

FIL4560: *History of Philosophy from 600BC until the 17th Century*

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Office: GM 438
Time: Tuesday 14.15–16.00
Place: GM 141

The *general* description of the course is the following

The topics of the course are works/epochs/schools/ideas in the history of philosophy from around 600 BC until the Renaissance. Texts and focus may vary, but important names will be Heraclitus, Parmenides, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Hellenistic philosophers, neo-platonists, Augustine, Boethius, Thomas Aquinas, Ockham, Montaigne and Galileo.

The *specific* topic in the Autumn 2015 is *Aristotle's ethics as moral philosophy*

Aristotle is often considered the founding father of virtue ethics, the third main ethical theory in addition to consequentialism (esp. utilitarianism) and deontology (esp. theories inspired by Kant). However, there are problems with reading Aristotle this way. In this course we shall try to understand Aristotle's ethics on its own terms, but also with reference to (similarities and differences) modern moral philosophy. As part of this we shall also take seriously Aristotle's own insistence that ethics and politics belong together as two parts of the same whole, which we may call his practical philosophy.

Specific topics include:

The nature, purpose and foundations of Aristotle's eudaemonism

Ethical naturalism as expressed in the so-called *ergon*-argument

Virtuous action

Moral emotions

Justice

Friendship

Man as a social/political animal (*zoon politikon*)

Political community: preconditions and problems

Teaching consists in seminars. These are led by the instructor, but active participation is expected from the students. Students are *required* to submit at least one question to the text/part of the text to be discussed in next week's seminar. They must submit question for at least 8 out of 12 seminars.

The exam consists in a term paper of approx. 10 pages, 2300 characters pr. page (not including bibliography and notes). The topic is chosen together with the instructor, but active use of secondary literature is expected. Students get individual supervision.

The syllabus consists in selected parts of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Politics*, as well as passages from the *Rhetoric* and possibly the *Eudemian Ethics*. Of particular relevance are:

Nicomachean Ethics Books I–V, VIII–IX

Politics Books I, III and VII

Rhetoric I 3–13, II 1–17

Editions. The following are recommended:

Nicomachean Ethics: C.D.C. Reeve (Hackett 2014) (preferred edition)

Broadie, S. and C. Rowe (OUP 2002)

Irwin, T.H. (Hackett 2000 (2nd ed.))

Ross, D. and L. Brown (OUP 2009)

Politics: C.D.C. Reeve (Hackett 1998)

Rhetoric:

G. A. Kennedy (OUP 1991)

R. Waterfield and H. Yunis (OUP 2018)

Eudemian Ethics: B. Inwood and R. Woolf (CUP 2013)

In addition the student must list a number of secondary titles in connection with the term paper, to be chosen together with the instructor. The following general introductions are recommended:

Reeve, 'Introduction' i Reeve (2014)

Broadie, 'Introduction' i Broadie and Rowe (2002)

Pakaluk, M., *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (CUP 2005)

Reeve, 'Introduction' i Reeve (1998)