

Ancient Western Philosophy

Prof. Yungwhan Lee

Course Description

In this course, we will survey ancient western philosophy. We will mainly discuss Plato and Aristotle, but also discuss a few selected pre-socratic philosophers and some major Hellenistic philosophical contributions. In the former half, I will focus on metaphysics and natural philosophy; in the latter, on ethics and political philosophy. It is my hope that, throughout this course, students will gain philosophical illumination through a close and careful reading and analysis of the great works of the ancient western philosophers and in doing so come to realize that in many respects the ideas and claims of these ancient western philosophers are not antiquated but living issues of today.

Required Text

Basically all the required readings can be found in the Course Book, which will be made available at the beginning of the semester

Lecture topics and Reading Assignments

(Subject to revision)

Week 1 – Course introduction/ What is philosophy?

No assigned readings

Week 2 – Pre-socratics 1. Milesians

Week 3 – Pre-socratics 2. Heraclitus and Parmenides

Week 4 – Sophists and Socrates

Week 5&6 – Plato's theory of Forms

Week 7– Aristotle's natural philosophy

Week 8&9 – Aristotle's Metaphysics

Week 10&11 – Plato's Ethics and Political philosophy

Week 12&13 – Aristotle's Ethics

Week 14 – Epicurean Ethics

One important notes!!!!

This is an online course in which you may watch pre-recorded lectures at your convenient pace. However, there will be three offline sessions– 1) Course Orientation, Sept. 4 (Wed.), 5 pm. (place to be announced), 2) Mid-term exam, which will be on Nov. 2, 3) Final exam, which will be on Dec. 14. Please understand that both exams will be held on Saturday morning (10 a.m. to 11: 30 a.m.) in order to avoid class schedule conflicts.