

# Philosophy 3013-001

## Plato's *Republic*

Fall 2017

Class Time and Location: Mon, Wed, Fri 10:45 AM - 11:35 AM, NS 202  
Instructor: Eric Hutton Office: CTIHB 425  
Phone: 801-581-7320 Office Hours: Wed 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM or by appointment  
E-mail: eric.hutton@utah.edu Course website: Canvas

Course Description: This course examines in depth one of the most important works in the history of Western philosophy, Plato's *Republic*, and offers students the opportunity to engage the broad range of philosophical topics covered by the text, including ethics, politics, psychology, metaphysics, and aesthetics. The course also examines different interpretations of the *Republic* that have been proposed by scholars.

Pre-requisites: None. Units: 3.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, students will:

- 1) Be better able to identify, analyze, construct, and criticize philosophical arguments.
- 2) Have gained understanding of diverse areas of philosophical inquiry.
- 3) Improve their writing skills.
- 4) Be thoroughly acquainted with the contents of the *Republic*.
- 5) Have familiarity with secondary literature on the *Republic*.

Required Texts:

1) Plato. *Republic*, translated by C.D.C. Reeve. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004.

(Note: Students **must** acquire **this** translation of the *Republic*—**no other translations** will be acceptable substitutes for in-class use or for writing papers.)

2) White, Nicholas. *A Companion to Plato's Republic*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1979.

All other readings are on reserve at Marriott Library. (Whenever possible, items will be put on e-reserve, but in some cases this may not be possible.)

(Note: The instructor will strive to follow diligently the schedule and plan set out in this syllabus, but this syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor at any time, and students will be given reasonable prior notice of any modifications. If/when such modifications are made, a new version of the syllabus will be posted on the course website and will be authoritative over all previous versions of the syllabus.)

## Schedule of Topics and Readings:

- Week 1      8/21 (Mon): Introduction. No reading.  
8/23 (Wed): The Beginning of the Conversation. Reading: *Republic I*, and Blondell, “The Play of Character in Plato’s Dialogues,” pp. 165-189.  
8/25 (Fri): Discussion
- Week 2      8/28 (Mon): A Series of Bad Arguments? Reading: *Republic I*; White, pp. 61-73; and Annas, “Book One”  
8/29 (Tue): **Argument Outline #1 Due by 5:00pm.**  
8/30 (Wed): An Argument Revived: Reading: *Republic II*, 357A-376D; White, pp. 74-82; Shields, “Plato’s Challenge: the Case against Justice in *Republic II*”  
9/1 (Fri): Discussion
- Week 3      9/4 (Mon): **Labor Day: No Class**  
9/6 (Wed): Building the Ideal City. Reading: *Republic II*, 368C-383C; White, pp. 82-94; Blondell, “The Play of Character in Plato’s Dialogues,” pp. 190-211.  
9/7 (Thu): **Argument Outline #2 Due by 5:00pm.**  
9/8 (Fri): Guardian Education. Reading: *Republic III*, 386A-403C; White, pp. 95-99; Schofield, “Music All Pow’rful.”
- Week 4      9/11 (Mon): Education and Lies. Reading: *Republic III*, 403C-417B; White, pp. 99-105; Schofield, “The Noble Lie”  
9/12 (Tue): **Argument Outline #3 Due by 5:00pm.**  
9/13 (Wed): Justice in the Ideal City. Reading: *Republic IV*, 419A-435C; White, pp. 106-122; Annas, “Parts and Virtues of State and Soul”  
9/15 (Fri): Discussion
- Week 5      9/18: (Mon): The Tripartite Soul. Reading: *Republic IV*, 435C-445E; White, pp. 122-138; Irwin, “*Republic IV*: The Division of the Soul”  
9/19 (Tue): **Argument Outline #4 Due by 5:00pm.**  
9/20 (Wed): Socrates’ Account of the Virtues: Cooper, “The Unity of Virtue”;  
9/22: (Fri): Discussion
- Week 6      9/25 (Mon): A Problem with Socrates’ Answer: Sachs, “A Fallacy in Plato’s *Republic*”  
9/26 (Tue): **Argument Outline #5 Due by 5:00pm.**  
9/27 (Wed): A Problem with Socrates’ Account of Happiness. Reading: Parfit, “What Makes Someone’s Life Go Best?”; White, “Happiness as Structure and Harmony”  
9/29 (Fri): Discussion
- Week 7      10/2 (Mon): Women, Children, and Family in the Ideal City. Reading: *Republic V*, 449A-473C; White, pp. 139-153; Vlastos, “Was Plato a Feminist?”; Okin, “Philosopher Queens and Private Wives: Plato on Women and the Family”

- 10/4 (Wed): The Third Wave of Argument Begins. Reading: *Republic* V, 473C – VI, 502C; White, pp. 153-174  
 10/6 (Fri): Discussion. **Writing Exercise #1 Due at 5:00pm.**
- Week 8      10/9 – 10/13 **Fall Break—No Class**
- Week 9      10/16 (Mon): The Form of the Good. Reading: *Republic* VI, 502C – VII, 534C; White, pp. 174-201  
 10/18 (Wed): Problematic Images. Reading: *Republic* VI, 502C – VII, 534C; Smith, “Plato’s Divided Line”  
 10/20 (Fri): TBA
- Week 10     10/23 (Mon): Philosophers as Rulers. Reading: *Republic* VII, 534C-541B; White, pp. 201-204; Brown, “Justice and Compulsion for Plato’s Philosopher-Rulers” and “Minding the Gap in Plato’s *Republic*”  
 10/25 (Wed): Degenerate Regimes and People. Reading: *Republic* VIII (all) – IX, 576E; White, pp. 205-222  
 10/27 (Fri): Discussion
- Week 11     10/30 (Mon): A Problem with the City-Soul Analogy. Reading: Williams, “The Analogy of City and Soul in Plato’s *Republic*”  
 11/1 (Wed): The Unhappy Tyrant. Reading: *Republic* IX, 577A-592B; White, pp. 222-245  
 11/3 (Fri): Discussion. **Writing Exercise #2 Due at 5:00pm.**
- Week 12     11/6 (Mon): Art and Beds. Reading: *Republic* X, 595A-608B; White, pp. 246-259; Vlastos, “A Metaphysical Paradox”  
 11/8 (Wed): Poetry Revisited. Reading: Burnyeat, “Art and Mimesis in Plato’s *Republic*”; Nehamas, “Plato and the Mass Media”  
 11/10 (Fri): Discussion
- Week 13     11/13 (Mon): The Myth of Er. Reading: *Republic* X, 608C-621C; White, pp. 259-266; Halliwell, “The Life and Death Journey of the Soul: Interpreting the Myth of Er”  
 11/15 (Wed): A Literary Retrospective. Reading: Blondell, “The Play of Character in Plato’s Dialogues,” pp. 211-250  
 11/17 (Fri): Pessimism in the *Republic*? Reading: Bobonich, “Philosophers and Non-Philosophers in the *Phaedo* and the *Republic*”
- Week 14     11/20 (Mon): TBA  
 11/22 (Wed): **Instructor out of town. No class.**  
 11/24 (Fri): **Thanksgiving Break. No class.**
- Week 15     11/27 (Mon): TBA  
 11/29 (Wed): A Survey of Some Alternative Approaches. Reading: Press, “Continuities and Discontinuities in the History of *Republic* Interpretation”

11/30 (Thu): **Writing Exercise #3 Due at 5:00pm.**

12/1 (Fri): The Straussian Approach. Reading: Strauss, "On Plato's *Republic*"

Week 16

12/4 (Mon): Assessing the Straussian Approach. Reading: Burnyeat, "Sphinx without a Secret"; Ferrari, "Strauss' Plato"

12/6 (Wed): Conclusion & Review. Reading: Smith, "Platonic Scholars and Other Wishful Thinkers"

12/14 (Thu): **Final Paper Due at 5:00pm**

Some of the readings and lectures in this course include materials that may conflict with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with the instructor at your earliest convenience.

#### Course Requirements:

- A) Students are expected to finish each assigned reading before the class meeting on that assignment. Students are also expected to bring copies of the assigned reading with them to class.
- B) Participation: students are expected to participate in discussion in class. For in-class discussion, raising thoughtful questions, responding insightfully to remarks by other students, answering questions from the instructor, and reading aloud (when asked by the instructor) will all count towards fulfilling this requirement. Students who for any reason miss class are still responsible for knowing both the content of lecture and discussion during that session. Office hours are not provided as make-up class sessions; students who miss class should first get notes from classmates and seek out the instructor if they have questions.
- C) Argument outlines: A series of argument outlines will be due at the dates and times noted above. Further instructions regarding the assignments will be given in class and posted on Canvas.
- D) Writing exercises: There will be a series of short writing exercises of 350-700 words (approx. 1-2 pages) due at the dates and times noted above. Further instructions regarding the the exercises will be posted on Canvas. Students will be required to submit the exercises to a plagiarism-detection website, Turnitin.com.
- E) Final paper: one paper of 1800-2100 words (approx. 6-8 pages) will be due at the date and time noted above. Further instructions regarding the paper will be posted on Canvas. Students will be required to submit the paper to a plagiarism-detection website, Turnitin.com.

Grading: participation in in-class discussions, 15%; argument outlines, 20%; writing exercises, 15% each; paper, 20%.

(The instructor reserves the right to change this weighting as necessary in order to fulfill the educational mission of the course.)

The grading scale to be used in this course severely penalizes failure to submit required work, so students who utterly fail to submit required work will jeopardize their overall course grade to a much greater extent than students who submit work that is of poor quality.

Note: All assignments submitted for a grade in this course must be the student's own work. Plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct may result in a failing grade for the entire course, and the case may be transferred to the University's Academic Misconduct Committee for further judgment. According to the Student code, "Plagiarism' means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as a basis for, one's own work offered for academic consideration or credit for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one's own, without attribution, any individual's words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression" (<http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>). If you have further questions about what constitutes plagiarism or academic misconduct, ask the instructor and consult the University Code.

### **College of Humanities Academic Misconduct Policy:**

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct, misrepresenting one's work, and inappropriately collaborating. Definitions can be found in the Student Code at <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>.

If you are suspected of academic misconduct, the process proceeds according to the rules found in the Student Code, University Policy 6-400(V). According to that policy, after meeting with you, the instructor must determine whether academic misconduct has, in fact, occurred.

—If s/he determines that no academic misconduct has occurred, s/he will document that you are not responsible for any academic misconduct.

—If s/he determines academic misconduct has occurred and this is the **first instance** in which you have been alleged to have committed academic misconduct, s/he will take into account whether the act was intentional or a result of negligence in determining the appropriate sanction, which can be up to failing the course. The sanction will be noted in the resolution of the case and your right of appeal is as specified in Policy 6-400(V).

—If s/he determines academic misconduct has occurred, and you have previously been sanctioned for an act of academic misconduct, and the prior instance of misconduct resulted in a sanction less than failing the course, the department will follow the process to fail you for the course. If the prior sanction was failure of the course, your new act of misconduct will result in failure of the course and the department will also follow the process to seek your dismissal from the program and the University.

**ADA Statement:**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.