



PHIL 70A: Ancient Philosophy (GE Area: Satisfies C2 – Letters)

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In Person | Fall Semester, 2023 | Tues./Thurs. 10:30-11:45 AM

In this course, we will examine a variety of philosophical traditions. This course will be divided into three main units. First, we will begin by examining various perspectives in “religious” literature (where “religious” is meant very, very broadly) on the question of what it means to be a human being, including texts from Hindu, Buddhist, Abrahamic, and ancient Greek traditions as well as philosophical commentaries on these. We will then turn our attention to Plato and Aristotle, concentrating in particular on how these two thinkers define and understand human nature.

Except for the Aristotle texts, all of the texts for the course will be available on Canvas. These will likely include some or all of the following:

- Abrahamic traditions: Books of Genesis and Job and selections from the Qur’an; Jewish, Christian, and Islamic commentaries and discussion, including Genesis Rabbah, Augustine of Hippo, Origen of Alexandria, Maimonides, al-Ghazali, al-Kindi, and Al-Qushayri
- Vedic and Hindu traditions: selections from the Rig Veda, the Upanishads, and Manava-Dharmasastra (“Laws of Manu”)
- Buddhist traditions: Agganna Sutta, Cakkavatti-Sihanada Sutta, Cula-Malunkyovada Sutta
- Greek mythological tradition: selections from Homer’s *Odyssey* and Sophocles’ *Antigone*
- Plato’s *Phaedo* and *Protagoras* dialogues along with selected passages from the *Timaeus* and the *Republic*
- Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* and *On the Soul* (Joe Sachs translations)

