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Fall 9-1-2005

# PHIL 251H.01: History of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy

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**Phil. 251: History of Ancient & Medieval Philosophy**  
**Fall Semester 2005**  
**R.E. Walton, Prof.**

**SYLLABUS**

Philosophy 251 is the first course in the year-long history of philosophy series, 251, 252. It presumes to cover philosophers whose work falls within the period c. 585 BC to 1400 AD, a mere 2000 years. The course emphasizes the Classical Greek philosophers, the Hellenistic Greek and Roman thinkers (the Epicureans, the Stoics, etc.) and introduces the Christian philosophers from Augustine to Aquinas. To undertake this course, students should have at least sophomore standing, have had a rigorous composition course and an elementary logic course similar to PHIL 210. It would also be helpful to have had the European civilization survey course and, perhaps, LS 151, or similar.

**Academic Policies**

**TEXTS:**

Allen, R.E. (ed.), *Greek Philosophy; Thales to Aristotle*.  
Plato, *Republic* (trans. G.M.A. Grube & C.D.C. Reeve).  
Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things* (trans., ed. M.F. Smith).  
Epictetus, *The Handbook* (trans. Nicholas P. White).  
O'Brien, Elmer, *The Essential Plotinus*.  
Various texts on reserve.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

Assigned portions of the texts should be read carefully and completely in advance of their being covered in lecture, and read again after the lectures. Reading of the texts should be regarded as an independent task coordinate with that of listening to the lectures. (Do not make the mistake of assuming that one can be substituted for the other.) I advise making reading notes. I strongly discourage the use of commercial study guides and other such flimsy abstracts.

You should take detailed lecture notes. You should consult with me, or my assistant, when you have trouble understanding something in readings or lectures, or when you wish to pursue a topic beyond the level at which it is covered in lecture. Office hours are maintained for this purpose.

Each student will prepare 2 or 3 short papers (500-1000 words) on assigned topics. The papers will be exegetical and critical in nature. Assignments will be given on short notice; papers will be due 5-7 days after they are assigned. Papers are graded on a 1-7 scale, with a basic paper which commits no errors awarded a 4. All students will meet with me to discuss their first paper.

There will be regular quizzes given throughout the semester at a rate of about one every other week. These quizzes will usually be unannounced. There may be an hour-long examination if it

seems appropriate. There will be a final examination required of all students, administered only on the date listed below.

Philosophy demands a high degree of skill in writing. Students beginning the study of philosophy are expected to be competent writers and it is expected that their skills will show distinct improvement as their study of philosophy progresses. Thus, you should expect that your writing will be held to higher standards than in other courses you have taken. Writing will be given considerable attention in order that you may improve.

**READINGS:**

\* \*\* TEXT\*\* \* WEEK

1. Allen, pp. 25-34 The Milesians I
2. " , pp. 40-42 Heraclitus of Ephesus II
3. " , pp. 43-48 Parmenides and Zeno of Elea II
4. " , pp. 49-54 The Pluralists III
5. " , pp. 35-39 Pythagoreanism III
6. Plato, Euthyphro IV
7. " , Apology IV
8. " , Crito V
9. " , Republic (Grube - Reeve) V, VI
10. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics (Allen, 384-408) VII
11. " , Categories (Allen, 285-290) VII
12. " , Physics (Allen, 413-421) VIII
13. " , Metaphysics (Allen, 307-313) VIII
14. " , Metaphysics (Allen, 369-383) VIII
15. Epicureanism, (Lucretius, TBA) IX
16. Stoicism, (selections on reserve) X
17. Skepticism (selections on reserve) XI
18. Plotinus, Enneads I,6; V,9; IV,8; V,I (O'Brien) XI
19. Augustine, misc. (reserve) XI
20. Anselm of Canterbury, Proslogion, etc. (reserve) XII
21. Thomas Aquinas, selections from Summa Theologica (reserve) XIV

FINAL EXAM: Fri., Dec. 16, 8:00-10:00