

**College of San Mateo**  
**Official Course Outline**

1. **COURSE ID:** PHIL 160    **TITLE:** History of Ancient Philosophy    **C-ID:** PHIL 130  
**Units:** 3.0 units    **Hours/Semester:** 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours; 96.0-108.0 Homework hours; 144.0-162.0 Total Student Learning hours  
**Method of Grading:** Letter Grade Only  
**Recommended Preparation:**  
ENGL 100 or ENGL 105
  
2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**  
**Degree Credit**  
**Transfer credit:** CSU; UC  
**AA/AS Degree Requirements:**  
CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E2b. Communication and Analytical Thinking  
CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5c. Humanities  
**CSU GE:**  
CSU GE Area C: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: C2 - Humanities (Literature, Philosophy, Languages Other than English)  
**IGETC:**  
IGETC Area 3: ARTS AND HUMANITIES: B: Humanities
  
3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**  
**Catalog Description:**  
This course addresses ancient philosophy with emphasis on the development of Greek philosophy from the Pre-Socratics through Aristotle and may also include Hellenistic, Roman, medieval or non-western thinkers.
  
4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**  
Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:
  1. Recognize key philosophers, arguments, and philosophic movements in ancient and medieval philosophy.
  2. Evaluate the fundamental tenets of the philosophical theories of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle and their respective epistemological, ethical, and metaphysical positions.
  3. Explain how historical and social contexts shaped ancient and medieval philosophic movements.
  
5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**  
Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:
  1. Employ critical philosophical skills
  2. Explicate primary philosophical texts of the ancient past
  3. Analyze primary theories and standpoints with special emphasis on Plato and Aristotle
  4. Critically analyze and evaluate arguments, assumptions, principles, and methods of the philosophers under consideration
  
6. **COURSE CONTENT:**  
**Lecture Content:**
  1. Ancient Greek Schools of Philosophy and Philosophic Methods
    - Platonism. Key topics may include:
      - Justice and moral goodness
      - Allegory of the cave
      - Metaphysics of ideas and forms
      - Wisdom
      - Nature of humanity and love
      - Importance of mathematics
    - Aristotelianism. Key topics may include:
      - Cosmological account of the universe
      - Teleological account of nature and ethics
      - Nature of human soul
      - The role of habits in morality
      - Epistemic difference between theoretical and practical knowledge

- Epicureanism. Key topics may include:
    - Hedonist ethics
    - Metaphysical materialism
    - The importance of friendship
    - The social construction of justice
  - Stoicism. Key topics may include:
    - The importance of reason
    - Metaphysical determinism
    - The limits of human agency
  - Skepticism. Key topics may include:
    - The limits of human knowledge
    - Ethical implications of skepticism
    - Different varieties of skepticism: the Academics versus the Pyrrhonians
  - Philosophers covered may include: Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Lucretius, Epictetus, Seneca, Sextus Empiricus, Plotinus
2. Formation of Basic Philosophical Questions. Key topics can include:
- Epistemology: the study of knowledge
    - What is knowledge?
    - How is knowledge acquired?
  - Metaphysics: the study of the fundamental nature of the universe
    - The transition from mythological perspectives to experimental view of nature
    - What is the origin of the cosmos?
    - What is the function of humans?
  - Ethics: the study of how humans ought to live
    - What is moral goodness?
    - Can virtue be taught?
3. Historical and philosophic transitions. Key topics can include:
- The development from the Pre-Socratics to the Athenian schools of philosophy
    - Pre-Socratic philosophers may include: Parmenides, the Milesians, the Pythagoreans, Anaxagoras, Democritus
  - The development from Athenian to Hellenistic schools of philosophy, such as Neo-Platonism.
  - The adoption and re-interpretation of ancient philosophy in Judaism, Early Christianity, and Islam
4. Medieval Philosophies and Debates. Key topics can include:
- Cosmological arguments for the existence of God
  - Teleological arguments for the existence of God
  - The ontological argument for the existence of God
  - The problem of evil
  - The nature of the human soul
  - Philosophers covered may include: Augustine, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Maimonides, Anselm, Aquinas, Bonaventure
5. Reading Ancient Primary Texts Critically

## 7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Discussion
- C. Guest Speakers

## 8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

### Writing Assignments:

- 2-3 essays approximately 3-8 pages each.
- essay for research paper, approximately 5-10 pages in length.
- summary for oral report

### Reading Assignments:

- 10- 20 pages of textbook reading per chapter per week
- outside independent reading for research term paper (approximately 10-20 pages every two weeks)
- outside independent reading for oral report (approximately 50 pages throughout the course)

### Other Outside Assignments:

- research for term paper (approximately 10 pages in length)

research for oral report (approximately 10 pages in length)

**9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION**

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Exams/Tests
- C. Group Projects
- D. Homework
- E. Papers
- F. Projects
- G. Research Projects
- H. Written examination

**10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):**

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Pojman, L. P., & Vaughn, L.. *Classics of Philosophy*, ed. Oxford University Press, 2022
- B. Melchert, N.. *The Great Conversation: A historical introduction to philosophy*, ed. Oxford University Press, 2018
- C. Aristotle. *Complete Works, Historical Background, and Modern Interpretation of Aristotle's Ideas* , ed. Annotated Classics, 2014
- D. Plato. *The Complete Works*, ed. e-artnow, 2015

**Origination Date:** September 2022

**Curriculum Committee Approval Date:** September 2023

**Effective Term:** Fall 2024

**Course Originator:** Jeremy Ball