



PHILOSOPHY 2205W (570)
Ancient & Medieval Philosophy
Fall/Winter 2026 - 2027

Instructor: Prof. Georgia Mouroutsou
Email: gmourout@uwo.ca

Instructor: Prof. Gyongyi (Ginger) Hegedus
Email: ghegedus@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description: A survey of the great philosophers from the pre-Socratics to Aquinas; focusing on the systematic unity of their thought, the influence of their ideas and their importance for us today. Themes include: the nature of reality, human existence, truth, God, political agency, and ethics.

Prerequisite(s):

Antirequisite(s): Philosophy 2200F/G, Philosophy 2201F/G.

Extra Information: 6 hours

Course Weight: 1.00

Breadth: Category B

Subject Code: PHILOSOP

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

PHILOSOPHY 2205 W 570
Ancient and Medieval Philosophy

Course Description: A survey of the great philosophers from the pre-Socratics to Christine de Pizan; focusing on the systematic unity of their thought, the influence of their ideas and their importance for us today. Themes include: the nature of reality, human existence, truth, God, political agency, and ethics.

Prerequisites: None.

Antirequisites: Philosophy 2200F/G, 2201 F/G.

This course is divided into 2 units. The first unit focuses on ancient philosophy and is taught by Dr. Mouroutsou. The second unit concentrates on medieval philosophy and is taught by Dr. Hegedus.

The Ancient Philosophy Part:

We will mostly focus on ancient metaphysics and ethics in Plato and Aristotle.

General Information

INSTRUCTOR OF THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY PART: Dr. Georgia Mouroutsou, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Department of Philosophy.

COURSE NATURE: Philosophy 2205 W 570 is a one-semester course. This class is co-taught by Prof Mouroutsou (ancient philosophy part) and Prof Hegedus (medieval philosophy part).

CLASS HOURS: Please note that the ancient philosophy part of the class will begin on **Wednesday, September 9** and end on **Monday, October 26, 2026**. The class will then be taught by Prof. Hegedus.

OFFICE HOURS: The office hour for the ancient part will take place for 30 minutes each time after class. Please stay with me after class if there are any questions. After the end of the ancient philosophy part, meetings will take place **only by appointment**.

Email communication: gmourout@uwo.ca

READINGS: Plato's *Phaedo* (translation Grube, Hackett edition) and the *Symposium* (translated by A. Nehamas and P. Woodruff, Hackett edition) and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*

(translation Irwin, Hackett Edition) are required (available in UWO bookstore). The other texts will be scanned and provided on our OWL site. The students are responsible for bringing the purchased books or scanned material to the class each time.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Submission of Intro/Abstract for the paper (electronically) on **Oct 18: 5% of the grade**
- Paper to write in class on **Oct. 26: 10% of the grade.**
- Exam Final on **Oct. 21: 20% of the grade**
- Participation 15% of the grade (different forms of participation)

NEW: Academic consideration for the mid-term requires submission of formal documentation. There is the possibility of extension for the essay (only for the writing in class not the abstract/intro) in case of academic consideration without formal documentation.

I. ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY PART:

It must be clear to the students that my grade will be half of the final grade for the class since Prof. Hegedus will evaluate the students for the second part (medieval philosophy). After the end of the term, we will discuss and submit the students' evaluations for the entire class.

For my ancient philosophy part, the following assignments will be evaluated:

A. One writing assignment in class, 15% of the final grade (5% the intro/abstract and 10% for the writing in class). We will explain what is needed and how we can thrive in this task in class (first session and Sept 21).

The students will be asked to choose a text, some pages of what we read, raise a question and answer it. Examples will be given as possibilities (not mandatory to choose from them). It is highly recommended that you chat with me about the topic you wish to choose before you work on it. In this way I can adjust it to your interests or find something that would be more appropriate for you.

- **All intros/abstracts** must be submitted to the assignment box of Dr. Mouroutsou's OWL site. A hard copy must be handed in on Oct. 19, in the class. We write the assignment in class on Oct. 26.

- You must use **ONE bibliographical reference in your paper other than the primary text you focus on**. You need to show **active engagement** with the work you refer to. It does not need to be a mere interpretation of the text. You can raise a critical question. We will explain things in class.
- **No abstracts will be accepted/graded after the class of Oct 19.**

B. Mid-term Exam:

There will be an examination for the class on Thursday, Oct. 16, which will be worth of **20%** of the grade.

C. Class participation (15%)

The participation will be worth of **15%** of the final grade, and consists in not merely being present in the class, which is necessary, but in participating in the class discussion and other ways (for instance, participating in our OWL forum; I will explain more in class)

The class participation is not something of less importance than writing assignments. For, while the biologists and physicists must attend their lab, we have to give and take reasons when arguing in philosophy. This is our lab, so to say.

Use of Electronic Devices:

You are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations.

Use of Laptops in the Classroom:

The use of laptops by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using laptops for purposes not directly related to the class will be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct.

II. Course Content and Objectives

The objective of this class is to make the students **familiar with the thought and arguments in ancient philosophy and prepare them for the medieval philosophy part of the course**. In particular:

- The focus of the ancient philosophy part of the class is **ethics**. All philosophers in ancient philosophy ask the question: How should we live our (entire) lives? They give different answers, depending on how they understand reality. It is their answer to this question and, partly, their understanding of reality that we will deal with.
- It is equally important **to familiarize the students with philosophical terms of broader application like empiricism, physicalism, dualism, essentialism, hedonism, materialism, virtue ethics, determinism and compatibilism.**
- Ancient philosophers have thought that good philosophy provides good arguments. Therefore, we will **examine the quality of arguments** and whether certain arguments developed by ancient philosophers are valid and sound. For example, the proofs of the soul's immortality in the *Phaedo*.
- At the same time, it is important to make clear that ancient philosophers thought that providing good arguments is not in itself sufficient for good philosophy. For, philosophy was developed as **talking and sharing arguments with others** and on the basis of **dialogue with predecessors or contemporaries.**
- We will learn how to **read and discuss the assigned texts thoughtfully and critically.**

III. Schedule FT 2026 (subject to small changes):

Sept. 9: Introduction to the Course. Assignments and mutual Expectations.

Agenda: Introduction to Plato, and Intro to the *Phaedo*

Sept 14, 16, 21, 23: PLATO'S ETHICS and METAPHYSICS

Sept. 14, 16 and 21: the *Phaedo*: The Theory of the forms and the immortality of the soul.

Agenda: the historical Socrates, his business and his heritage. The dramatic context of the dialogue. The three first proofs of the soul's immortality, the interlocutors' objections. The final proof, in which the Platonic theory of the forms is introduced after Socrates criticizes the Presocratic search for causes. The parts/theorems of the theory of forms. Forms as causes.

On Sept. 21, we will (also) discuss our writing of the essay in class.

Sept 23: the *Symposium*: another dialogue in which we encounter **the theory of forms**. Another topic: **What is love?**

Agenda: What do the speeches up to Diotima's contribute to the topic? Love as a great god (Phaedrus). The two kinds of love: good and bad (Pausanias). Love as power in nature and arts (Eryximachus based on Heraclitus). Aristophanes' story about and account of the love of individuals. Even greater praise to love as the most beautiful, adorable and delicate god (Agathon). Socratic critical examination of Agathon's view and the nature of desire: to acquire something one lacks in the present or preserve in the future what one possesses.

The Diotima's speech as the climax: a story (myth) about the origin of Love as a spirit between gods and human beings. Different objects of love and *the* object of love: "reproducing and giving birth in beauty"; for, the lover desires immortality by wishing to preserve the good *forever*. Philosophy is the love of wisdom as the knowledge of forms (the peak of the ladder and the highest object of love).

Alcibiades joins the party too late: the love and praise of an individual, namely, Socrates. What makes the ugliest person in ancient Athens so attractive? Why is he so strange?

Symposium continued

Sept 30: National Truth and Reconciliation Day. No class.
--

Sept 28 AND Oct. 5, 7, 19: ARISTOTLE's *Nicomachean Ethics*: A Proposal for Virtue Ethics

Agenda:

Sept 28: The Object and the Method of ethics, Critique of Platonic ethics, the Notion and Definition of Happiness: between hedonism/utilitarianism and deontology: **Bk 1**

- Why is pleasure no part of the definition of happiness?
- Why is affectivity no part of the definition of happiness?

Oct. 5: Virtues of Character and the Mean (**Bk 2, Bk 3**, chapters 6-12, and **Bk 4**)

- Human virtue/excellence (ἀρετή) and the mean
- What kind of mean is here at stake?
- Is relativism lurking (this is my measure; this is yours etc etc)?

Oct. 7

The Intellectual Virtues (**Bk 6**).

- The Five Ways to "hit the truth" (understanding, science, wisdom, prudence and craft)
- Wisdom and Prudence
- Good deliberation

Reading Week (10-18 October/ no classes)

By getting to class/before class, Oct 19, electronic submission of the intro/abstract for the paper

Oct. 19

The Nature and the Kinds of Pleasure (Bk 7, chapters 11-14, and Bk 10, chapters 1-5) and the two kinds of happiness: Bk. 10 (chapters 6-9)

- How can we measure and compare the different kinds of pleasure and happiness?
- Provocation: in the lives we live, there is constant distraction. According to Aristotle, pleasure is impossible in these conditions.

AND REVIEW

Oct 21: Final exam (for our part of the class)

Oct. 26: Final paper in class writing

Course information: Medieval Philosophy Section

PHIL 2205 W (570) part 2 (starting in the second part of October after Prof. Georgia Mouroutsou's section on ancient philosophy)

Instructor(s): Ginger (Gyongyi) Hegedus

Contact Information: ghegedus@uwo.ca

Office Hours: By appointment.

Course description: During the second part of the semester, we will analyze medieval Christian, Islamic and Jewish primary texts (in English translation). The students will gain insight into the most important topics of medieval thought: the problem of faith and rational thought, creation of the world, the afterlife of the soul, the existence of God, etc.

Course learning outcomes:

- The medieval way of thinking does not only belong to the past, what we consider today as the 'religious way of thinking' originates from medieval roots. Historically and textually based investigation of a complex period (500-1500 CE) helps to understand the ways in which people of religious convictions think in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

- Religions and ideologies define the ways in which we perceive situations, and this perception defines our ways to act. This course attempts to help a deeper understanding of different worldviews thereby increasing *acceptance* and *tolerance*.
- The development of critical, analytical, and comparative skills, while investigating sources about religious and philosophical ideas in the Middle Ages.
- Multi-perspectival vision gets deepened and enriched by argumentation. Discussions in class will contribute to the development of the *critical* and *argumentative skills* of the students.

Mode of Instruction: in person

Course textbooks/materials

Available in: Schoedinger, A.B. (ed.), *Readings in Medieval Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 1996. They will be posted on the online system as well; thus, students will not need to purchase the book. Students will also receive handouts outlining the most important terms analyzed in the lectures.

Method of evaluation:

Short essay (2000-2500 words), deadline: 10 days before the end of classes (Nov 27): **40%**

The essay is supposed to be a comparison between two or three primary texts from the reader (Schoedinger.) The paper will be expected to contain an original analysis of the selected material and personal insights and reflections on the relevance and nature of the selected theme. The student should use a consistent footnoting style that includes page references.

Exam (Dec. 2026) in person: **50%**

Since the final grade will contain the grade received in the first part of the semester as well (Antique Philosophy); the second part of the semester will offer 50% of the final mark.

Class participation: 10%

Academic Considerations:

Late penalties for essays will be 5% per day. All essays should be submitted to Turnitin.com for plagiarism checking. Extensions will be granted if the student is able to provide the Academic Dean's Office with appropriate documentation. No extensions or make-up exams will be granted unless specifically recommended by the ADO.

Academic Consideration for Absences: students may be absent from classes on two occasions, in case if they miss more than two classes medical reports will be required. In all other cases the ADO's regulations on makeup exams will be followed.

Academic Integrity / Remote Proctoring:

- *Link to Western Scholastic Discipline policy:*
https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf
- The essay should be run through Turnitin.com. No external help, including chatbots, can be used while composing the essay or during the exam.

Important Dates:

Fall Reading Week: Oct 12 – 18, 2026

December Examination Period: December 11-22, 2026

Spring Reading Week: February 13-21, 2027

April Examination Period: April 12-30, 2027

Schedule of Classes:

Week 1. Introduction: What is the context and relevance of the Middle Ages?

The three Abrahamic religions and the Antique philosophical tradition

Week 2. The Existence of God, St. Anselm on the Existence of God, St. Thomas Aquinas on the Five Ways of proving the existence of God

Ethics and the Problem of Evil, Pseudo-Dionysius on the Nature of Evil, St. Thomas Aquinas on Concerning Evil

Week 3. The Map of the Universe

Mind and Logic (the Tabula Porphyriana, Categories, Nominalism, Realism)

Week 4. God's Foreknowledge and the Notion of Free Will

Theology: The Notion of Trinity, Duns Scotus, Eriugena, Bonaventure

Week 5. The Notion of the Soul (Augustine, Aquinas)

Political Philosophy (Al-Farabi, Aquinas)

Week 6. Knowledge and Sensation, the Epistemology of Augustine and Aquinas

Conclusion

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this assessment.
- If instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs. (For example, if students need to submit X of Y assignments, this flexibility already provides consideration.)
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

Western’s Mental Health Services site provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.