

PHILOSOPHY 102: HELLENISTIC PHILOSOPHY

UCSD 2016 Spring
MWF 12-12:50pm
WLH 2114

Professor Monte Johnson
H&SS 7058 Office hours: MW 12:50-1:50pm
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The works of the founders of the major schools of Hellenistic philosophy, the Epicureans, Stoics, and Sceptics, have been lost, but their ideas survive in fragments quoted in later authors, and in extant works of Roman writers. We will read some of the fragments of the Greek philosophers of the Hellenistic period, and ethical and political writings of Cicero and Seneca in order to get an idea of the range of Hellenistic ethical theories, as well as their approach to some more concrete ethical problems, such as the relationship between ethics and physics and logic, the relative value of pleasure and virtue, consolation and the control of emotion, and the methods of obtaining of tranquility and happiness.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at UCSD Bookstore)

- *Hellenistic Philosophy: introductory readings* / translated with introduction and notes by Brad Inwood and L. P. Gerson. Second edition. Indianapolis, 1997.
- *Cicero: On Moral Ends*. Translated by R. Woolf. Cambridge, 2001.
- *Seneca: Dialogues and Essays*. Translated by J. Davie. Oxford, 2007.

OBJECTIVES

1. Learn how to read, interpret, discuss, cite, quote, and paraphrase the fundamental doctrines of the Epicureans, Stoics and Sceptics in English translation.
2. Learn the ways that Greek philosophy was transformed by Roman writers for their own purposes, and to appreciate Cicero and Seneca as literary archetypes for later legal, ethical, and social-political discourse. Appreciate the enduring influence of Hellenistic philosophy on the history of philosophy and science.
3. Conduct original research on Hellenistic Philosophy in relation to your own interests. Learn to utilize both primary and secondary sources in representing and criticizing philosophical views. Present your ideas to your peers, and give and receive helpful criticism from them.

EVALUATION (see separate evaluation form, which must be completed and submitted)

This course uses a method of evaluation called *specifications grading*. All modules for the course are graded pass/fail on the basis of the written specifications for each module. Final grades (including P/NP grades) are computed on the basis of the number of modules completed. All written work for the entire course, including copies on which feedback has been written, must be retained and submitted as a package at the end of the final exam (June 8, 2016, 2:30pm, no early or late submissions accepted). Attendance at all 30 meetings is mandatory and participation in the discussion is graded. See evaluation form for policy on absence and late submission of work.

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SCHEDULE

Note: All readings are in the textbooks unless otherwise noted. All readings should be done prior to the meeting during which they will be discussed. Please bring your textbook(s) to class, and be prepared to ask questions or make comments about the material. Consult alternate translations and editions if possible.

Meeting (2016) Topics, Readings, and Deadlines

Week 1

1. March 28 Syllabus and Overview
2. March 30 Cynics
Reading: Diogenes of Sinope (Handout)
3. April 1 Cyrenaics
Reading: Aristippus of Cyrene (Handout)
Student Information Form Due!!!

Week 2

4. April 4 Introduction to Epicureans
Reading: pp.3-45 of *Hellenistic Philosophy*
5. April 6 Epicurean Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 1
6. April 8 Criticism of Epicurean Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 2

Week 3

7. April 11 Introduction to Stoics
Reading: pp. 110-178 of *Hellenistic Philosophy*
8. April 13 Stoic Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 3
9. April 15 Criticism of Stoic Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 4
Scholar Assignment Due.

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Week 4

10. April 18 Academic Scepticism
Reading: Pp.261-284 of *Hellenistic Philosophy*
11. April 20 Academic Ethics
Reading: Cicero, *On Moral Ends* 5
12. April 22 Pyrrhonian Scepticism
Reading: Pp.302-324 and 387-398 of *Hellenistic Philosophy*.
Guest Lecturer: Mario Attie (UCSD 2016).

Week 5

13. April 25 Debate
Students will divide into groups of Stoics, Epicureans, and Academics, and debate the relative merits of their philosophical Schools.
Draft 1 of Reseach Essay Due.
14. April 27 Midterm Examination
15. April 29 Scholar Presentations
Scholar Assignment Revision Due (electronic copy).

Week 6

16. May 2 Scholar Presentations
17. May 4 Scholar Presentations
18. May 6 Scholar Presentations

Week 7

19. May 9 Introduction to Seneca
Reading: Seneca, *On the Happy Life*
20. May 11 Tranquility
Reading: Seneca, *On Tranquility of Mind*
21. May 13 Shortness of Life
Reading: Seneca, *On the Shortness of Life*
Draft 2 of Research Essay Due.

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Week 8

22. May 16 Consolation
 Reading: Seneca, *Consolation to Marcia*, *Consolation to Helvia*
23. May 18 Anger
 Reading: Seneca, *On Anger III*
24. May 20 Mercy
 Reading: Seneca, *On Mercy*

Week 9

25. May 23 Philosophers in elite circles
 Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* (selections; handout)
26. May 25 Philosophers in popular culture
 Performance of Lucian's play, *Philosophers for Sale!*
 Students can earn participation credit by reading out the parts.
27. May 27 **Final Written Examination**

Week 10

- *May 30 MEMORIAL DAY—NO CLASS
28. June 1 Research Presentations
29. June 3 Research Presentations

Finals Week

30. June 8 11:30am-2:30pm
 Final Examination—Final Research Presentations
 Draft 3 of Research Essay due.