



ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY IN CONTEXT

Dr. Georgia Sermamoglou-Soulmaidi
June 12-July 2, 2023

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Walk in the footsteps of some of the greatest philosophers in the Western tradition. In this seminar, students will study major works of ancient Greek philosophy as well as the social and political contexts in which they developed. The seminar is broad in scope, aiming to cover the entire period from the Presocratics to the Stoics. We will address questions such as the following:

What is the nature of the material universe? Is there a basic principle, or set of principles, that everything obeys? Is the way we conceive of the divine influenced by our own, human nature? Is the fear of death justified? If we know what's good for us, why do we sometimes fail to act accordingly? Is the life of virtue preferable to the life of pleasure, and if so, why?

FIELD STUDY

Field study includes visits to the following archaeological sites and museums:

Mycenae, Argos, Tiryns, Nafplion; the National Archaeological Museum; Kerameikos, Plato's Academy, Acropolis, Athenian Agora, Theater of Dionysus, Areopagus, Pnyx, and Eleusis; Aristotle's Lyceum, Roman Agora, Library of Hadrian, Temple of Olympian Zeus, Philopappos Monument, Thorikos, and Sounion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All students are expected to attend 60 hours of instruction in the classroom and on site, preparing assigned readings carefully and participating in discussion. Students will also be assigned oral reports on specific readings.

EVALUATION

Assessment of students seeking credit for the course will be based upon the following:

Three, once-weekly exams, including term IDs, short answers, and essays.	40%
5-7 pg. paper	40%
Class participation	20%

**Papers are due on the Sunday after the last day of class.*

REQUIRED BOOKS

The following books must be acquired prior to student arrival in Athens:

1. *Ancient Philosophy: Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy*, (Fourth Edition): from Thales to Aristotle. Eds. Cohen, Curd, and Reeve. Hackett Publishing, 2011. ISBN-13: 978-1603844628
2. *The Discourses of Epictetus*, Transl. Robin Hard, Introduction by C. Gill, London: Everyman, 1995.
3. *Marcus Aurelius: Meditations*. Transl. Gregory Hays. Penguin Random House, 2003.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

WEEK ONE	THE PRESOCRATICS
The Milesians	Thales Anaximander Anaximenes
The Ionians and the Italians	Xenophanes, Heraclitus; Pythagoras, Empedocles
The Ionian Revival	Anaxagoras; Leucippus and Democritus
WEEK TWO	SOCRATES AND PLATO

Socrates	Plato, <i>Apology</i>
Plato	Plato, <i>Protagoras</i> (Can virtue be taught?)
Plato	Plato, <i>Protagoras</i> (The power-of-knowledge argument)
WEEK THREE	ARISTOTLE AND THE STOICS
Aristotle	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> 1
Aristotle	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> 2
The Stoics	Epictetus, <i>Discourses</i> (selections) Marcus Aurelius, <i>Meditations</i>