**COURSE OUTLINE**

**(1) GENERAL**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **UNIVERSITY / Department** | * NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS / Department of History and Philosophy of Science   in collaboration with:   * ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI / Department of Philosophy and Education * UNIVERSITY OF PATRAS / Department of Philosophy * UNIVERSITY OF CRETE / Department of Philosophy and Social Studies | | | | |
| **STUDY LEVEL** | Postgraduate | | | | |
| **COURSE CODE** | 102 | | **SEMESTER OF STUDY** | 1st | |
| **COURSE TITLE** | PLATO | | | | |
| **INSTRUCTOR(S)** | Georgia Sermamoglou-Soulmaidi | | | | |
| **TEACHING ACTIVITIES** | | **TEACHING HOURS PER WEEK** | | | **ECTS** |
| Seminars | | 3 | | | 10 |
| **COURSE TYPE** | specialization, skills development | | | | |
| **PREREQUISITE COURSES** | – | | | | |
| **LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION and EXAMINATIONS** | English | | | | |
| **COURSE OFFERED TO ERASMUS STUDENTS** | No | | | | |
| **COURSE WEBSITE (URL)** | ++ | | | | |

**(2) LEARNING OUTCOMES**

|  |
| --- |
| **Learning Outcomes** |
| Upon successful completion of this course, students:   * will have gained familiarity with the close reading and interpretation of philosophical texts; * will be able to apply their knowledge and understanding to other works of ancient philosophy; * will be able to form judgments about the social and moral issues raised in the texts; * will be able to communicate clearly their views and arguments to both specialist and non-specialist audiences |
| **General Skills** |
| * Critical Thinking * Independent work * Team work * Work in an international environment * Work in an interdisciplinary environment * Generating new research ideas |

**(3) COURSE CONTENT**

|  |
| --- |
| **PLATO ON VIRTUE, LOVE, AND THE GOOD LIFE**  **General Description:**  This seminar introduces students to Plato’s ethics, focusing on questions of virtue, pleasure, love, and their relationship to the good and happy life.  We will spend Weeks 1-3 studying a number of dialogues that articulate Socrates’ conception of *eudaimonia*. In Weeks 4-6, we will consider the nature of virtue. By the end of the first half of the semester, we will be in a position to evaluate Plato’s views on the relationship between virtue and *eudaimonia*.  In the second half of the semester (Weeks 7-12), we will turn to Plato’s mature works. We will spend two weeks on the late books of the *Republic*, in which many of the questions of the first half of the semester will be considered afresh. Finally, we will conclude the semester with a detailed study of Plato’s *Phaedrus*, exploring the role of love in the good life.  **Course Requirements:**  Students are expected to read the following dialogues *in their entirety* in advance of the corresponding class session. While the focus of each session will be more limited (and the main discussion topic is indicated below), familiarity with the dialogue as a whole will be expected.  Course requirements also include the following:   1. Two-page outlines of the basic structure of each dialogue will be due every week, in advance of each class session. 2. A 5-page midterm paper is due by the end of Week 6. 3. A 15-page final paper is due by the end of the semester. 4. Optional Extra Credit is available for students wishing to give oral reports on secondary literature. You may choose from the additional readings indicated in the weekly schedule below.   **Weekly Schedule:**  **WEEK 1: *Apology***  This work is useful as a general introduction to Plato’s ethics. We will explore Socrates’ conception of the good and happy life, his views on the fear of death, and the role of the divine.  **WEEK 2: *Gorgias***  This dialogue begins as an inquiry into the nature and power of rhetoric, but soon shifts into a discussion of the role of justice and temperance in the good life, as well as the *techne* that produces them. We will focus on the final part of the work, including the myth with which the dialogue is concluded.  \*Additional Reading : Annas, J. (1982) “Plato’s Myths of Judgement,” *Phronesis* 27: 119-143.  **WEEK 3: *Euthydemus***  The *Euthydemus* is a discussion between Socrates and two brothers, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, who practice a very aggressive type of sophistry called eristic. Our discussion will focus primarily on Socrates’ two protreptic speeches to philosophy, which constitute an important argument on the nature of, and preconditions for, the good life.  **WEEK 4: *Laches***  In this dialogue, Socrates and his interlocutors, Laches and Nicias, explore the nature of courage and its relationship with the other virtues. We will examine closely the final argument, and the implications of Nicias’ view that courage is a form of knowledge, i.e. knowledge of all good and evil.  \*Additional Reading:  Sermamoglou-Soulmaidi, G. (2022) “The Nature of Courage in Plato’s *Laches*,” *Apeiron* 56: 187-210.  **WEEK 5: *Protagoras***  Is knowledge of the good sufficient to ensure action in accordance with it? Put another way: if I know what benefits me, will I consistently act on my knowledge? The *Protagoras* introduces the thorny topic of *akrasia*, or weakness of will, which will be the focus of our discussion in this session.  **WEEK 6: *Hippias Minor***  We will discuss Socrates’ seemingly paradoxical view that an agent committing injustice voluntarily is better than one who does so involuntarily, and we will be concerned afresh with the question of the kind of knowledge required for virtuous action.  **Midterm Paper due: max. 5 pages**  **WEEKS 7-8: *Republic* 8 & 9**  Our study of *Republic* 8 and 9 will involve a similar set of questions as in the first half of the semester. We will be interested in determining whether Plato’s middle-period views appear consistent with those of his early period or whether they show signs of intellectual development.  \*Additional Reading (for Week 8): Erginel, M. M. (2011) “Inconsistency and Ambiguity in *Republic* IX,” *The Classical Quarterly, New Series* 61: 493-520.  **WEEKS 9-12: *Phaedrus***  We will spend the final month of the semester on Plato’s *Phaedrus* – a puzzling but fascinating dialogue on love, *logos*, and the relationship between the two.  \*Additional Reading (for Week 11): Heath, M. (1989) “The Unity of Plato’s *Phaedrus*,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 7: 150-173.  **Final Paper due: max. 15 pages** |

**(4) TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS – ASSESSMENT**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TEACHING FORMAT** | Class discussion. |
| **USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES** | Use of E-class online platform. |
| **TEACHING STRUCTURE** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | ***Activity*** | ***Semester Workload*** | | Lectures, Seminars | 39 | | Presentation preparation | 21 | | Independent study | 120 | | Project (paper preparation and submission | 120 | | **Total**  (30 hours of work per credit unit) | ***300*** | |
| **STUDENT EVALUATION** | 1. Class participation (20%) 2. Weekly outlines (20%) 3. Midterm Paper (20%)  4. Final Paper (30%)  5. Oral Report (10%)  \*The oral report is optional. If it is not selected, the final paper will count for 40% of the final grade for the course. |

**(5) RECOMMENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

|  |
| --- |
| Bensen Cain, R. (2007) *The Socratic Method: Plato’s Use of Philosophical Drama.* London and New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.  Bobonich, C. (2011) “Socrates and *Eudaimonia*.” In D. R. Morrison, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates*, 293-332. Cambridge.  Brickhouse, T. C. and Smith, N. D. (1994) *Plato’s Socrates*. New York and Oxford.  ---------- (2007) “The Myth of the Afterlife in Plato’s *Gorgias*.” In M. Erler and L. Brisson (eds.) Gorgias – Menon: *Selected Papers from the Seventh Symposium Platonicum*, 128-137. St. Augustin: Academia Verlag.  Fussi, A. (2001) “The Myth of the Last Judgment in the *Gorgias*,” *Review of Metaphysics* 54: 529-552.  Gould, J. (1955) *The Development of Plato’s Ethics*. Cambridge.  Hannan, N. (2021) “Knowledge and Voluntary Injustice in the *Hippias Minor*,” *Apeiron* 54: 545-569.  Irwin, T. H. (1977) *Plato’s Moral Theory: The Early and Middle Dialogues*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  ---------- (1995) *Plato’s Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  Jones, R. and Sharma, R. (2017) “The Wandering Hero of the *Hippias Minor*: Socrates on Virtue and Craft,” *Classical Philology* 112: 113-137.  Klosko, G. (1987) “Socrates on Goods and Happiness,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 4: 251-264.  Mikalson, J. D. (2002) “The *daimon* of *eudaimonia.*” In J. F. Miller, C. Damon, and K. S. Myers, eds. Vertis in Usum: *Studies In Honor of Edward Courtney*, 250-258. Munich and Leipzig: K. G. Saur Verlag.  Reshotko, N. (2009) “Socrates and Plato on *Sophia*, *Eudaimonia* and their Facsimiles,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 26: 1-19.  Rowe, C. (2007) *Plato and the Art of Philosophical Writing.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.  Rudebusch, G. (1999) *Socrates, Pleasure, and Value*. Oxford.  Santas, G. X. (1979) *Socrates: Philosophy in Plato's Early Dialogues*. London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.  Sermamoglou-Soulmaidi, G. (2014) *Playful Philosophy and Serious Sophistry: A Reading of Plato’s* Euthydemus. Berlin: De Gruyter.  ---------- (2023) “The Nature of Courage in Plato’s *Laches*,” *Apeiron* 56: 187-210.  Stauffer, D. (2006) *The Unity of Plato’s* Gorgias: *Rhetoric, Justice, and the Philosophic Life.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. |