

# PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE HUMANITIES I

HUMA 11500, Section 01  
T/TH 09:00-10:20, Pick 319  
Autumn 2015

**Instructor:** Anastasia Artemyev Berg  
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With the guide of Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles and Euripides we will ask: What makes a human life excellent? Will an excellent life be happy? Must it be just or virtuous? What it is to think philosophically on these matters, what kind of difference that can make to our lives?

## Required Texts:

Plato        *Five Dialogues*, translated by Grube, Hackett.  
Plato        *The Republic*, translated by Griffith, Cambridge UP, 2000.  
Aristotle    *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by Crisp, Cambridge UP, 2000.  
Sophocles   *Theban Plays*, translated by Meineck and Woodruff, Hackett, 2003.  
Euripides    *Bakkhai*, translated by Anne Carson (source TBA)

Please use the editions listed (available for purchase at the Seminary Coop Bookstore, 5751 S. Woodlawn Ave.). Both in written assignments and in class discussions, you references should be to these editions.

Additional readings will be made available on the Chalk Site. Make sure you bring an annotated hard copy of the texts assigned in the class schedule to each meeting.

## Requirements:

### I. **Reading**

Students are expected to complete all reading assignments before coming to class and to bring the relevant text(s) to class.

### II. **Discussions**

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to actively participate in class discussion. This means both asking questions and being prepared to answer them.

“Philosophy is the kind of thinking that human beings do together, in their capacity as human beings. Some games (Solitaire) can be played alone; some (Tennis) cannot. Philosophy is like the second kind, only it’s not a game.” Agnes Callard

In addition, students must attend and contribute to all three writing seminars in order to

pass the writing component of the course (15% of course grade).

NB: Attendance at all three writing seminars is required not only for the course, but it is also a mandatory requirement for graduation from the college.

### III. **Chalk Posts**

By **Thursday at 5pm** of each week you will receive a prompt for a weekly Chalk post on your group discussion board (these are your writing seminar groups, accessible in the Chalk page for the course). The nature of these written assignments will vary, but will typically involve writing two or three short paragraphs analyzing or responding to something in the assigned reading for that week. By **Monday at noon** you are required to post your response. By **Monday at 8pm** you are required to respond to at least one post from one of your colleagues. These short assignments are mandatory and will count towards your participation grade for the class. They will not be graded, but will often form the basis for class discussion. You may skip one of these, at your choosing.

### IV. **Papers**

	Due Date	Length	Percentage of Course Grade
First Paper	10/16, 5pm	3 pages	15%
Second Paper	11/13, 5pm	5 pages	22%
Third Paper	12/8, 8pm	5 pages	28%

### V. **Grade Composition**

Papers	65%
Class participation (class discussions, chalk posts)	20%
Writing Seminars	15%

### Policies:

#### I. **Deadlines**

There will be a one day grace period after each deadline during which you may still submit your paper, any paper submitted during this period will automatically lose ½ a letter grade (e.g., will drop from an A to a B+). Papers submitted later than this will not be accepted unless an extension has been arranged no less than three days before the paper is due. It is your responsibility to manage your workload such that you can complete your assignments in a timely manner.

#### II. **Academic Integrity**

The penalty for plagiarism is failure in the course. Students are expected to know what constitutes plagiarism and are advised to consult Charles Lipson's book *Doing Honest Work in College*. The Writing Program also provides helpful advice here:

[http://writing-program.uchicago.edu/resources/collegewriting/but\\_what\\_if\\_you\\_get\\_stuck.htm](http://writing-program.uchicago.edu/resources/collegewriting/but_what_if_you_get_stuck.htm)

In general, that work that you submit or present is expected to be the product of your own ideas, formulated in your own original language (with appropriate citation of external sources, where necessary), and written for this course alone. If after looking over Lipson's book and the writing program advice page you have any remaining questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask the professor or writing intern.

**III. Disabilities Accommodation**

I am available to discuss appropriate accommodations for students in this course: for if there are any changes that would facilitate your greater participation, please don't hesitate to contact me. If you have an Accommodation Determination Letter, please provide me with a copy as soon as possible. For more information, please talk to me or visit <http://disabilities.uchicago.edu>.

**IV. Statement of gender and pronouns**

I am committed to conducting this course in a way that acknowledges and affirms the diverse identities of University of Chicago students. If you would like to be identified by a name and or/pronouns not apparent on the course roster, please contact me via email or during my scheduled office hours with your preferred name and/or gender identity. I will honor your stated gender identity in all official and unofficial communications and in all classroom activities.

**V. Electronic Devices**

Conservative airplane takeoff rules apply: All devices with an ON/OFF switch must be switched off during class unless prior permission to use them has been obtained from the instructor. The first time the student breaks this rule a warning will be issued (this will most likely take the form of a request to put the device away), the second instance will be followed by a deduction to your participation grade.

**VI. Discussion etiquette**

In order to create a climate for open and honest dialogue and to encourage the broadest range of viewpoints, it is important for class participants to treat each other with respect. Name calling, accusations, verbal attacks, sarcasm, and other negative exchanges are counter productive to successful teaching and learning about topics and won't be tolerated.

Some obvious specific guidelines include: do not interrupt one another; challenge one another respectfully; critique ideas, not people; build on one another's comments; work toward shared understanding; do not monopolize discussion; if you are offended by anything said during discussion, acknowledge it either immediately or after class; consider anything that is said in class strictly confidential.

While the instructor/a student is speaking, you may not speak to someone else. The first time the student breaks this rule a warning will be issued (this will most likely take the form of a request to stop talking), the second instance will be followed by a deduction to your participation grade.

## Reading Schedule

The following schedule is provisional, and subject to change based on our discussion and progress in class. Readings for the next class will be finalized at the end of each meeting, and updated schedules will be posted on the Chalk site when appropriate

Week 1	09/29 10/1	Introductions Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i>	
Week 2	10/6 10/8	Plato, <i>Republic I</i> Thucydides, Melian Dialogue (available on Chalk)	
Week 3	10/13 10/15 10/16	Plato, <i>Republic II, Republic III up to 412b</i> Plato, <i>Republic III (412b-end), IV</i> <b>First Papers Due, 5pm</b>	<b>WS First Assignment Due</b>  -- writing seminars --
Week 4	10/20 10/22	Plato, <i>Republic V</i> Plato, <i>Republic VI-VII</i>	
Week 5	10/27 10/29	Euripides, <i>Bakkhai</i> Euripides, <i>Bakkhai</i>	
Week 6	11/3 11/5	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book I Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book II-III	Give paper prompts
Week 7	11/10 11/12 11/13	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book VI Aristotle, <i>NE</i> , Book VIII-IX <b>Second Papers Due, 5pm</b>	<b>WS Second Assignment Due</b>  -- writing seminars --
Week 8	11/17 11/19	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book X Sophocles, <i>Oedipus Tyrannus</i>	
Week 9	11/24 11/26	Sophocles, <i>Oedipus Tyrannus</i> Thanksgiving Break	
Week 10	12/1 12/3	Wrap-up, Catch-up. Reading Period	--writing seminars --
Week 11	12/8	<b>Third Papers Due, 8pm</b>	