

Phil 304. Semester One 2014

Lectures: Thursday 12-2.

Discussion Hour: Friday 1-2 (begins first week.)

The philosophy Stage III 'discussion hours' are not intended to be like tutorials. Rather than revising material from the lectures, they will be devoted to hacking through further problems, or pursuing topics of interest to the participants.

Contact me at r.hursthouse@auckland.ac.nz. Room 323 in Arts 2.

Assessment: Two 2,000 word essays, each worth 25%; one two hour exam worth 50%.

N.B. The first essay is due on March 31st. Details on Cecil in a separate document.

The main objective or desired learning outcome of this course is

- **a good preliminary understanding of Aristotle's ethical theory.**

However, given that Aristotle is separated from us by almost two and a half thousand years, and writes in ancient Greek (some of which is not literally translatable into English), he is difficult to understand without any preparation. So another objective/desired learning outcome of this course is

- **a good understanding of modern neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics**

which will serve the double purpose of expanding your understanding of modern ethical theory and preparing you for Aristotle. The aim is to achieve this second objective *in the first four weeks of the course* hence the due date of the first essay. [To get you off with a flying start, I offer you the option of doing a comprehension test before lectures start. See the 'Welcome and Comprehension Test' Announcement in Cecil.]

So the plan is that we gallop through the first six chapters of the set text *On Virtue Ethics* - henceforth OVE - in the first month and spend the rest of the semester on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* - henceforth NE - (with constant back-references to the modern ethical theory). However, as part of the preparation for the Aristotle, it is a good idea for you to start reading him alongside the OVE chapters.

Texts.

OVE is available online through Voyager, and usually available secondhand through 'bookfinder' MUCH cheaper. (Just google it). Grab it NOW (remember to specify the destination is NZ - it makes a big difference to the quoted price.)

The best translation of the NE is the Cambridge University Press one by Roger Crisp. Another very good translation - with a fabulous introduction and notes - is the Oxford University Press edition by Sarah Broadie and Christopher Rowe. (You are strongly recommended to get one of these, and not rely on the Penguin or World Classic versions and preferably NOT Terence Irwin's Hackett translation.) Again, both are usually available more cheaply on bookfinder. The Crisp is also available online through Voyager, but you will need a translation to hand in class.

Readings for the first four weeks.

Remember that, for each week, the reading specified is to be done to *prepare* for that week's lecture. So, given that the lectures fall on a Monday, you need to do it the weekend or week before.

First week: OVE, Intro and Chapter 1. Do this NOW, and do the comprehension test before the first lecture.

Second week: OVE Chapters 2-3, and also try to get through Aristotle NE, Book 1. Chapter 13, Book II, Chapter 3, Book III, Chapters 6-12. (If you get bogged down, read the first three sections of Kraut's article on Aristotle: Ethics, in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Online*. (<http://plato.stanford.edu/>)

Third week: OVE Chapters 4 and 5, re-read OVE p.15 (from the bottom 'This brings me to ...') to 16 and definitely read or re-read Aristotle, NE, Book I, Chap 13. Also Book II, Chaps 3- 4.

Fourth week: OVE Chapter 6, re- read NE Book I chapter 13, Book II chapter 4. (If you haven't got to Aristotle yet, do, DO, just read the Book II little Chap 4 bit.) Also Robert B. Louden 'On Some Vices of Virtue Ethics', *American Philosophical Quarterly* 1984, (online through Voyager), reprinted in *Virtue Ethics*, edited by Roger Crisp and Michael Slote.; also in *Virtue Ethics*, edited by Daniel Statman, both in the general library AND in short loan. **Note that your first essay is due next week, on August 19th, so you will need to be doing the reading for that too.**

After that, we settle down to working on Aristotle, with two lectures on him before the break. Very sensible, very well-organised people, who do well on this course, will have been through the whole of the Nic Eth already; sensible and organised people will have at least read Book 1, and the introductory material in whatever edition they are using and perhaps the beginnings of the Kraut Stanford Encyclo article (above) and hence will get something out of the first class on him.

From which you may infer:-

IT IS NOT A GOOD IDEA TO LEAVE READING THE NE UNTIL THE BREAK.