

## **PHIL G4140**

**Time: Tuesday 10:10am-12pm, Spring 2022**

**Office hours: TBD**

**Credit points: 3**

**Instructor: Katja Maria Vogt, kv2101@columbia.edu**

**TA: TBA**

## **EARLY STOIC PHILOSOPHY: LOGIC, PHYSICS, AND ETHICS—PRELIMINARY**

### **1. Welcome**

#### *Readings*

The study of early Stoic philosophy relies on so-called fragments, short selections from texts by other authors who cite a Stoic text or paraphrase and discuss it. Our reading assignments are typically *very* short; but it takes time to think through the fragmentary reports. In order to bring the texts to life and enable students to critically assess Stoic ideas, the course adopts the following methods.

#### *Synchronous Learning*

Synchronous class time is devoted to the analysis of key ideas, in-class discussion, and student presentations on influential secondary readings. Students are expected to take active roles.

#### *Asynchronous Learning: Mini Lectures + Handouts*

For every lesson, you're expected to do three things on your own time:

- read the primary text closely,
- work through the handout,
- watch a short video that explains a question relevant to the readings.

### **2. Course description**

The course offers an advanced introduction to key themes in early Stoic philosophy, that is, the philosophy of Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus, as well as some of their interlocutors.

- Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, spent more than 20 years in Plato's Academy, at a time when Plato's dialogues were studied in-depth.
- Cleanthes, the second head of the Stoic school, is famous for his writings on theology and physics.
- Chrysippus, the third head of the Stoic school, is an extraordinarily productive philosopher. He wrote extensively all three fields of Stoic philosophy: logic, physics, ethics. Ideas that count as "orthodox" go back to him just as much as they go back to Zeno.
- At the time, Plato's Academy moves toward a skeptical phase.
- Outside of the Academy, Pyrrho and Epicurus have already developed their philosophies. In some contexts, we will ask whether Zeno and other early Stoics are responding to them.

Early Stoic philosophy is famous for its systematicity. The Stoics distinguish among three disciplines: logic, physics, and ethics. Logic includes, beyond the field that today we call logic, philosophy of language and epistemology. Physics includes theology and an account of the soul. Ethics includes normative ethics, metaethics, theory of emotions, and political philosophy.

Here are two observations about the subfields. First, the Stoics take it that physics (together with logic and ethics) provides a full account of the world; there is no deeper or more fundamental line of inquiry. Are the Stoics forerunners of today's physicalism? Alternatively, given that they hold that divinity pervades the cosmos, are they ancestors of panpsychism? Second, Stoic theories in each field relate in deep ways to theories in the other fields. It is difficult to study any topic without studying, *per impossibile*, at the same time all topics! Given the systematic nature of Stoic thought, one needs to explore every topic in the light of other topics—but that raises the question “where to start?”

We address this challenge by beginning with three “best off” topics in ancient philosophy, topics where we see the Stoics in action, arguing against Plato, the skeptics, and so on:

- Unity of the virtues: does one need to have all virtues in order to have any one of them?
- Kataleptic impressions: are there impressions that reveal precisely how things are and at the same time reveal *that* they are impressions that reveal things precisely?
- First principles: what are the “first principles”?

These three topics introduce premises in ethics, epistemology, and physics; they thus offer a path into core issues in Stoic philosophy. Then we take a step back and examine some relevant premises step-by-step, exploring Stoic proposals in logic, physics, and ethics in greater depth.

Prior to taking this class, undergraduate students should have taken at least one philosophy class, independent of whether this class is in ancient philosophy. Stoic thought resonates as much with 20th/21st century philosophy as with ancient debates, hence a background in contemporary philosophy is as helpful as a background in ancient thought.

### 3. Readings

Most texts that we study are in: Long, A. A., and D.N. Sedley (eds. and trans.), 1987, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, translation and philosophical commentary in vol 1, Greek and Latin texts, and philological commentary in vol. 2, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press [= LS]. Vol. 2, which contains the Greek and Latin original texts, is accessible through Butler Library.

Seminar participants are encouraged to purchase Vol. 1, which contains the texts in translation. The book is available as a paperback and will be ordered at Book Culture. If you have questions or concerns, please let me know; I will have a few copies of the book in my office.

Each seminar session is devoted to a selection of primary texts combined with one or two recommended secondary readings. Additional secondary readings are listed in the week-by-week schedule below.

The secondary readings include papers and chapters, listed as “KMV,” intended for a book I’m writing on the Stoics. All feedback and input is greatly appreciated!

The seminar includes 2 meetings of the *Workshop in Ancient and Contemporary Philosophy*, an author-meets-critics series devoted to the discussion of recent or forthcoming publications. Students are expected to read pre-circulated drafts of papers prior to the session. Information about the program for 2021/22 is here <<https://katjavogt.github.io/workshop-in-ancient-and-contemporary-philosophy/>>.

Recommended introductory articles on *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*:

Allen, James, “Carneades”, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/carneades/>>.

Bobzien, Susanne, “Ancient Logic”, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2020 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/logic-ancient/>>.

Brittain, Charles, “Arcesilaus”, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2008 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/arcesilaus/>>.

Sedley, David, “Diodorus Cronus”, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/diodorus-cronus/>>.

Vogt, Katja, “Ancient Skepticism”, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2021 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/skepticism-ancient/>>.

#### **4. Week-by-Week Plan**

##### ***January 18: Intro to Stoic Ethics—The Unity of the Virtues***

Primary reading: Chapter 26 on the three subfields of Stoic philosophy and Chapter 61 on virtue; plus 41H. Focus on: 26A, 41H, 61B, 61F, 61H.

Optional secondary readings: Stephen Menn, “Physics as a Virtue”; KMV, “Virtue is Knowledge.”

##### ***January 25: Intro to Stoic Logic—Kataleptic Impressions***

Reading: LS ch. 39 and ch. 40 on impressions and criteria of truth.

Secondary Reading: Tamer Nawar, “The Stoic Account of Apprehension.” *Philosophers’ Imprint* 14 (2014): 1-21 [about internalism/externalism]. Simon Shogry, “The Stoic Appeal to Expertise: Platonic Echoes in the Reply to Indistinguishability.” *Apeiron* 54 (2) (2021): 129–159.

##### ***February 1: Intro to Stoic Physics—The Active and the Passive Principle***

Reading: LS 27D, LS 43, 44, LS 55A and D.

Secondary Reading: Michael Frede, “The Original Notion of Cause.” In: Malcolm Schofield, Jonathan Barnes and Myles Burnyeat (eds.), *Doubt and Dogmatism*, CUP.

Optional Readings: Ada Bronowski, *The Stoics on Lekta: All There is to Say*, ch. 3 “Bodies and Incorporeals,” OUP 2019. Michael Frede, Phronesis (forthcoming), “The Original Notion of Cause,” “La Théologie Stoïcienne,” In: Gilbert Romeyer Dherbey and Jean-Baptiste Gourinat (eds.), *Les Stoïciens*, Paris: Vrin, 2005, 213–232. Wolfhart Totschnig, “Bodies and their Effects: The Stoics on Causation and Incorporeals”, *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 95 (2013):

119–147. KMV, “A Unified Notion of Cause.” *Rhizomata: A Journal for Ancient Philosophy and Science* 6(1) (2018): 65-86.

**February 8: Knowledge and Opinion**

Reading: LS chapter 41, 61S and T

Secondary Readings: Constance Meinwald, “Ignorance and Opinion in Stoic Epistemology.” *Phronesis* 50 (2005): 215–31. KMV, “Why Beliefs are Never True,” in: *Belief and Truth* (OUP 2012).

**February 15: Workshop in Ancient and Contemporary Philosophy**

Katerina Ierodiakonou, “Concepts and Conceptions in Stoic Philosophy”

Guest speaker: Katerina Ierodiakonou (Athens)

Commentators: Anthony Hejduk (Columbia), Whitney Schwab (Maryland)

**February 22: Movements of the Mind**

Reading: 39A, B, G; cf. 65B; 53 G, H, J, Q; cf. 46A; 69A

Secondary Readings: Simon Shogry, “The Stoic Appeal to Expertise: Platonic Echoes in the Reply to Indistinguishability.” *Apeiron* 54 (2) (2021): 129–159. Iakovos Vasiliou, “Ancient Philosophy and Disjunctivism: The Case of the Stoics.” In Casey Doyle, Joe Milburn, and Duncan Pritchard (eds.), *New Issues in Epistemological Disjunctivism*. Routledge 2019.

**March 1: True and False Propositions**

Reading: LS 39G, 33A, B, C, D, F, G, I, P and 34A, B, C, D.

Secondary reading: Katerina Ierodiakonou, “Stoic Logic,” Susanne Bobzien, “Stoic Logic,” Susanne Bobzien, “Frege Plagiarized the Stoics,” in: *Themes in Plato, Aristotle, and Hellenistic Philosophy: Keeling Lectures 2011-18* (2021); KMV, “The Stoics on Lekta: All There Is to Say,” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* (2020) [review of Bronowski (2019)].

**March 8: A Case Study in Stoic Logic—Vagueness**

Reading: LS 37B-H

Secondary Reading: Susanne Bobzien, “Chrysippus and the Epistemic Theory of Vagueness,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, New Series, Vol. 102 (2002): 217-238; KMV, “Vagueness and Kataleptic Impressions,” for *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*.

**SPRING BREAK**

**March 22: Workshop in Ancient and Contemporary Philosophy**

Simon Shogry, “Chrysippus on the starting-points for *epistēmē*”

Guest speaker: Simon Shogry, Oxford

Commentators: Abigail Breuker (Columbia), Máté Veres (Toronto)

**March 29: Impulse, Action, and Appropriate Action**

Reading: 53A, Q, R, 33I, 65A, 57A, B, C, 69A

Secondary Reading: Brad Inwood, 1985 (selections).

**April 5: Value, Proper Function, Virtue**

Reading: LS 58, 59 (especially A and B), 60 (especially G and K), 64C

Secondary Readings: KMV, “Taking the Same Things Seriously and not Seriously” (2014).

### ***April 12: The End and Happiness***

Reading: LS 63

Secondary Readings: KMV, “The Virtues and Happiness in Stoic Ethics,” in: Chris Bobonich (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Ancient Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 183-199; Gisela Striker, “The Role of Oikeiôsis in Stoic Ethics,” in *Essays in Hellenistic Epistemology and Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 281–297; and “Antipater, or the Art of Living,” in *The Norms of Nature*, ed. Malcolm Schofield and Gisela Striker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 185–204.

### ***Week 13, April 19: Emotions Versus Rational Feelings***

Reading: LS chapter 65

Secondary reading: Margaret Graver, *Stoicism and Emotion*, University of Chicago Press 2007; KMV, “Anger, present injustice and future revenge in Seneca’s *De Ira*,” in Gareth Williams and Katharina Volk (eds.), *New Developments in Seneca Studies*. Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition, (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 57-74.

### ***Week 14, April 26: The Cosmic City***

Reading: LS ch. 67, 66A, re-read ch. 57

Secondary readings: Martha Nussbaum, “Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism,” *5 Journal of Political Philosophy* 1 (1997); KMV, *Law, Reason, and the Cosmic City* (OUP 2012), ch. 2.

## **5. Requirements**

### **5.1. Undergraduate Students**

#### ***Participation***

In-class participation, discussion posts, and similar contributions (for example, discussions in group office hours held by the TA or the instructor) jointly count for **10% of the grade**.

#### ***Presentation Option***

Two or three students jointly prepare a 5-minute presentation, followed by 15 minutes of discussion, so that this segment of class takes up 20 minutes in total. The presentation is delivered by one of the students (or jointly). It introduces one of the secondary readings, outlining the key proposal made in a scholarly article. Jointly taking responsibility for a 20-minute discussion replaces one 1-page assignment and counts for **10% of the grade for everyone in the team, no matter whether you are the presenter**. If you’re not doing a presentation, you must write **three** instead of three outlines (see below), added deadline **March 16, 10% of the grade**.

#### ***Written Work Toward a Term Paper***

##### ***Step One: Outlines***

Undergraduate students must pick portions of the assigned readings for analysis and submit **two 1-page papers. Due dates: Feb 8** (1st assignment), **March 1** (2nd assignment)—or earlier!

Choose one fragment that strikes you as complex and interesting, or at the most two fragments, if it seems to you that jointly they convey interesting ideas. Your paper should have two parts:

1. A bullet-point outline of what you take to be key ideas and/or steps in the argument.
2. Pick two terms that come up in the text and explain how, according to the reading, we should understand these terms (for example, if the notion of virtue comes up, try to explain briefly what, according to this text, virtue is).

The point of these assignments is twofold: to prepare for in-class discussion and to practice the kind of reading/analysis that is needed for philosophical engagement with Stoic philosophy.

1-page assignments are single spaced, 350-450 words. They must be submitted through the "Assignment" function on Canvas. Each 1-page assignment counts for **15% of the grade**. **In total**, the two 1-page assignments count for **30% of the grade**.

### ***Step Two: 5-page paper***

Write a short paper on one of the topics/questions outlined in the mini videos. Work with the skills you acquired while writing the outlines (i.e., start from an outline of the text, explain all technical vocabulary). Your paper should be double-spaced, c. 5 pages, c. 800-1000 words. Due date **March 29**. The paper counts for **25% of the grade**.

### ***Step Three: extended 10-page paper***

You'll receive feedback on your 5-page paper, with input on how to extend it to a 10-page paper. The extension and revision of the paper counts for **25% of the grade**. Due date: **April 26**.

## **5.2. Graduate Students**

### ***Presentation***

Two students jointly prepare a 5-minute presentation on one of the secondary readings and are prepared to engage in a 20-minute discussion of related issues.

### ***Written Work***

One term paper (16-18 pages), or two shorter papers (8-9 pages). Short papers address topics discussed in class or in the mini videos. Deadlines:

**March 1:** Please let me know whether you write two short papers or one longer paper.

**March 29 and April 26:** Deadlines for the two short papers.

**March 12 and April 26:** Deadlines for abstract and full paper for the long paper. If you're writing on the Sophist, please let me know and we'll find an arrangement for the deadlines.

## **6. Academic Integrity and Honor Code**

Please consult Columbia University's policies on academic integrity as well as Columbia's honor code:

<http://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/academicintegrity>

<https://www.college.columbia.edu/ccschonorcode>

<http://bulletin.columbia.edu/general-studies/undergraduates/academic-policies/academic-integrity-community-standards/>

Columbia has recently updated policies for academic integrity specifically regarding the context of online learning:

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/research/academic-integrity-and-responsible-conduct-research>

These policies explain Columbia University's academic regulations and how you can safeguard the integrity of your original work. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the details of what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty. You are expected to confirm to these policies in your academic work. It is important that you understand that academic dishonesty can lead to disciplinary action, including failure in the course and suspension, or even expulsion, from the University.

The intellectual venture in which we are all engaged requires of faculty and students alike the highest level of personal and academic integrity. As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity.

Scholarship, by its very nature, is an iterative process, with ideas and insights building one upon the other. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars' work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that inform our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited.

In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated. Students failing to meet these responsibilities should anticipate being asked to leave Columbia.

## **7. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with Disability Services. More information on the Disability Services registration process is available online at [www.health.columbia.edu/ods](http://www.health.columbia.edu/ods) and <http://www.college.columbia.edu/rightsandresponsibilities>. Registered students must present an Accommodation Letter to the professor before an exam or other accommodations can be provided. Students who have, or think they may have, a disability are invited to contact Disability Services for a confidential discussion at (212) 854-2388 (Voice/TTY) or by email at [disability@columbia.edu](mailto:disability@columbia.edu).