Ancient Philosophy
TR 12:30 – 1:45
BH-207

http://philosophy.tamucc.edu

Professor:
Don Berkich, Ph.D.

Office: FC-283 and CCH-262
Hours: TR 1:00 - 4:00 and by appointment
Office#: 3976 (do not leave a message, send email instead)
Home#: 944-2756 (never call after 9:00 p.m., but texting is encouraged)
Email: don.berkich@tamucc.edu
Web: http://philosophy.tamucc.edu/berkich

Course Description:
This course is a reading and discussion seminar devoted to the two major figures of Ancient Western Philosophy, Plato and Aristotle. Our focus will be a close reading of their major texts.

Our emphasis will set the stage for the philosophical transition to the mediavels and, eventually, the moderns. The course concludes with a discussion of the philosophical problems discovered by Ancient Western Philosophy. There are no prerequisites.

Tentative Reading Schedule:

Week 1 Introduction
Week 2 The Apology
Week 3 The Republic
Week 4 The Republic
Week 5 The Republic
Week 6 The Republic
Week 7 The Republic
Week 8 The Meno
Week 9 The Meno
Week 10 De Anima
Week 11 Nicomachean Ethics
Week 12 Nicomachean Ethics
Week 13 Nicomachean Ethics
Week 14 Nicomachean Ethics
**Student Learning Outcomes:**

As determined by a pre-test and a post-test the first day, students will demonstrate their capacity for sentient cognition by

1. Learning the names of at least two historically important philosophers--e.g., Plato and Aristotle.

2. Learning the names of at least three important texts written by these philosophers--e.g., *The Symposium, The Republic, and The Metaphysics.*

**Texts:**


* Useful but not required--selections from these and other sources will be provided as necessary. That said, anyone seriously considering developing a shelf of important philosophical works is well-advised to include these books.

**Requirements:**

**Examinations**

There will be a midterm examination due Thursday, 10/17, and a final examination due Wednesday, 12/12. Subject to student suggestions, the examinations will be short- and long-essay format. The examinations will be take-home and will include material from lecture, discussion, guest lecturers, and panel discussions. Students may expect approximately two weeks to work on each examination.

**Reading Quizzes**

Starting on Tuesday, 9/4, every class will begin with a very brief reading quiz. Each reading quiz will consist of a short-essay (no more than one side of one page, usually much less) answer to a question chosen from three published in advance. Only the best scoring twenty quizzes count towards the course grade. Each quiz is worth up to 25 points as per the following distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Where were you? We missed you!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Um, which reading were you on?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nice answer, but which question were you answering?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>There are some serious gaps here, but you're heading in the right direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Good! You've got some of the basics covered, but there is a much better way to put it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Outstanding! Clear, concise, and correct!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participation:**

Students should be prepared to contribute to class discussion. Students should also be prepared to answer specific questions about the reading material and should be able to outline key elements of the assigned readings for the class.

**Attendance:**
Attendance is not mandatory, but it is strongly recommended. See below.

Policies:

The professor assumes that students enrolled in this course are sincere student-scholars. That is, the professor will treat them with the respect due scholars, and, as scholars, they shall do their best to live up to the standards of scholars. To wit,

Preparation:

Scholars carefully read assignments in advance of class, take notes on their reading, explore specific issues in discussion with fellow scholars, and follow-up class by re-reading portions of the required readings and exploring suggested readings.

Participation:

Scholars are eager to respectfully, openly, and critically discuss arguments and issues raised by the readings. Scholars are adept at following a line of reasoning wherever it may lead. Most importantly, scholars welcome the insights and criticisms of their peers: A scholar understands that it is possible to entertain a proposition without believing it, just as it is possible to present an argument without personally endorsing the argument. Scholars enjoy vigorous deliberations and are always careful to treat fellow scholars with patience and good humor.

Assignments:

Scholars fully immerse themselves in assignments and never assume that an assignment is only legitimate if it will be covered on a test. Scholars are naturally curious and see every assignment as an opportunity to explore new issues, see old issues in new light, and hone their growing skills.

Cheating:

Scholars are very careful to give proper credit and maintain the highest standards of scholarly conduct. Thus, subject to university guidelines, any instance of cheating (including plagiarism) will be vigorously prosecuted.

Attendance:

Scholars always attend class barring serious injury, illness, or disaster. Scholars view class-time as rare and valuable for the thought it evokes and the opportunities it presents. Scholars arrive early for class and never leave class early without obtaining prior approval from the professor. Scholars who miss class are responsible for obtaining class-notes, doing the readings, and fully answering any exam questions derived from class discussion. Make-up reading quizzes will be provided upon request, although the question asked may not be the question chosen in class.

Grading Formula:
There are 1000 points possible as follows:

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>25 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
<td>200 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>300 points</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Points =

Sum of the best twenty reading quizzes + Midterm Examination + Final Examination

Course Grade is determined by the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>900-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>800-899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>700-799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>600-699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>000-599</td>
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Additional Notes:

Any change in the above will be announced in class. No change will be made which would be detrimental to the student's grade.

Please note that this syllabus is not authoritative. That is, the syllabus on the course website supersedes this syllabus wherever they differ. The professor and the students are only responsible for the syllabus as it appears in its entirety on the course website, including the schedule of topics and readings. This syllabus is provided solely to meet the requirements of the Texas State Legislature and has no bearing whatsoever on how the course will in fact be run.

Any student missing a due date must provide a documented, acceptable reason according to university guidelines. Students with a proper excuse for missing a due date will be given a reasonable extension.

Students without a proper excuse for missing a due date will lose 20 points per day after the due date.

Required University Note to Students with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

Required College of Liberal Arts Note on Academic Advising: The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

Required University Note on the Grade Appeal Process: As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or
appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon
the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a
grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including
the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for
completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals,
and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents
are accessible through the University Rules Web site at
http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the
grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

By accepting this syllabus the student indicates that the syllabus has been read, all requirements
are understood, and all policies are acknowledged.