

Philosophy 463: Aristotle

Professor Matthew Strohl

Office: LA 147

Office hours: TR 3:35-4:05 and by appointment

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Course description:

This course is a survey of several of Aristotle's central works, focusing on topics in physics, philosophy of mind, metaphysics, and ethics. Aristotle's writings are dense and often very difficult, and so while the reading assignments for the course are short in terms of number of pages, you should spend as much time on them as you would on much longer assignments, and always read important segments more than once.

Required texts:

Aristotle, *Selections*, trans. Terence Irwin and Gail Fine, Hackett Publishing 1995

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 2nd edition, trans. Terence Irwin, Hackett Publishing 1999

Note: You *must* use these translations (no exceptions!). Translations of Aristotle's works vary widely in quality and the vast majority of them are *terrible*. Irwin and Fine's translations are generally very good. Moreover, it will be very useful for us all to be using the same translation, since different translators often translate important terms differently.

I will make assigned secondary literature available online, probably by emailing .pdf files.

Grading and exams:

There will be four pop quizzes, one in-class exam, one take-home exam, and one paper in two drafts. The pop quizzes are meant to give you an incentive to do the reading and come to class. If you miss a quiz or in-class exam for any reason except a documented emergency you will receive a zero. I will drop your lowest quiz grade. For those who miss more than one quiz without an acceptable excuse I am adopting a "cry me a river" policy. The take-home exam and paper due dates are firm. I will accept them one day late with the penalty of a full letter grade, but after that I will not accept them unless you are stymied by a documented emergency.

Given that this is an upper division writing course, *the quality of your writing matters to your grade*. We'll talk about what constitutes high quality philosophical writing in class.

The grading breakdown will be:

In-class exam: 20%

Take-home exam: 20%

Quizzes: 20%

Paper: 40%

Academic misconduct:

You are strictly held to the University of Montana Student Conduct Code (<http://www.umt.edu.SA>). The in-class exams are closed-note: you may not consult anything but your own mind in order to answer questions on the exam. You may not use cell-phones, or any electronic devices to aid you, nor fellow students, nor fellow students' answers on exams, etc. You will receive no credit for any exam that you cheat on. Your conduct will also be reported to the Dean.

Special needs:

Students with disabilities will receive reasonable modifications in this course. Your responsibilities are to request them from me with sufficient advance notice, and to be prepared to provide verification of disability and its impact from Disability Services. Please speak with me after class or during my office hours to discuss the details. For more information, visit the Disability Services for Students website at www.umt.edu/dss/

Please do not use a laptop during class unless you need to because of a documented special need.

Readings

1/2: Intro

1/29: *Categories* 1-5

2/3: *Posterior Analytics* 1-4, 19

2/5: *Physics* I

2/10: *De Generatione et Corruptione* I.1-4, II.1-4

2/12: *Physics* II

2/17: Cont.

2/19: *Physics* III, IV

2/24: *Physics* VI, review

2/26: Exam

3/3: *De Anima* I.1-3, II.1-2

3/5: *De Anima* II.5-12

3/10: *De Anima* III.3 and III.10-11, *De Motu Animalium*

3/12: *Metaphysics* IV.1-4

3/17: Cont., start on *Metaphysics* VII (Warning: exceedingly difficult. You should skip the stuff about Plato unless you're interested in it. The most important part for our purposes will be 1-4. Read more if you can but focus on those chapters.)

3/19: *Metaphysics* VII cont.

3/24: *Metaphysics* XII, selections from M. Frede's piece on XII.

3/26: No new reading, take home exam due

3/31-4/2: Spring Break

For the rest of the course, readings are from the *Nicomachean Ethics*

4/7: I.1-12, Ackrill article

4/9: X:6-9, Cooper article

4/14: I.13-II

4/16: III.1-5

4/21: III.6-12, V.5, skim IV

4/23: VI

4/28: VII.1-10, selections from *Protagoras* (handout)

4/30: VIII.1-5, IX.8-12 (Paper due)

5/5: VII.11-14, X.1-5

5/7: Spillover material; paper handed back with comments.