Students' Union Representatives

The Student Ombuds Office provides independent, impartial, and confidential support for students who require assistance or advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. For more information, see www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds. For the Students' Union Faculty of Arts rep: arts1@ucalgary.ca.

Safewalk

Call 403-220-5333 (24/7/365) for a Safewalk volunteer to accompany you safely to your destination on campus including parking lots, housing, and the LRT station or use a Campus Help Phone.

PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

The Department of Philosophy is located on the 12th floor of the Social Sciences Building and on the web at www.phil.ucalgary.ca

PHILOSOPHY UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM ADVISORS FOR WINTER 2014:

Chris Framarin (Undergrad Director) chris.framarin@ucalgary.ca

Reid Buchanan buchanar@ucalgary.ca

Mark Migotti (Honours Program Advisor) migotti@ucalgary.ca

For assistance with registration issues in Philosophy courses, contact Merlette Schnell (schnell@ucalgary.ca)

PHIL 401: Plato
Tentative Schedule of Reading Assignments
Winter 2014/Fischer

All reading assignments can be found in *A Plato Reader: Eight Essential Dialogues* (Hackett).

Week 1

Thursday, January 9th: Introduction

Recommended: Stanford Encyclopedia Articles on Plato and Socrates, available at

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato/>

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/socrates/>

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-ethics-shorter/>

Week 2

Tuesday, January 14th: *Apology*, pp. 21-46

Thursday, January 16th: *Apology*, pp. 21-46

Week 3

Tuesday, January 21st: *Crito*, pp. 47-59

Thursday, January 23rd: **CLASS CANCELLED**

Week 4

Tuesday, January 28th: *Republic I*, pp. 270-302

Thursday, January 30th: *Republic I*, pp. 270-302

Week 5

Tuesday, February 4th: *Republic II*, pp. 302-330

Thursday, February 6th: *Republic II*, pp. 302-330

Week 6

Tuesday, February 11th: *Republic III*, pp. 330-365

Thursday, February 13th: *Republic IV*, pp. 366-396

Reading Week

Tuesday, February 18th: **NO CLASS**

Thursday, February 20th: **NO CLASS**

Week 7

Tuesday, February 15th: *Republic IV*, pp. 366-396

Thursday, February 27th: *Republic V*, pp. 396-433

Week 8

Tuesday, March 4th: *Republic V*, pp. 396-433

Thursday, March 6th: *Republic VI*, pp. 433-463

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Week 9

Tuesday, March 11th: *Republic* VI, pp. 433-463
Thursday, March 13th: *Republic* VII, pp. 463-491

Week 10

Tuesday, March 18th: *Republic* VIII, pp. 491-521
Thursday, March 20th: *Republic* VIII, pp. 491-521

Week 11

Tuesday, March 25th: *Republic* IX, pp. 521-545
Thursday, March 27th: *Republic* X, pp. 545-573

*****Short Essay Assignment Due on Friday, March 28th*****

Week 12

Tuesday, April 1st: *Republic* X, pp. 545-573
Thursday, April 3rd: *Phaedrus*, pp. 213-242

Week 13

Tuesday, April 8th: *Phaedrus*, pp. 243-266
Thursday, April 10th: *Phaedrus*/Review

*****Take-Home Final Exam Due on Friday, April 11th*****

Homework Assignment #1: Plato's *Apology*

Please type up and print out your assignment, which is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, January 14th. It should be no longer than one page double-spaced, in 12-point font.

1. It is often thought that Socrates claims that he knows nothing except for the fact that he knows nothing. This claim is sometimes called "Socratic Ignorance." (There is even a Wikipedia entry called "I know that I know nothing," which attributes this thought to Socrates in the *Apology* at 21d.) However, Socrates claims to know important and controversial things throughout the *Apology*, such as the following:
 - a. "To act unjustly, on the other hand, to disobey someone better than oneself, whether god or man, that I do know to be bad and shameful" (29b6-7).
 - b. "... bear in mind this single truth: nothing bad can happen to a good man, whether in life or in death...; rather, it's clear to me that to die now and escape my troubles was a better thing" (41d).
 - c. (For additional expressions of certainty, see 22d1, 28a6, 30a5, 30c6-8.)

So, what kind of knowledge, exactly, is Socrates disclaiming? What knowledge does he lack? What knowledge does he claim to have?

[Hint: It may help to consider the knowledge claimed by people that Socrates is critical of. Also, it may help to consider the distinction that Socrates draws at 20d-e between *human* wisdom and *superhuman* wisdom.]