Plato and Aristotle
Philosophy 01:730:302:02
Fall 2013

Instructor: Adam Crager
Time and Location: Friday 11:30-2:30pm, Murray Hall 115
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Office Hours: TBA

Course description

A philosophical introduction to the work of Plato and Aristotle focusing on selected topics in metaphysics, ethics, and the philosophy of mind. Our goal will be to understand the views of these philosophical geniuses, and analyze their reasons for holding such views. We pay special attention to tracing points of agreement and disagreement between Plato and Aristotle. Some central questions that shall arise: What is happiness? And how can it be achieved? What is the point of love? What is a psychē (≈ mind/soul)? Does it survive death? Can the behavior of things be explained by their natures (i.e. forms or essences)? What even is the ‘nature’ or ‘form’ of thing? Are there beings beyond and independent from those we encounter with our senses?—beings, perhaps, that do not come to be and pass away, but exist eternally?

Prerequisite

One course in philosophy other than 01:730:101 or 102 (Logic, Reason, and Persuasion).

Required texts

1. Plato: Symposium, Hackett: translation by Nehamas and Woodruff
3. Aristotle: Selections, Hackett: translation by Irwin and Fine

Course Schedule

Week 1 Introduction (9/6)
Week 2  Plato (9/13)
  Period 1: Symposium
  Period 2: Symposium [read through at least 189b]

Week 3  Plato (9/20)
  Period 1: Symposium
  Period 2: Symposium [read through at least 207a]

Week 4  Plato (9/27)
  Period 1 Symposium
  Period 2 Symposium [read to the end; read 210a-212b very slowly]

Week 5  Plato (10/4)
  Period 1 Meno
  Period 2 Meno [read through 86c, the rest is optional]

Week 6  Plato (10/11)
  Period 1 Phaedo
  Period 2 Phaedo [read through at least 78a]

Week 7  Plato (10/18)
  Period 1 Phaedo
  Period 2 Phaedo [read through at least 95e]

Week 8  Plato (10/25)
  Period 1 Phaedo
  Period 2 Phaedo [read to the end; focus on 95e-108e, the rest we will barely discuss]

Week 9  Aristotle (11/1)   DUE DATE PROBLEM SET 1
  Period 1 Metaphysics I.1-2
  Period 2 Physics II.3

Week 10  Aristotle (11/8)
  Period 1 Metaphysics I.3-7
  Period 2 Metaphysics I.9-10
Week 11  Aristotle (11/15)
  Period 1  *De Anima* I.1, I.4, II.1
  Period 2  *De Anima* II.2-4

Week 12  Aristotle (11/22)
  Period 1  *Metaphysics* XII.1-5
  Period 2  *Metaphysics* XII.6-7, 9-10

Week 13  Aristotle (11/27)
  Period 1  *Nicomachean Ethics* I.1-6
  Period 2  *Nicomachean Ethics* I.7-13

Week 14  Aristotle (12/6)  DUE DATE PROBLEM SET 2
  Period 1  *Nicomachean Ethics* II.1-6
  Period 2  *Nicomachean Ethics* X.6-9

Week 15  FINAL EXAM

Grading

1. Problem-set 1 = 30%
2. Problem-set 2 = 30%
3. In class final exam = 30%
4. Participation = 10% (Attend class. Be engaged. Ask questions. Student participation will make the class far more interesting for me and for you. Also, don’t use class time to send emails, surf the internet, etc. FYI It is not terribly difficult to tell when a student is using his/her computer for non-academic purposes in class.)

Course policies

- Always bring the relevant book to class.
- Do each week’s reading before class.
- Course schedule is subject to alteration.
- Assignments are to be submitted electronically to acrager@princeton.edu. Acceptable formats are: .doc, .docx, and .pdf (I will comment on your work electronically and send notes back to you).
• Extensions will only be granted in highly unusual circumstances.

• Plagiarism is forbidden; and given the internet it’s become far easier to catch. For ques-
tions as to what constitutes plagiarism, and Rutgers University disciplinary policies, see: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/.

• Assignments submitted late will be marked down 1/3 of a latter grade for every day they are late. (For instance, a B+ assignment due on Friday but submitted on Saturday will be awarded a B; if the same assignment is submitted on Sunday a B- will be given).

Advice

• The course is meant to be difficult. Readings are not terribly long. But in different ways, all texts we shall consider are extremely complex. To get anything out of them, students must read assigned texts very slowly. Particularly dense passages, and those which present philosophical argumentation, are best read more than once.

• Students are encouraged to come to class and ask questions about passages they don’t understand. This is very difficult material that is supposed to prompt such questions.