

Spring 2021, University of Victoria
Department of Philosophy
Course website: available at <https://bright.uvic.ca/d2l/home/55526>

Dr. Clifford Roberts (cliffordroberts@uvic.ca)

Office hours: Mon-Tue 3-4pm (or by appt.; sign-up is required)

Meeting times: T-W-F 11:30am-12:20pm

Plato's *Republic* is one of the most imaginative, influential, controversial, and rich works in the history of Western philosophical reflection. It covers a dizzying variety of topics: the ideal political system, the best form of education, the nature and value of art, the correct analysis of belief and knowledge, the nature of virtue and happiness, the structure and constitution of the mind, the list could go on. All of these topics are tied together in an outrageous conceit: an analogy between political and psychic structure. The *Republic* also offers us Plato's sustained thinking on topics central to his philosophical outlook, among which: the Theory of Forms, the relation between the sensible and intelligible worlds, the place of mathematics in cognition, and the role of reason in a virtuous and happy life. In this course, we will read through the entirety of the *Republic* together with contemporary scholarly material; our goal is to deploy contemporary concepts, methods of analysis and reasoning in order to develop a deeper, richer and more precise understanding of the text while avoiding the dangers of anachronism or literalness.

Plato. *The Republic*, trans. G. M. A. Grube, rev. C. D. C. Reeve (Hackett, 1992)

All other readings for the course will be made available on Brightspace

This will be a fully *synchronous* online seminar centered on student discussion rather than lectures by the instructor. This means the course will be held weekly via Zoom at the meeting times indicated above. These meetings will not be recorded.

Students must submit a digital copy of each of the assignments through Brightspace and by the assignment deadline.

6% per assignment, 5 assignments in total (total value = 30%)

In 500 words, students will i) briefly summarize one of the week's articles and ii) raise one substantive critique of the article with regard to how it reads or understands the course text. There are 5 articles assigned in the course and students have the choice to comment on any 5 of them, but cannot comment on > 1 article per week. The assignments will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Late assignments will not be accepted.

the Monday evening of the week when the article will be discussed.

30%
1500 words (per

[Grading](#)). All evaluations of tests and assignments will be calculated according to percentage scores. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference.

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 in all activities 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 honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student

Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If the student is unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing sources, the instructor should be consulted. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student's transcript, or a suspension.

It is the student's responsibility to read and understand the University's policy on academic integrity. For the policy, see the most recent edition of the academic calendar (online here: [University of Victoria Statement on Academic Integrity](#)).

The University of Victoria is committed to creating a learning experience that is as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please feel welcome to discuss your concerns with me. If you have a disability or chronic health condition, or think you may have a disability, you may also want to meet with an advisor at the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL). For more information about CAL, see: <https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/>

Many, if not most, students experience some difficulties with their mental health during their years as undergraduate students. Make sure you are familiar with the university

<u>Week 4:</u> Feb 1-5	<u>Readings:</u> Bk. II.376d – III Malcolm Schofield, "Music all powerful" §§1-4 Elizabeth Belfiore, "'Lies Unlike the Truth'"
<u>Week 5:</u> Feb 8-12	<u>Readings:</u> <same as previous week> Christopher Gill, "Plato on the Education of Character" James Wilberding, "Curbing One's Appetites in Plato's <i>Republic</i> "