

PHIL 310: The Philosophy of Plato
MWF 11am-12pm

Plato's dialogues embody a series of questions that have never lost their immediate vigour: how we should live, what there is, and how we can know. But it is the way that Plato posed those questions – his rigour, his artful use of dialogue to justify both sides of a question, and the inspired vitality of his central arguments – that renew the value of his original writing for each generation. In this course, we engage with a range of Plato's richest and most challenging works, and explore the evolution of his central ideas and methods, including his attempt to differentiate the ideal philosopher from the student of language and persuasion or the natural scientist; his reinterpretation of the Socratic method as a sharp dialectical instrument for locating the truth; his development of a famous case for eternal mathematical and ethical patterns and his application of these Forms to questions in ontology and epistemology; his moral and political theory; and his most developed articulations of the philosopher's function in society.

REQUIRED TEXT

J. Cooper, *Plato: Complete Works* (Hackett, 1997)
Secondary readings will be circulated online.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS TBD

COURSE WEBPAGE socrates.arts.ubc.ca/310

INSTRUCTOR

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