

Lectures: MWF 1-2pm in HENN 202

**A First Course in Socratic Philosophy**

“The unexamined life is not worth living”: this is how the seminal Athenian philosopher Socrates explained his way of life to the jury that sentenced him. How did this attitude – and with it the complex of Western philosophy, medicine and science – first emerge in ancient Greece? In this course, we will piece together fragmentary evidence for the birth of rational speculation between the poets Homer and Hesiod (8th century BC) and Plato and Aristotle (4th century BC). Through the origin story of Western philosophy, we will encounter the original articulations of Greece’s most enduring and provocative ideas, among them atomism, materialism, the dialogue of science and religion, the notion of a universe governed by regular mathematical laws, the possibility of knowledge, and the goals of human life.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

- ➔ C.D.C. Reeve, *A Plato Reader* 📖 UBC BOOKSTORE
  - ➔ P. Curd & R.D. McKirahan, *A Presocratics Reader* 📖 UBC BOOKSTORE
  - ➔ F. Ricken, *Philosophy of the Ancients* 📖 ONLINE
- Supplementary readings will be posted online.

**COURSE WEBPAGE**

- ➔ UBC Canvas · [canvas.ubc.ca](https://canvas.ubc.ca)

**TEACHING ASSISTANTS** Jem Tari and Jayden Lloyd**INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Michael Griffin  
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Office Hour: W 2-3pm  
 Office: BUCH C212

Please read the required texts before each lecture, and bring the text with you to class.

Students must adhere to the University’s standards for academic integrity ([learningcommons.ubc.ca/academic-integrity](https://learningcommons.ubc.ca/academic-integrity)).

Students with special needs are encouraged to contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Unless you are a superhero, your phone should be off during class.

**EVALUATION OVERVIEW**

See final page.

<b>Weekly quizzes</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Essay 1</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Essay 2</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Philosophical Journal</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>ePortfolio</b>	<b>10%</b>

*There is no final examination for CLST/PHIL 211.*

**A message from your AMS: The UBC AMS Speakeasy**

Speakeasy is a free, confidential student service offering one-on-one peer support, information and referrals to the UBC community, in a non-judgmental safe space. No issue is too big or too small, and the service operates on a drop-in basis. AMS Nest front desk (1314, soon moving to 3rd floor).

## EVALUATION

See course webpage for additional details to be posted during the term.

☞ **Weekly online quizzes.** [25% total]

Due each *Monday*, beginning Sep 17.

- 11 quizzes, completed outside of class time, online via Canvas; due beginning Sep 17.
- Complete at any time during the week before due.
- Include readings **up to (but excluding) the date they are due.**
- We will **drop** your lowest (or missed) quiz grade over the term (only best 10 grades count).

☞ **2 Essays.** Thesis-based writing assignments, approximately 1500 words. [25% each] [50% total]

Due Oct 10, Dec 3.

Suggested topics and guidelines will be posted online; you may also propose your own topic. We'll discuss strategies for essay writing during the term. You may also book in *early* with the **UBC Writing Centre** for tutorials: <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/improve-your-writing/>

## STRUCTURE

Articulate and argue for a creative *thesis* in answer to a *question*. Your question should relate to the course material. Your question may be drawn from the topics posted in the official guidelines, or you may formulate your own question; if you're in any doubt, feel free to contact the instructor. You should directly reference and engage with primary (ancient) philosophical texts. You are also encouraged to research and engage with modern scholarship in the area. A full description of this assignment will be posted online.

☞ **Philosophical Journal.** A reflective journal, with snapshots submitted online. [15% total]

Short summary page due each *Friday* · Full summary due Nov 30.

- For this component of your participation, you're invited to develop and maintain a **philosophical journal** reflecting on ideas in the course. Each Friday, briefly summarize your week's reflections and submit a snapshot online. At the end of class, we invite you to summarize your journal as a whole. (Optionally, you may share your summary on your ePortfolio, below). A full description of this assignment will be posted online.

☞ **ePortfolio Project.** An online platform for sharing your work. [10% total]


Preliminary plan due September 27 · Full submission due Nov 16.


- For this project, you will develop an **ePortfolio** at [ubcartsa.ca](http://ubcartsa.ca). An ePortfolio is a platform for sharing your work online (optionally in a public form). For this course, we ask you to reflect your understanding of a set of philosophical values of your choice, and write a philosophical response to an ethical case study drawn from a real-world situation. A full description of this assignment will be posted online.

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**If you anticipate difficulties in submitting any component of the coursework by the date listed, please contact the instructor by email; extensions can be discussed on a case-by-case basis.**

	Topics	<i>A Plato Reader</i>	<i>A Presocratics Reader</i>	Supplementary Reading
Wed 5 Sep	Welcome & Course Syllabus			Online: "Bird's Eye View"
	<b>Introduction</b>			
Fri 7	Hellenic Culture & Philosophy Using Sources		xii-xiii   Timelines, Maps ch. 1   Homer & Hesiod: pp. 1-7	Ricken 1-5: Philosophy & Myth ☞ Ricken numbers refer to <b>paragraphs</b> (not pp.)
Mon 10	Socrates and His Thought	Introduction	ch. 14   Sophists: <b>Read 14.1, 1-12</b> ☞ Optionally, read further in ch. 14	Ricken 54-57: The Sophists Ricken 58-60: Socrates
	<b>Introducing Socrates</b>			
Wed 12	Socrates' Defence (1): The <i>Apology</i>	<i>Ap.</i> 17a-30b [13] ☞ [Brackets] → Stephanus page count	ch. 2   Milesians: <b>Read 2.1, 1-8</b> ☞ Optionally, read further in ch. 2	Online: Aristophanes, <i>Clouds</i> (excerpt) ☞ Optionally, read Ricken 5-19: The Milesians
Fri 14	Socrates' Defence (2): The <i>Apology</i>	<i>Ap.</i> 30c-42a [12]		
Mon 17	Socratic Justice: The <i>Crito</i> What is Virtue?	<i>Crito</i> 43a-54e [11 + 2] <i>Meno</i> 70a-71c, 80a-e		
	<b>Socrates in Dialogue</b>			
Wed 19	Socrates and Traditional Religion: The <i>Euthyphro</i>	<i>Euth.</i> 2a-16a [14]		Ricken 61-70: Plato, Dialogues, Forms
Fri 21	Socrates and the Sophists: <i>Republic</i> I	<i>Rep.</i> I, 327a-340a [13]		
Mon 24	Socrates and the Sophists: <i>Republic</i> I	<i>Rep.</i> I, 340a-354c [14]		
	<b>Socrates Ascending: Plato's <i>Symposium</i></b>			
Wed 26	Socrates and the <i>Symposium</i> Speeches of Phaedrus & Pausanias	<i>Symp.</i> 172a-185e [13]	ch. 1   Homer & Hesiod (review)	Online: Readings in classical Greek gender & sexuality
Fri 28	The Speech of Eryximachus Natural Philosophy: Empedocles	<i>Symp.</i> 185e-189d [14]	ch. 8   Empedocles: <b>Read 1, 47</b>	
	📌 <b>September 28: Submit Preliminary Plan for E-Portfolio</b>			

	Topics	<i>A Plato Reader</i>	<i>A Presocratics Reader</i>	Supplementary Reading
Mon 1 Oct	The Speech of Aristophanes The Speech of Agathon	<i>Symp.</i> 189d-197e [8]		
Wed 3	Socrates and Agathon Diotima and Socrates (1)	<i>Symp.</i> 198a-207a [9]	Introducing Plato's Patterns	Ricken 70-73: Plato's Forms
Fri 5	Diotima and Socrates (2) The Patterns ( <i>eidē</i> , Forms)	<i>Symp.</i> 207a-212c [5]	ch. 5   Heraclitus Read 1-7, 18-22, 37-41 ☞ Optionally, read further in ch. 5	Online: Aristotle, <i>Metaph.</i> 1.6 ☞ Optionally, read Ricken 29-33: Heraclitus
Mon 8	<i>Thanksgiving Day: No Class</i>			
Wed 10	Alcibiades and Socrates The Patterns, continued	<i>Symp.</i> 212c-223d [11]	ch. 6   Parmenides Read 1-8	☞ Optionally, read Ricken 34-44: The Eleatics ☞ Optionally, read Ricken 74-94: Plato's Forms
 <b>October 10: First Essay Due</b>				
<b>Socrates in Action: Plato's <i>Republic</i> 2-10</b>				
Fri 12	Justice and <i>Eudaimonia</i> : The Choice of Lives	<i>Rep.</i> 2, 357a-368c [11]		Online: Xenophon, <i>Glaucon</i> (excerpts)
Mon 15	The City-Soul Analogy The 'True City' and Education	<i>Rep.</i> 2, 368c-383c [15]		
Wed 17	Educating the Soul: Music	<i>Rep.</i> 2-3, 386a-403c [17]	ch. 4   Xenophanes	Ricken 20-23: Xenophanes
Fri 19	Educating the Soul: Body	<i>Rep.</i> 3, 403c-417b [14]		
Mon 22	Virtue: Wisdom, Courage, Temperance, and Justice	<i>Rep.</i> 4, 419a-435a [16]		
Wed 24	Psychology and Motivation	<i>Rep.</i> 4, 435a-445e [10]		Ricken 103-105: The Soul ☞ Further online readings (opt'l)
Fri 26	Spouses, Children, Cooperation 'Platonic Feminism'	<i>Rep.</i> 5, 449a-472b [23]		Ricken 115-123: The State ☞ Further online readings (opt'l)
Mon 29	Educating the Soul: Philosophy (1)	<i>Rep.</i> 5-6, 472b-502d [30]		Ricken 85-93: Knowing Forms (1)

	Topics	<i>A Plato Reader</i>	<i>A Presocratics Reader</i>	Supplementary Reading
Wed 31	Educating the Soul: Philosophy (2) The Divided Line and the Cave	<i>Rep.</i> 6-7, 502d-517c [15]		Ricken 94-102: Knowing Forms (2)
Fri 2 Nov	Educating the Soul: Philosophy (3) The Curriculum Constitutions: Bks 8-9 in review	<i>Rep.</i> 7, 517c-541b [24 + 3] <i>Rep.</i> 9, 580a-c; 588b-589c; 591b-92b ☞ Optional: 8-9, remainder		
<b>Socrates in Liberation: the <i>Phaedo</i></b>				
Mon 5	Introductory Conversation	<i>Phaedo</i> 57a-69e [12]		
Wed 7	Three Arguments for Immortality of <i>Psychē</i>	<i>Phaedo</i> 70a-84b [14 + 1] <i>Meno</i> 81a-82b ☞ Optional: <i>Meno</i> 82b-86c	ch. 3   Pythagoras Read 1, 7-11	Ricken 24-28: Pythagoras
Fri 9	Objections Socrates' Response (1)	<i>Phaedo</i> 84c-96a [12]	ch. 9   Anaxagoras Read 12	
Mon 12	Socrates' Response (2)	<i>Phaedo</i> 96a-107d [11]	ch. 3   Pythagoras Read 16-20	
Wed 14	Myth and Conclusion	<i>Phaedo</i> 107d-118a [11]		
<b>Socrates Transcendent: the <i>Phaedrus</i></b>				
 <b>November 16: E-Portfolio Due</b>				
Fri 16	Introduction Lysias and Socrates' First Speech	<i>Phaedrus</i> 227a-242a [14]		
Mon 19	Socrates' Second Speech: Divine Madness; Soul's Likeness	<i>Phaedrus</i> 242a-246e [4]		Online: Plato, <i>Ion</i>
Wed 21	Socrates' Second Speech: The Soul's Journey	<i>Phaedrus</i> 246e-257c [11]		Online: Plato, <i>Timaeus</i> (excerpts) Ricken 106-108: the Soul
Fri 23	Socrates and Phaedrus on <i>Logoi</i>	<i>Phaedrus</i> 257c-274b [17]		
Mon 26	Writing and the Soul; Conclusion	<i>Phaedrus</i> 274b-279c [5]		

	Topics	<i>A Plato Reader</i>	<i>A Presocratics Reader</i>	Supplementary Reading
	<b>The Simple Soul</b>			
Wed 28	<i>Republic</i> 10: The Soul Without Imitation	<i>Republic</i> 10, 595a-608c [13]		
Fri 30	<i>Republic</i> 10: Immortality	<i>Republic</i> 10, 608c-621d [13]		<b>Ricken 112-114: The Soul</b> <b>Ricken 127-129: The Unwritten Doctrines</b>
	<b>📅 November 30: Journal Summary Due</b>			
	<b>📅 December 3: Second Essay Due</b>			