

# PHIL 490/500 2 7 K H \$ U L V W R W H O L D Q + H O O H Q L V W

## Paradoxes

Spring 2018, University of Victoria

Department of Philosophy

Course website: available <http://coursespaces.uvic.ca>

### Instructor and Contact Information

Dr. Clifford Roberts [cliffordroberts@uvic.ca](mailto:cliffordroberts@uvic.ca)

Office hours: Th 1:30 - 3:30 (or by appt.)

Office: CLE B38

### Meeting Times & Place

Th 3:30-6:20

CLE B315

### Course Description

The paradoxes of Zeno of Elea argue that motion and plurality are impossible by deriving absurd consequences from their existence. The perversity of these arguments to motion and plurality do after all exist: just look around? might seem to disqualify them from serious scrutiny, yet paradoxes exerted a tremendous influence on physical theories of later philosophers. Aristotle, for instance, developed his physics partly in response to them, and still in the Hellenistic period, the Epicureans and the Stoics produced physical theories that are clearly shaped by the desire to accommodate and respond to the paradoxes. Nor are the paradoxes and responses to them mere period pieces, artifacts of primitive philosophical understanding, for contemporary philosophers have been equally vexed by them, some arguing that they reveal important facts about such things as infinity, continuity and change. In this course we will examine the paradoxes themselves and the physical theories of Aristotle, the Epicureans, and the Stoics which the paradoxes partly give rise to. While our focus is ancient responses to the paradoxes, we will also discuss contemporary responses in order to evaluate the virtues and vices of both contemporary and ancient accounts. The goal is not merely to understand aspects of ancient physical theories, but to understand and evaluate their distinctive attempts to affirm or accommodate Zeno's paradoxes.

### Course Texts

[LS] = Sedley, D. & Long, A. A. (eds) *The Hellenistic Philosophers, Volume I* (Cambridge)

[A] = McKeon, R. (ed.) *The Basic Words of Aristotle*, rev. ed., intro. C. D. C. Reeve (Modern Library, 2001)

### Course Evaluation

#### (1) Essays (total = 70%)

Two essays will be assigned during the term. The first is worth 30% and will be due at the end of Reading Break; the second paper is worth 40% and due at the end of the term. Topics will be made available on CourseSpaces for both papers, but considerable leeway will be given to students to devise their own topics.

(2) Class Presentation (total = 30%)

Each student will be required to make a 10-20 minute presentation to the class on a pre assigned topic. All students will be expected to sign for the topics by the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of classes.

Course Grading

Grades will be assigned in percentage points. The final grade for the course will be converted to a letter grade according to the follow table.

Grades	GPV	Percentage
A+	9	90-100
A	8	85-89
A-	7	80-84
B+	6	77-79
B	5	73-76
B-	4	70-72
C+	3	65-69
C	2	60-64
D	1	50-59
F	0	0-49

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that the student submits, whether individual or group work. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values related to learning, teaching, research, and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

The responsibility of the institution

Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic are met. By d31.49 456.07 Tm 0 G [(-)] TJ ET Q q 315.05 452.95 62.544 13.44 re W\* n72.024 29

which explains the failure to hand the assignment or sit the test. The previous policies do not apply to students with documented disabilities. An attempt will be made to accommodate such students including, but not restricted to, providing makeup assignments and tests.

Course Schedule

Dates & Topics	Assignments
<p><u>Week 1:</u> Historical Background: Zeno Aristotle &amp; the Hellenistic School Jan 4</p>	<p>No Readings.</p>
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<p><u>Weeks 2-3:</u> Jan 11 &amp; 18</p>	<p><u>Required Reading</u> (i) §§2.3 &amp; 3-3.4 in Huggett, Nick Zeno's Paradoxes (<a href="https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/paradox-zeno/">https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/paradox-zeno/</a>) (ii) §§2 &amp; 3 in D. L. Q. 'R Z G H Q % U D G O H \ ' = (<a href="http://www.iep.utm.edu/zeno-par/">http://www.iep.utm.edu/zeno-par/</a>)</p>
<p>Unit II: Aristotle · V 3 K \ V L F V</p>	
<p><u>Week 4</u> Infinity Jan 25</p>	<p><u>Required Reading:</u> Physics 1.4-8 ([A] pp. 257-269)</p>
<p><u>Week 5</u> Time &amp; Place Feb 1</p>	<p><u>Required Reading:</u> Physics 1.4 ([A] pp. 269-300)</p>
<p><u>Week 6</u> Motion Feb 8</p>	<p><u>Required Reading</u> Physics 1.1-2, VI ([A] pp. 253, 316-40)</p>
<p><u>Week 7:</u> **Reading Break** Feb 15</p>	<p>No readings.</p>

Unit III: Epicurean Physics	
<p><u>Week 9:</u> The Fundamentals Mar 1</p>	<p><u>Required Reading:</u> [LS] pp. 251</p>
<p><u>Weeks 10-11:</u> Atoms, Minima &amp; Motion Mar 8 &amp; 15</p>	<p><u>Required Reading:</u> [LS] pp. 372</p>
Unit III: Stoic Physics	
<p><u>Week 12</u> Principle of Place &amp; Void Mar 22</p>	<p><u>Required Reading:</u> [LS] pp. 262, 274, 294</p>
<p><u>Weeks 13-14:</u> Continuum &amp; Time Mar 29 &amp; Apr 5</p>	<p><u>Required Reading:</u> [LS] pp. 297-308 Essay #2 due on Apr 12</p>