

**UNIVERSITY OF INDIANAPOLIS**  
**SUMMER SESSION II 2009**  
**THE-460-01-SUII09**  
**ANCIENT GREEK PLAYS**

**Professor: Dr. Stanley Sfekas**

**Office Hours:** Th 5:50-6:50; M-W 5:50-6:50; 9 Ipitou St., Tel: 210 3239908;

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**Text:** *Plays to be provided to students.*

**CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES:**

Great classical plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes will be read and analyzed from a historical, literary, psychological and philosophical standpoint.

**WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU:**

You are expected to read every assignment, attend every class, and make full effort both to understand the claims made by the professor and the authors, and (more importantly) to understand the reasons offered in support of those claims. It is, furthermore, expected that you will learn to evaluate critically these claims and reasons. The most important part of this course will be your own struggle to understand the issues and to come to terms with the conflicting claims about matters important to you. The primary way to do this is through conversations, discussion, and “dialectic” (the traditional philosophical term for the movement of thought among persons). You are therefore expected to be prepared to raise questions and discuss the issues in class.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

You are required to attend class, except when unable to do so because of unavoidable circumstances, in which case you are responsible for the material covered in class during your absence. Excessive absences will adversely affect your grade.

**PLAGIARISM:**

Plagiarism includes:

- a) turning in a paper written by another person
- b) turning in a paper copied from a book or journal
- c) Presenting the work of others as your own
- d) Downloading material from the Internet without any acknowledgment.

In short, plagiarism is seen as stealing somebody else’s words and ideas and is a serious offense. Avoid it always using your own work and always documenting a source. Students who use poor techniques of documentation may inadvertently be guilty of plagiarism.

### **CHEATING:**

Cheating is punishable by automatic failure in the course and a report to the UIA administration to establish a hearing committee to decide on dismissal from the university. Cheating includes the use of “cheat sheets” or other copy materials, requesting or giving information during an examination, or looking at another student’s examination paper during the examination.

### **TOPICS TO BE COVERED:**

Week I: Aeschylus: *Prometheus Bound*, *Agammemnon*, *The Libation Bearers*.

Week II: Sophocles: *Electra*, *Antigone*, *Oedipus Rex*.

Week III: Euripides: *Electra*, *Medea*, *Hippolytus*.

Week IV: Aristophanes: *The Clouds*, *The Frogs*

### **EVALUATIONS**

Mid-Term Examination	25%
Midterm Paper	15%
Final Examination	25%
Research Paper	20%
Personal Evaluation	15%
Total	100%

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### **I. KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN CULTURES AND THE PHYSICAL AND NATURAL WORLD:**

The most widespread systems of ideas that offer philosophical guidance are religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Religions differ from philosophies not in the subjects they address, but in the method they use to address them. Religions have their basis in mythic stories that pre-date the discovery of explicitly rational methods of inquiry. Many religions nowadays appeal to mystical faith and revelation—modes of belief that claim validity independent of logic and the scientific method, at least for the biggest questions. But most religions are in their origins pre-rational rather than anti-rational, a story-teller's account of philosophic issues rather than a scientist's.

Philosophy raises some of the deepest and widest questions there are. Addressing the

issues in each branch of philosophy requires integrating everything one knows about reality (metaphysics) or humanity (epistemology, ethics, politics, and aesthetics). Proposing reasonable positions in philosophy is therefore a difficult task. Honest philosophers have often disagreed about key issues, and dishonest ones have been able to slip their own positions into the mix as well. For this reason, there is not one philosophy worldwide, as there is one physics. Instead, there are many philosophies.

**II. INTELLECTUAL AND PRACTICAL SKILLS:** In Greek, "philosophy" means "love of wisdom." Philosophy is based on rational argument and appeal to facts. The history of the modern sciences begins with philosophical inquiries, and the scientific method of experimentation and proof remains an instance of the general approach that a philosopher tries to bring to a question: one that is logical and rigorous. However, while today the sciences focus on specialized inquiries in restricted domains, the questions addressed by philosophy remain the most general and most basic, the issues that underlie the sciences and stand at the base of a world-view.

**III. PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:**

Over the course of history, philosophers have offered entire systems that pulled together positions in each of the branches of philosophy. Aristotle, the father of logic, authored such a system in ancient times, teaching that we could know reality and achieve happiness. In more modern times, philosophers such as John Locke and Immanuel Kant have written systematic accounts of their thought. Most modern philosophers, however, have specialized in one area or another within philosophy, although some schools of philosophy have emerged that are marked by the general positions of their members on a variety of issues and the members' shared admiration for a chain of historical figures. These schools have included Pragmatism, Logical Positivism, and Existentialism, but are little-known outside of university classes in modern philosophy.

**IV. INTEGRATIVE LEARNING:** Today philosophic issues often enter public life through political or social movements, some religious in inspiration, such as Christian conservatism, and others secular, such as left-wing environmentalism and socialism. The ideas of such movements are often called ideologies. That term, "ideology," is another name for the systems of ideas we have been talking about. Though the focus of ideological movements is political, their political beliefs tend to be rooted in shared conceptions of reality, human nature, and values.

## **RESEARCH PAPERS**

The academic community designates research papers by a number of different names – response paper, research paper, report, term paper, review article, thesis, and dissertation – depending in part on the level, scope and nature of the paper.

### **RESPONSE PAPER:**

Response papers are short about 3-4 (B.A.) 6-7(M.A. students) pages typed documents, in which you explore the question more deeply than we have been able to do in class. Students are required to read 2-3 (B.A.) 4-5 (M.A.) articles/books and incorporate them into the paper although the response paper should consist of the student's own analysis of the question and have a comparative slant. A selective bibliography of works should be presented.

**TERM PAPER:**

The name term paper refers to a project that summarizes or demonstrates mastery of the work of a term or semester. It is a critical paper as evidence of the development of analytical techniques during the term, requiring library research in secondary sources to substantiate the student's observations and conclusions. The paper should be 7-10 (B.A.) 11-17 (M.A.) pages long typewritten.

**RESEARCH PAPER:**

The name distinguishes a paper based on work read, on information gathered systematically in the library, research conducted either in collections of printed material or through direct observation and experimentation. The writer of a research paper carefully documents the sources of information and conclusions presented in the paper. The paper should be 5-8 (B.A.) 9-13 (M.A.) pages typewritten.

**THESIS PAPER:**

The word thesis commonly refers to a substantial research project. As the word implies, a thesis should draw on original conclusion based on information derived from research. Although the term can also designate the paper written for a doctoral degree, American usage generally reserves the name thesis for the Master's paper. The papers should be 15-25 pages typewritten.

For the most part, when you write a critical paper about a literary work, you are asked to write an argument – to offer an interpretation of the interrelationship of a work's form and meaning. You should be able to use a process approach to each paper, drafting as needed, so long as you incorporate the following elements into your final draft.