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PHL 466.01: Aristotle

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Philosophy 466: Aristotle

Professor Matthew Strohl

Office: LA 147

Office hours: TR 8-8:30 and 11-11:30am. Also very available 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 by emailing .pdf files.

Grading and exams:

There will be one in-class exam, one take-home exam, and one paper in two drafts. I will not be directly grading you on attendance and participation, but your attendance and participation will determine whether I round a grade up or down, give you a break, etc.

In-class exam: 30%

Take-home exam: 30%

Paper: 40%

You will have some flexibility about the paper topic but you **MUST** talk with me about what you're going to write about at least two weeks in advance, you **MUST** engage with some secondary literature that I will suggest for you, and you **MUST** write an outline **BEFORE** writing a rough draft. If you are having trouble coming up with a paper idea come talk with me and I will help you.

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.

Schedule

1/29 sup
1/31 *Categories* 1-5, *Prior Analytics* I.1,4
2/5 *Posterior Analytics* I.1-4, II.8,19
2/7 *Physics* I
2/12 *De Generatione et Corruptione* I.1-4, II.1-4
2/14 *Physics* II
2/19 cont.
2/21 *Physics* III, IV
2/26 *Physics* VI
2/28 spillover/review
3/5 Exam
3/7 *De Anima* I.1-3, II.1-4
3/12 *De Anima* II.5-12, Lorenz article
3/14 *Metaphysics* IV
3/19 Cont., start *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.)
3/21 *Metaphysics* VII cont., start *Metaphysics* XII, selections from M. Frede's intro to *Metaphysics* XII
3/26 *Metaphysics* XII cont
3/28 Take-home exam due
4/2-4/4 spring break

From here on out it's all *Nicomachean Ethics* unless otherwise noted:

4/9 I.1-12, Ackrill article
4/11: X:6-9, Cooper article
4/16 I.13-II; also look at *De Anima* III.3 and III.10-11, *De Motu Animalium* (moral psychology, virtue of character)
4/18 III.1-5 (theory of action, responsibility) TALK TO ME ABOUT YOUR PAPER BHY
4/23 III.6-12, V.5, skim IV (particular virtues of character)
4/25 VI (virtues of thought)
4/30 VII.1-10, selections from *Protagoras* (handout) (akrasia)
5/2 VII.11-14, X.1-5 (pleasure) PAPER DRAFT DUE
5/7 VIII.1-5, IX.8-12 (friendship)
5/9 spillover