



## Ancient Philosophy Course Descriptor

Course Title	Ancient Philosophy	Faculty	Philosophy
Course Code	NCHPH723	Course Leader	Dr David Mitchell
Credit Points	20	Teaching Period	Any
FHEQ Level	Level 7	Date Approved	June 2020
Compulsory/ Optional	Optional		
Pre-requisites	None		
Co-requisites	None		

### COURSE SUMMARY

The course surveys ancient Greek philosophy from the pre-Socratics to the post-Aristotelian schools, with most attention paid to Plato and Aristotle. Topics covered belong mainly to epistemology, metaphysics and philosophy of mind. There is a focus on the evolution of philosophy as a discipline with a distinctive method, particularly as shaped by Socratic practice. Aristotle's work is considered as a critical response to Plato's, especially in metaphysics and philosophy of mind, but also in relation to pre-Socratic thinkers. The course opens with Heraclitus, and concludes with selected controversies from the Hellenistic period.

### COURSE AIMS

The aim of this course is to:

- Develop students' skills in the interpretation, analysis, and evaluation of ancient Greek philosophical texts.
- Promote students' ability to categorise, elaborate, and compare, the chief ancient Greek approaches to a range of philosophical questions.
- Enable students to form and defend their own estimates of the merits of alternative positions in the first phase of western philosophy.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- K1d Demonstrate wide-ranging knowledge of, and recognition of systematic connections between key questions and debates in the first phase of western philosophy, in areas such as metaphysics, mind, and methodology.
- K2d Engage synoptically, critically and constructively with the texts and theories of a wide range of philosophers.

### SUBJECT-SPECIFIC SKILLS

- S1d Employ advanced philosophical devices to support, challenge, or adapt, key positions in ancient Greek philosophical texts.

### TRANSFERABLE AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- T1d Show self-direction in working independently, creatively, and to deadlines.
- T2d Organise and synthesise information, question assumptions, and engage with competing arguments.
- T3d Produce original, clear, sophisticated, and persuasive treatments of complex topics.
- T3d Consistently apply an excellent level of technical proficiency in written English, using an advanced application of scholarly terminology, that demonstrates the ability to deal with complex issues both systematically and with sophistication.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning strategies for this course will include:

- 30 hours of lectures
- Two one-hour one-to-one tutorials

Course information and supplementary materials are available on the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Students are required to attend and participate in all timetabled sessions for this course. Students are also expected to manage their directed learning and independent study in support of the course.

## EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The study of philosophy cultivates skills that are employable across a range of sectors. These include the abilities to:

- Work independently, creatively, and to deadlines.
- Conduct research and explore relevant existing knowledge.
- Analyse, contextualise, and interpret complex ideas and materials.
- Synthesise and evaluate information against a backdrop of uncertainty.

- Solve problems through logical reasoning.
- Present findings and opinions in a clear, structured manner, whether orally or in writing.
- Engage in collaborative and constructive discussion.

## ASSESSMENT

### FORMATIVE

Students will be formatively assessed during the course by means of set assignments. These do not count towards the end of year results, but will provide students with developmental feedback, both written and oral.

### SUMMATIVE

Assessment will be in one form:

AE:	Assessment Activity	Weighting (%)	Online submission	Duration	Length
1	Written assignment	100%	Yes	N/A	5000 words

The written assignment will be assessed in accordance with the assessment aims set out in the Programme Specification.

## FEEDBACK

Students will receive feedback in a variety of ways, written and oral, within one-to-one tutorials, in discussion phases of lectures, and on formatively and summatively assessed assignments. Students will also attend the formal meeting, Collections, in which they will receive constructive and developmental feedback on their performance.

Feedback is provided on summative assessment and is made available to the student either via email, the VLE or another appropriate method.

## INDICATIVE READING

Note: Comprehensive and current reading lists for courses are produced annually in the Course Syllabus or other documentation provided to students; the indicative reading list provided below is used as part of the approval/modification process only.

### BOOKS

Aristotle, *Physics Book 2*, in *Physics Books I and II*, trans. & ed. W. Charlton. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970/1984.

Barnes, J. (ed.), *Early Greek Philosophy*. London: Penguin, 2002.

Kenny, A., *Ancient Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Long, A. and Sedley, D. (eds.), *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, Vol.1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Plato, *Meno*, in *Meno and Phaedo*, ed. D. Sedley and A. Long. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

**INDICATIVE TOPICS**

Topics such as the following will be studied:

- Knowledge
- Philosophical Method
- The Psyche
- Forms
- Types of Explanation

<b>Title: NCHPH723 Ancient Philosophy Course Descriptor</b>					
<b>Approved by: Academic Board</b>					
<b>Location: Academic Handbook/Programme specifications and Handbooks/ Postgraduate Programme Specifications/MA Philosophy Programme Specification/Philosophy Course Descriptors</b>					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Proposed next review date	Modification (As per AQF4) & category number
2.0	January 2022	April 2022	Brian Ball	April 2025	Category 3: Changes to Course Learning Outcomes
1.0	June 2020	June 2020	Brian Ball	April 2025	