

Aristotle
PHIL 6010
Syllabus
Fall, 2011

Professor Edward Halper
Office: Peabody Hall #128
Hours: 3:15-3:45W 3:15-3:30F
Other times by appointment
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Objective and Theme: The theme of the course is analogy and Aristotelian science. Aristotle thinks that science has a determinate structure. Each science treats a genus. A genus is a class that shares a common character, a nature. An analogy is a proportion between four terms that generally extends beyond the genus. Insofar as an analogy falls outside a genus, and a science treats a genus, analogy should not come under a science. Yet, we will see that Aristotle repeatedly relies on analogy in his sciences. We will see that analogy has no real ontological status, that is, no reality. How, then, can Aristotle rely on similarities that cannot be known and do not really exist?

We will begin with *Metaphysics* book I (Iota) and follow it with a part of book Λ and all of book N. Book I defines the one by using an analogy. The opening of book Λ sketches another analogy. Book N is about the one and the dyad as principles of number and why analogies are unscientific. From there, we will move to Aristotle's discussion of motion in *Physics* Γ, an analysis that, again, relies on an analogy. The account of motion bears certain similarities with what Aristotle takes to be Plato's treatment of the good (see *Nicomachean Ethics* A.6), and account Aristotle rejects. On the other hand, *Parts of Animals* A.4 again acknowledges the scientific import of certain analogies. By reflecting on these treatments of analogies, we will prepare ourselves to consider the role of analogy in particular investigations. I have chosen the discussion of continuity in *Physics* Z for its clear mathematical character. We will also read the discussion of the first mover in *Physics* H-Θ. The course concludes with the *Meteorology*.

Our concern here is not historical, nor are we primarily interested only in grasping Aristotle's doctrines. The focus of the course will be on understanding the issues Aristotle grapples with, his general approach to those issues, and the arguments makes to raise and resolves those issues. You are expected not only to understand Aristotle but to wrestle with his problems yourself. In other words, you are invited to learn to do philosophy like Aristotle. We will be dealing with Aristotle's texts, and you are expected to read them carefully and to engage them critically. Aristotelianism is a way of thinking, and you should emerge from this course with some understanding and appreciation of it. As graduate students, you should become familiar with some recent secondary literature.

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Texts: *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton University Press), vol. 1

Either: *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton University Press), vol. 2

Or:

Aristotle's Metaphysics, trans. Joe Sachs (Green Lion Press, 1999).

Other translations of particular works are acceptable. You are encouraged to consult several translations and the original.

Grading:	Critiques	Sept. 9, 23	20%
	Mid-Term	October 17	15%
	Major Paper (8-10 pages)	November 18	35%
	Final Exam	December 9 (3:30-6:30)	30%

Assignments: As you will soon discover, Aristotle's arguments are often complex and difficult. You will find it helpful to try to formulate them in your own terms as you read. As a teaching device, I shall ask you to turn in a one to three page explication and critique of an argument twice during the semester. They will be due on September 9 and 23. Each critique should express in your words an argument that appears in the text, and it should contain at least one criticism of the argument and, perhaps, a defense of the original argument against the criticism. Your presentation should be an argument, not a summary of an argument or a description of an argument. Someone reading your presentation should be convinced of the argument's conclusion. To criticize the arguments you should look for unstated assumptions that are false or for a conclusion that does not follow from what is assumed. Though it is not necessary for you to do so, you may find it useful to consult the secondary literature for arguments and criticisms. (All citations *must* be noted.) The assignment should show that you understand how Aristotle supports his views. Do not merely summarize his position or his remarks; that would show me only that you have read the text. Instead, present the argument as an argument. (Keep it brief.)

You can use a critique as the starting point for your major paper; but the latter ought to address an issue rather than a passage. This course paper should be a substantial piece of work. *It must make some significant use of secondary literature.* A critique requires reflection on a single passage; the course paper allows you to pursue a single problem deeply, the final examination require you to have a comprehensive knowledge of the issues covered in the course.

Study: Most of the work for this course will lie in the preparation of the reading assignments. You are expected to come to class prepared to ask and answer questions about the readings. As you know, reading philosophy is not like reading other material. You will undoubtedly need to read the assignment more than once. As a minimum, I suggest three readings. Begin by reading a large portion of text quickly; then carefully prepare the section that will be discussed in class; third, read the material again after class. Read the text critically. Ask yourself questions as you read. Construct your own counter-arguments. Try to anticipate questions that I might ask.

Academic Honesty: All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

Selected Bibliography

I. General Treatments of Greek Philosophy

- Brumbaugh, Robert S. *The Philosophers of Greece*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981.
- Collingwood, R.G. *The Idea of Nature*. London: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Gilson, Etienne. *Being and Some Philosophers*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies Press, 1952.
- Guthrie, W.K.C. *The Greek Philosophers: From Thales to Aristotle*. New York: Harper & Row, 1960.
- Snell, Bruno. *The Discovery of Mind*. T.G. Rosenmeyer (trans.). Boston, 1953.

II. Aristotle: Greek Texts

Bekker, I. (ed.). *Aristotelis Opera*. 2 vols. Berlin, 1831.

More commonly used editions are those in the Oxford Classical Text series and the Budé editions.

III. Translations and Commentaries

Complete:

Barnes, J. (ed.). *The Works of Aristotle*. 2 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. [Oxford translations revised by Barnes. Some Clarendon translations substituted.]

Ross, W.D. (ed.). *The Works of Aristotle*. Oxford, 1928. [Standard “Oxford” Translations.]

Partial:

The Basic Works of Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon. [A useful compilation of some of the “Oxford” translations.]

Hippocrates Apostle has translated the *Metaphysics*, the *Physics*, and a number of Aristotle’s other works. His editions include extensive notes.

Portions of Aristotle’s work have appeared in the Clarendon Aristotle series. These are very literal translations of two or three books of a work accompanied by commentaries that assess their philosophical value from the perspective of contemporary (= Analytic) philosophy. Those volumes that include course readings are:

Annas, Julia. *Metaphysics. Books M and N*

Hussey, Edward. *Aristotle. Physics. Books III and IV*

Graham, Daniel. *Aristotle. Physics. Book VIII*

IV. General Works on Aristotle

Ackrill, J. L. *Aristotle the Philosopher*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981. [Aristotle and Analytic Philosophy]

Allan, D. J. *The Philosophy of Aristotle*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952.

Barnes, J. *Aristotle*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Barnes, J., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Barnes, J. Schofield, M. Sorabji, R. *Articles on Aristotle*. 4 vols. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1975-79. [A selection of some influential articles, some of which are translated by the editors. These volumes contain good bibliographies.]

Edel, Abraham. *Aristotle and His Philosophy*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982.

Evans, J. D. G. *Aristotle*.

Grene, M. *A Portrait of Aristotle*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963. [Emphasizes Aristotle’s interest in biology.]

Irwin, Terrence. *Aristotle’s First Principles*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

Jaeger, W. *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of his Development*. trans. R. Robinson. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948. [Jaeger is the father of developmental interpretations of Aristotle.]

Lear, Jonathan. *Aristotle: The Desire to Understand*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Moravcsik, J. M. E. *Aristotle: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968.

Mure, G. R. G. *Aristotle*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Randall, J.H. *Aristotle*. New York, 1960. [Aristotle as a Deweyan Naturalist]

Robin, L. *Aristote*. Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1944.

Robinson, Timothy. *Aristotle in Outline*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1995.

Ross, W.D. *Aristotle*. London: Methuen, 1964.

Taylor, A.E. *Aristotle*. New York: Dodge Publishing, 1919.

V. Ancient Commentators

Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca. Berlin: Reimer, 1882-1909. [Prussian Academy Edition of Aristotle's so-called "Neo-Platonic" commentators.]

VI. Metaphysics

Burnyeat, Myles. *Notes on Books Eta and Theta of Aristotle's Metaphysics*. Oxford: Sub-faculty of Philosophy, 1984.

Burnyeat, Myles. *Notes on Book Zeta of Aristotle's Metaphysics*. Study Aids Series. Oxford: Sub-faculty of Philosophy, 1979.

Gill, Mary Louise. *Aristotle on Substance*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Halper, Edward C. *One and Many in Aristotle's Metaphysics: Books Alpha-Delta*. Las Vegas: Parmenides Pub., 2009.

Halper, Edward C. *One and Many in Aristotle's Metaphysics: The Central Books*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1989.

Loux, Michael J. *Primary Ousia an Essay on Aristotle's Metaphysics Z and H*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991. Scaltsas, T. *Substances and Universals in Aristotle's Metaphysics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994.

Owens, Joseph, and Lloyd P. Gerson. *Aristotle's Gradations of Being in Metaphysics E-Z*. Edited by Lloyd P. Gerson. South Bend, Ind.: St. Augustine's Press, 2007.

Owens, Joseph. *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian Metaphysics a Study in the Greek Background of Mediaeval Thought*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978.

Reeve, C. D. C. *Substantial Knowledge Aristotle's Metaphysics*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Pub., 2000.

Scaltsas, T. *Substances and Universals in Aristotle's Metaphysics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994.

Yu, Jiyuan. *The Structure of Being in Aristotle's Metaphysics*. The New Synthese Historical Library. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2003.

Witt, Charlotte. *Ways of Being Potentiality and Actuality in Aristotle's Metaphysics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003.

VII. Physics

Charlton, W. *Aristotle's Physics: Books I and II*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.

Judson, Lindsay, ed. *Aristotle's Physics: A Collection of Essays*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

Mansion, A. *Introduction-à la physique aristotélicienne*. Louvain, 1945.

Solmsen, Friedrich. *Aristotle's System of the Physical World*. Ithaca, 1960.

Sorabji, Richard. *Necessity, Cause, and Blame: Perspectives on Aristotle's Theory*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980.

Waterlow, Sarah. *Nature, Change, and Agency in Aristotle's Physics*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.