

# Introduction to Ancient Philosophy

Ph 207a A01 Spring 2022

This course outline is © Thomas Heyd

Eno, whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day, and our commitment to ongoing dialogue and reconciliation with the peoples of these lands. For information on indigenous students and efforts to foster reconciliation, please visit the UVic Office of Indigenous Engagement.

## Course description

In this course we consider the earliest reflections in the European philosophical tradition on the nature of wisdom, the foundations of the good life, and the limits of knowledge. Class discussion is highly encouraged. Students from all faculties are welcome to attend.

We begin by considering the suggestion that everything is made up of certain basic constituents of some particular unknown thing, and that the properties of things depend on their constituents. We also consider classical Greek critiques of traditional religious beliefs, of standard gendered and ethnocentric social structures that allow populists to gain the upper hand in the state.

Furthermore, we reflect on explanations of the relation between constantly changing appearances and structures and processes, we inspect several ways to think of justice, and ask whether grasping justice requires personal engagement with it. Throughout the course students are encouraged to develop arguments and engage in careful reading of the assigned texts.

## Textbook and additional Readings

Required: Reeve Miller and Gerson (eds.), *Introductory Readings in Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy*

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Highly recommended optional: Catherine Osborne, *Presocratic Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2004), and Julia Annas, *Ancient Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2000). Some additional texts may be assigned throughout the course, to be downloaded through Brightspace.

## Course organisation and student engagement

To facilitate comprehension and class discussion, assigned weekly readings are to be done *ahead of lectures*. Constructive participation and tolerance of the views of others are expected. Everyone is

in the explanation of key points, B) quality of development of points presented, C) effective and correct use of the Engr oand c)0 Td4 (o- (y)-8





*Student Mental Health Supports / UVic Support Connect*

Many, if not most, students experience some difficulties with their mental health at some point in time as undergraduate students. This may especially be the case during the present Covid-19 pandemic. It is hard to shake the stigma associated with problems like depression and anxiety, however, if at any point you believe that you could benefit from help with mental health issues, please contact the new UVic Student Wellness Centre / UVic Support Connect. In addition to providing face to face help, they offer a 24 x 7 phone & online mental health counselling and support program, no matter where you are located, at any time. This is an excellent resource at your disposal on campus. They genuinely want to help, so do consider taking advantage of this free resource.

*Health Services and Centre for Ac*

**\*\*Friday 21 Jan: GUEST LECTURE:**