

PHILOSOPHY 3000 "ANCIENT WESTERN"

Fall Term 2007

Call Number: 56137

Room: Peabody 220

Time: 2:00 - 3:15 PM; Tuesdays and Thursdays

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 2:00-4:00; or by appointment

Texts:

- 1) The Symposium, Jowett, Benjamin (translator)
- 2) The Republic of Plato, Lee, Desmond (translator)
- 3) The Last Days of Socrates, Tredennick, Hugh
- 4) Nichomachean Ethics, Ross, David (translator)

*The unrefined and sluggish mind
of Homo javanensis
Could only treat of things concrete
And present to the senses.*

--- Willard Van Orman Quine ---
(philosopher/logician)

As I look back on it now [high school and college], it's obvious that studying history and philosophy was much better preparation for the stock market than, say studying statistics. Investing in stocks is an art, not a science, and people who've been trained to rigidly quantify everything have a big disadvantage.

--- Peter Lynch ---
(former director: Fidelity Magellan)

In the following syllabus I describe the framework of this course and what is required by it. I consider this syllabus a contractual agreement between you and me. If, for any reason, you do not believe that you can follow this syllabus and do the work required, then consider dropping this class NOW. Others are waiting in the wings.

GOING TO MY WEB PAGE

It will be **important** for you to check in on my web page from time-to-time. To do this, follow these steps. After you are at my web page, I suggest that you book mark it. That will make life easier for you as you have to reenter this page.

- (1) Go to <Department of Philosophy Home Page>;*
- (2) on the left side of the screen click on <PEOPLE>;*
- (3) in the middle of the screen click <FACULTY>;*
- (4) scroll down to <Frank R. Harrison, III> and click on name;*
- (5) click on <Dr. Harrison's Web Page>;*
- (6) scroll to your appropriate class to read information and print off what you need.*

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

- 1) To introduce you to Socrates/Plato and Plato's most famous student, Aristotle;
- 2) To introduce you to rational thinking and argumentation by means of questioning, discussion, lectures, tests, and a final research paper;
- 3) To begin to clarify what it is for a problem to be a philosophical problem and what are the sorts of considerations necessary to resolve such problems in a rational manner;
- 4) Through written tests and papers to provide you with opportunities to display knowledge of the materials assigned and discussed as well as to develop and express in writing well-structured rational arguments to support various positions;
- 5) To provide class time opportunities for you to raise, and defend or criticize, questions and views concerning the assigned writings as applied to particular real life type situations; and
- 6) To aid you in coming to understand yourself better as a rational, thinking human being.

This course is offered in a professional and critical manner. You would be wise to approach the course as you would expect to approach any serious job you might have after graduation. As an individual human being, you have my full respect and concern.

As a student learning, I demand, and expect, of you nothing less than your very best! In producing to the standard of your very best within the environment of this course, you will be required to display a great deal of discipline and hard work. To attempt anything less will be to cheat yourself, others in the class, me, all of those taxpayers who are helping to support your education, and ultimately the state and nation. I am not at all tolerant of any of this. Nor should you be.

BASES OF FINAL GRADE

Two tests..... 30 each
Final Take Home Test..... 30
Participation..... 10

Merely attending class – even a perfect attendance – gives NO credit toward participation. Further participation must be thoughtful while showing that you have read the material, listened in class, and are not merely attempting “to make points.” Of course, I am the final judge in all of this.

STUDENT DATA SHEET

You must complete a Student Data Sheet. You will find this sheet on my Web Page. On this sheet indicate the name you wish to be called in class. Also indicate if you do not want either your local address or your local telephone number to be included in a class directory to be passed out to all members of the class.

FIRST SUBMITTED ASSIGNMENT

The first written assignment must be submitted to the professor **no later than Thursday, 23 August, during the class period.** This assignment is to have completed a “Student Data Sheet” a copy of which you will find on my Web Page. A recent photo **MUST** be attached to this sheet within the space indicated. (Photos can be obtained at Kinko's if you do not have a recent one.) You are then to write an autobiographical sketch. The autobiographical sketch is to be typed (12 point font with one inch margins) on standard 8.5" x 11" paper (not pulled from a notebook). The sketch is to be **no shorter than three (3) full pages and no longer than five (5) full pages.** Pages are to be numbered consecutively in the upper right-hand corner of each page, beginning with the first page.

When you have completed your autobiographical sheet, place your Student Summary Sheet on the top and staple all together firmly in the upper left hand corner.

Not to submit this assignment as specified is reason for withdrawal from this class.

In the autobiographical sketch I invite you to introduce yourself, as a person, to me. You may wish to address such questions as "Why am I in an institution of higher learning, and especially the University of Georgia?", "What is required to be successful at the University?", "What do I think relevant to my life in general, and to my university education in particular?", "What are my major likes and dislikes in both 'things' and people?", "What specific goals do I wish to reach in my next seven years? Why do I wish to reach these goals and not some others?", "Do I consider myself a moral person and on what standards of morality?", "Do I hold anything so important that I would be willing to die for it? Why is this so important to me, or why is there not something so important for me?". "Why am I in this class and what do I hope to achieve from it?" These questions are only illustrative of the types of topics you might consider. *Go your own path.*

Remember, I must have a good recent photo of you included with this autobiographical sketch. I consider this a necessary condition for you to remain in this class.

TESTS

There are two (2) in-class written tests. There is also a final take home test. Each of these counts 30 of the final grade of the student

These tests will be composed of several critical essay questions from which you will select two on which to write an essay. These essays are not to be understood as purely descriptive, or opinion, essays, although surely both description and opinion will be appropriate to some degree. Here you will be presented with a problem or situation to analyze, a hypothesis to defend or attack, *etc.* Most importantly you are to construct arguments, give rational and objective reasons, etc. in support of the position you take in the essay. Personal beliefs and personal opinions, no matter how important and strong they might be for you, are not to be confused with arguments and reasons. You are to demonstrate in lucid and correct English, using good vocabulary, your ability to apply the assigned reading materials, class discussions and the rational method in addressing the topic of the essay.

In this class by "critical essay" the following is minimally understood. An essay shall contain minimally five paragraphs, each paragraph having at least five sentences. An essay must have a well constructed introduction (not merely a "first paragraph") and a well-constructed conclusion (not merely a "last paragraph"). Minimally the introduction must state clearly what the thesis of the essay is and how you intend to develop and support that thesis. The conclusion must not merely summarize the salient points of the essay and their relation in regard to the general thesis, but also suggest problem areas and other considerations that still need to be considered in relation to the topic under consideration. Students often make low grades because they do not construct satisfactory INTRODUCTORY and CONCLUDING paragraphs. Each paragraph must have a clearly written topic sentence, the subject of which is to be developed in that paragraph. Further, each paragraph, with the exception of the conclusion, must have a clearly written transitional sentence relating the

content of that paragraph to the topic of the next. A very good five paragraph essay will earn you a “C+.” (I consider a “C+” a very solid grade.) I expect more for higher grades.

In a critical essay it is not sufficient merely to relate what someone (e.g., Plato or Aristotle) says about a given topic. You must also clearly put forth the reasons (i.e., arguments) supporting why someone holds this position. Equally important are arguments you develop pointing out any weaknesses in the position under consideration, or if you perceive no weaknesses, arguments in support of this position.

Proper grammar, style and spelling is demanded in all cases of writing in this course. Mistakes in grammar, style and spelling significantly lower a test grade. Examples of standard references for proper grammar, style and spelling are

- 1) *Harbrace Handbook of English*, and
- 2) *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*

It is important to note that the materials and tests in this class are cumulative. Hence, once anything has been introduced through reading assignments, hand-outs, class discussion, etc. you are responsible for both knowing and using that material through the entire class.

If, for some reason (e.g., ADD, hypomania, etc.) you require special consideration when taking a test, or in the class in general, please see me as soon as possible.

FINAL TEST

The final test is to be completed “at home.” It is due during the beginning of class on Thursday, 29 December, or before if you have completed it. The only case under which this take home test will be received late is outlined in the above comments regulating missing tests. All of the above comments concerning writing tests are applicable to writing the final test. About a week prior to the due date you will be give several topic/questions on which to write argumentative essays. You will select two of these. Each essay shall be a full four to five typed pages, in 12 point font, and with one inch margins on all four sides of the page. Three and a half pages is not sufficient and five pages and one line on page six is too much. Each page is to be numbered at the bottom center of the page. You are not to copy the question as part of the essay. I want a “title page” on which you put your name, the name and number of this course, and the date. This page is to be put on the top of all of your work and all of this is to be stapled in the upper lefthand corner before coming to class to turn in your work. The title page, of course, is not part of the overall page count for the completed test. Failure to comply with any of these instructions will result in your paper not being accepted and you receiving a zero on it.

STEPS IN REASONING AND WRITING WELL

In any writing you do for this class, always follow the following:

- 1) Always state the *hypothesis* (or hypotheses) to be considered (discussed, argued for, etc.). Point out key terms that need defining, points to be questioned, explanations needed, arguments required, and the like.
- 2) Always state the *methodology* to be used. State *how* you are going to proceed in supporting and justifying the hypothesis.
- 3) Always *clarify* the hypothesis so that both the person presenting it (i.e., you) and the person receiving it will be discussing exactly the same thing.
- 4) Always *defend*, or *reject*, the hypothesis under consideration by presenting various kinds of arguments, explanations, factual considerations, as are appropriate to both the type of hypothesis being discussed and the specific hypothesis itself.
- 5) Always clearly draw some *conclusion(s)* and indicate new areas of discussion suggested by this (these) conclusion(s).

FOUNDATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS OF RATIONALITY

In that you are attempting to say something rational in your writing and in class participation, you will want to be mindful of the following:

- 1) Nothing in reality can correspond to a verbal contradiction.
- 2) Because someone (even a *great number* of people) *BELIEVE* that *X* does (or does not) exist, is (or is not) true, is (or is not) morally (politically, financially, aesthetically, etc.) acceptable (or not acceptable) or right (or wrong), it does not follow that *X* does (or does not) exist, is (is not) morally (politically, financially, aesthetically, etc.) acceptable (or not acceptable) or right (or wrong).
- 3) The state-of-being (e.g., gender, religious persuasion, sexual orientation, race, and even sanity) of someone uttering *X often* has little to do with whether *X* is rationally acceptable or not. On the other hand, whether we accept or reject *X* may very well be influenced by our perception of the one presenting *X*. We must be careful of how we are influenced.
- 4) We must not confuse motivation with argumentation or explanation. No hypothesis or claim is to be accepted without evidence or argument no matter how strong your motive for believing it is.

5) A declarative sentence must be understood before it can be said whether that sentence is true or false, correct or incorrect, acceptable or not --- that is to say, meaning rationally proceeds acceptance or rejection of any claim. Thus, before presenting arguments, one wants always clearly to define all essential terms used in an argument.

6) If something holds to be the case in one situation, then it also must hold to be the case in a situation (similar to) like the first unless there are strong over-riding arguments for accepting some differences between the otherwise similar cases.

POSTING OF FINAL GRADES

No final grades are posted, or given out, by the professor for this class. You will receive your final grade only from the Registrar.

CHEATING

Cheating, plagiarism, etc. is in no way tolerated. Any suspected instance of such behavior is reported immediately to the Student Judiciary for action. In all such cases the policies of the Student Handbook are strictly followed. Be certain to read, "A Culture of Honesty at the University of Georgia".

ATTENDANCE

It is the better part of wisdom to attend, and participate in, ALL classes. If you are not in class, you certainly cannot participate. Further, coming to class but regularly sleeping, or being inattentive, through lectures, discussions, etc. does not count as attendance. Those who do not attend class regularly usually drop the class, make a poor grade, or fail. Further, it is the prerogative of the professor to assign a 'WF', any time during the term, to a student for poor attendance (three or more absences is considered "poor attendance")

WITHDRAWALS

In accordance with University Policy, a 'W' is assigned, upon written request of a student to the professor, as a grade for that student if he/she wishes to withdraw from the class up until, and including, the final working day for class withdrawal as listed in the University Calendar.

If a student wishes to withdraw from the class after the final day for class withdrawal, as listed in the University Calendar, a 'WF' is assigned unless that student meets the requirements of the University for receiving a 'W.' In that case a 'W' has to be recommended to me from the Office of Student Affairs.

INCOMPLETES

I's ("Incomplete") are seldom given in this class, and only under the guidelines set out by the University. An I must be requested in a formal letter to the professor. In this letter the student requesting an I must establish that (s)he has a passing grade at the time of the request and that the reasons for requesting an I are absolutely nonacademic. Evidence supporting this claim must accompany the request letter. The final decision to give an I is left to the professor of the class. Any I must be completed within nine months after it is given. It is the absolute responsibility of the student to remember and to meet this deadline. If not, that I automatically turns into an 'F'. The details of how the I is to be completed will be written and signed by the student requesting the I as well as the professor.

IMPORTANT DATES

16 August	First day of class; complete "Student Data Sheet"
23 August	Turn in autobiographical sketch with recent photo; seating assignments
<i>25 September</i>	<i>First Test</i>
12 October	Midpoint Withdrawal Deadline -- last day to withdraw from the class with a <u>W</u>
25-26 October	Fall Break
<i>30 October</i>	<i>Second Test</i>
21 -23 November	Thanksgiving
29 November	Take Home Test Due at the Beginning of Class
6 December	Last day of class and course evaluations

STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF THE COURSE

At the end of this syllabus you will find a copy of the form used for instructor and course evaluation. Please read it carefully. If, while the class progresses, you find anything which is not up to what you perceive as an 'A' standard, please talk with me about it! It is of no positive help for anyone merely to assert something like "Harrison is a pompous ass" on the class evaluation. First, while this may well be so, there is no indication just why it is so and what might be done to make things better. And, second, even if this information were provided on the evaluation, it would be too late at the end of the class to attempt any improvements. This class contains difficult material to teach and to absorb, and you may have some *excellent suggestions* on how to go about doing this -- suggestions which I have not considered. Further, some of my teaching techniques may be counter-productive for you. We can also talk about these. Perhaps I can change, or perhaps you can come to see why I do what I do -- or a little of both. In any event, if you are dissatisfied with the way something in the class might be moving, then, as a student, you have both the right and the obligation to see me about it as soon as possible. In particular, do not wait immediately before a test or the end of the class to see me. Then it is far too late!

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments should always be read through before the class in which the assigned readings are discussed. Immediately after that class period you should carefully reread the material, and work on organizing and restructuring your notes of the day. If you do not follow this procedure of preparation and follow-up, you will quickly become behind in your work, will not understand what is being presented and discussed in class, will not be able to participate in class, and will eventually earn a low or failing grade.

When reading any assignment, always first read through quickly the entire assignment. Then go back and study the material carefully and in depth. It will not be unusual for you to read each Platonic dialogue and each book in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics four or five times. I suggest taking notes on your reading assignments but DO NOT try to underline in the text. Then merge the notes you take on the text with the notes you take in class.

I strongly urge that you study regularly in groups. I further urge that no group tolerates a parasite.

Always read the editor's introduction, and any other editorial notes, for each of the books you have. Doing this is an assumed part of your assignments.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

16 August	Getting Started; complete "Student Data Sheet" and submit
21, 23, 28 August	<u>Symposium</u>
30 August, 4 September	<u>Republic</u> : Translator's <i>Introduction</i> , Parts One, Two and Three
6, 11 September	<u>Republic</u> : Parts Three, Four and Five
13, 18 September	<u>Republic</u> : Parts Seven and Section 3 of Part Eight
20 September	<u>Republic</u> : Part Eleven
25 September	Test I
27 September, 2 October	<u>Euthyphro</u>
4 October	<u>Apology</u>
9, 11 October	<u>Crito</u> , and <u>Phaedo</u> pp 178-183
12 October	
	<i>This is the last day to withdraw from the course with a "W". After today, according to University regulations, I must assign a "WF" if you decide to withdraw.</i>
16, 18, 23 October	<u>Nicomachean Ethics</u> : Books I-III

25, 26 October	Fall Break
<i>30 October</i>	<i>Test II</i>
1, 6 November	<u>Nicomachean Ethics</u> : Books IV-VI
8, 13 November	<u>Nicomachean Ethics</u> : Books IV-VI
15, 20 November	<u>Nicomachean Ethics</u> : Books VI-VII
22 November	Thanksgiving Holiday
27, 29 November	<u>Nicomachean Ethics</u> : Books VIII-X
<i>29 November</i>	

Final Take Home Tests must be submitted in proper format at the beginning of class, otherwise a paper will not be graded and a grade of "zero" will be assigned.

4 December	<u>Nicomachean Ethics</u> : Books VIII-X
6 December	Last Day of Class
	Final Comments and Observations and Class evaluations

FIRST READING ASSIGNMENT: *The Symposium*

We are now beginning an examination of the question, "What is love?" Another way of putting this is to ask, "What do I -- or you -- mean when I -- or you -- say that I love someone or something?" Furthermore, we also want to -- need to -- ask how love is related to concepts such as goodness, beauty, truth, and knowledge. For example, do I ever love anything or anyone of which, or of whom, I have absolutely no knowledge? Can I ever love that which I view as evil and/or ugly? There are dozens of questions and opinions to be raised here, and I want you to raise and talk about them against the background of the dialogues you will now be reading! Engage your roommates and your friends in such conversations.

In reading "commentaries" on, and translations of the Platonic dialogues, you will sometimes find writers attempt to view these ancient writings through the lens of Puritanism and Victorianism. Here we may be told that Socrates and Plato were against "physical" desires, impulses, pleasures, contacts, etc., and that we, like they, should "live" in a transcendental world of "pure spirit." I do not interpret Socrates or Plato in this hyper-puritanical-other-world manner. Certainly no person should be a "slave" to his or her physical desires. There must always be control of our passions. But, according to the ancient Greeks, that is not to say he should not satisfy them in a well-ordered, balanced manner. As the contemporary philosopher, Gilbert Ryle, points out, "That a man should not be a mere weathercock to his fears, likings and hankerings does not entail that ideally he should be screened from them. Though gales may sink the ill-rigged or ill-steered sailing ship, no ship can sail without winds. Winds can be too weak as well as too strong." (The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, "Plato")

The Symposium is "high drama," parts of which you would do well to read aloud ... for example the "speech" of Aristophanes. Later you can compare the speeches in The Symposium with the Divided

Line in The Republic. And you may see the Myth of the Sun and the Myth of the Cave of The Republic found in their own way in The Symposium. If so, how and where? Can we be a lover of anything if we are ignorant of that which we profess to love?

Also be aware of the “rite of transformation” of the individual which can be brought about by love/desire (eros) when properly followed.

SECOND READING ASSIGNMENT: *The Republic*

In these passages Plato raises questions concerning what is justice (that is, morality) and how do considerations of justice (morality) relate to knowledge, what exists, proper education, and a host of other questions. We must be careful, however, with the notion of justice (morality) as presented in The Republic. For this is not a dialogue dealing with Political Philosophy in the sense that some of you might think of Political Philosophy, although it is certainly related to that. For, after all, the Greek view is that the individual and the state are essentially related to one another. In any event, we shall be tracing this Socratic notion of “justice” as we move through The Republic.

We shall also want constantly to be aware of how does this notion of “justice” relate to loving properly. Keep in mind and compare what you read here with the various things you have discovered in The Symposium.

Two questions you may want to think about seriously. First, in what does justice (morality) consist. What is it to be just (moral)? The other question is this: Why be just (moral)? Even if we know what it is to be just (moral), why bother with it in the first place? Socrates is continually addressing these two questions throughout The Republic.

THIRD READING ASSIGNMENT: *Euthyphro* and *The Apology*

After you have completed the sections from The Republic, read Euthyphro. Again, first read the dialogue quickly through. Euthyphro concerns itself with piety, or the love of the gods by humans. After all, if we want to come to understand better love, we ought to consider what is it to love the gods (or God). Do you believe that anyone, yourself included, can be pious, not knowing what piety is? What is it to love the gods (God), how is this love related to love of things and love of another human being? Or is it related to them? How is knowledge related to the love of the gods (God)? Even the atheist must raise such questions for he claims that there is no god to love.

The Apology is an account of the trial of Socrates and Plato's view of Socrates' defense against his accusers. Do you think that Socrates was guilty of the charges brought against him? Be prepared to defend your position against the well laid out arguments of Socrates. Your mere opinion is

rationally worthless. You must best Socrates' arguments if you are going reasonably to disagree with him.

FOURTH READING ASSIGNMENT: *Crito* and *Phaedo* selection

Read *Crito* and pages 178-183 of *Phaedo*. Coupled with *Euthyphro* and *The Apology*, these dialogues provide us with a view of Socrates' last days. How do these dialogues propel us along the paths to understanding love, knowledge, etc.? In particular when reading *Crito* you might find yourself disagreeing with Socrates' actions. You may believe that if you had been the one in prison, given all the facts, then you would have attempted to escape. How would you go about convincing Socrates that you were morally right and that he was morally wrong? (Note, being practical, or prudent, is not the same thing as being moral!) In the last part of *Crito* the Laws of Athens speak to Socrates. This is another Platonic myth. In attempting to interpret this myth, ask yourself what do the Laws represent, what does Athens represent, and who (or what) does Socrates represent?

FIFTH READING ASSIGNMENT: *Nicomachean Ethics*

We are now shifting our attention to Aristotle (Plato's most famous student). Read Books I-III of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. What do you suppose Aristotle would mean by 'ethics' in general and 'virtue' in particular? What do you mean by 'ethics' and 'virtue'? Does your definition agree with that of Aristotle? If not, in what way do you differ?

SIXTH READING ASSIGNMENT: *Nicomachean Ethics*

Read Books IV and VI. Like Plato, Aristotle was deeply concerned with the notion of justice. Does Aristotle agree with Plato's notion of justice, or are these two thinkers different in their approaches? For Aristotle ethics is not simply a matter of morality but also is essentially linked to what we might call the intellect. Today do we view the intellect as an important part of ethics and morality?

SEVENTH READING ASSIGNMENT: *Nicomachean Ethics*

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* read Books VI-VII. Here Aristotle introduces the important notion of "intellectual virtue". Can we have moral virtue without intellectual virtue? How are these two related for Aristotle?

EIGHTH READING ASSIGNMENT: *Nicomachean Ethics*

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* read Books VIII and IX. Here are Aristotle's views concerning "friendship." Now read Book X. It appears that what is happiness and what is pleasure are often confused. How does Aristotle separate these two notions? Having separated them, what difference does this make to his view of ethics, virtue, and the final goal of humans? Do you believe that

happiness and pleasure are two distinct notions? Does it make sense, for example, to say that a person could be happy while in pain, or that a person could be unhappy while in a pleasant state? Think of concrete examples here.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

(N.B., where no city is named for a person, "of Athens" is understood)

The following table is supplied for you to be able to review some of the more important events which happened in the ancient western world leading up to, and during, the period of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. I thought that you might be interested in some of the parallel happenings.

B.C.

- 585: Thales of Miletus. According to Herodotus, Thales predicted in May of 585 B.C. an eclipse of the sun which was invisible in Asia Minor.
- 582: First Pythian and Isthmian games the Acropolis statues and the "Apollon"
- 580: Acragas; Aesop of Samos, fabulist
- 576: First Nemean games
- 570: Phalaris dictator at Acragas; Stesichorus of Himera, poet
- 566: First Panathenaic games
- 565: Anaximander of Miletus, born
- 561-60: First dictatorship of Peisistratus
- 560-46: Croesus of Lydia subjugates Ionia
- 558: Carthage conquers Sicily and Corsica
- 550: Emporium (Spain); 535, Elea (Italy)
- 546-27: Second dictatorship of Peisistratus
- 546: Anaximenes
- 545: Persia subjugates Ionia
- 540: Hipponax of Ephesus, poet
- 535-15: Polycrates dictator of Samos; Theodorus of Samos, artist; Anacreon of Teos, poet
- 534: Thespis establishes drama at Athens
- 531: Pythagoras of Samos; came from the island of Samos to Italy ca. 531, and there founded a religious order
- 530: Theognis of Megara, poet
- 529-00: Pythagoras, philosopher, at Crotona
- 527-10: Hippias dictator at Athens
- 520: Olympiads begun at Athens
- 517: Simonides of Ceos, poet
- 514: Conspiracy of Harmodius and Aristogeiton
- 511: Phrynichus of Athens, dramatist
- 510: Destruction of Sybaris by Crotona

- 507: Cleisthenes extends democracy at Athens
- 500: Hecataeus of Miletus, geographer; Heraclitus of Ephesus, wrote his major work ca. 500 B.C.
- 499: Ionia revolts; Aeschylus' first play
- 497: Ionian Greeks burn Sardis
- 494: Persians defeat Ionians at Lade
- 493: Themistocles archon at Athens
- 490: Marathon; temple of Aphaea at Aegina; Empedocles of Acragas born; Zeno of Elea Born
- 489: Aristides archon; trial of Miltiades
- 488-72: Theron dictator at Acragas
- 487: First selection of archons by lot
- 485-78: Gelon dictator at Syracuse
- 485: Epicharmus establishes comedy at Syracuse
- 482: Ostracism of Aristides
- 480: Battles of Artemisium, Thermopylae, Salamis, and Himera; Agelades of Argos, sculptor; Anaxa of Clazomenae came to Athens; end of the Persian War; "Fifty-year Period"
- 479: Battles of Plataea and Mycale
- 478: Pausanias of Sparta, commander of the United Greek Forces, was called back to Sparta because of his extravagant, and festive, life in Byzantium; Pindar of Thebes, poet
- 478-67: Hieron I dictator at Syracuse
- 478: Pythagoras of Rhegium, sculptor
- 477: Delian Confederacy founded
- 475: Parmenides of Elea, wrote his major work ca. 475 B.C. and came to Athens ca 450 B.C. at the age of sixty-five
- 472: Polygnotus, painter; Aeschylus' Persae
- 469: Birth of Socrates
- 468: Cimon defeats Persians at the Eurymedon; first contest between Aeschylus and Sophocles
- 467: Bacchylides of Ceos, poet; Aeschylus' Seven against Thebes
- 464-54: Helot revolt; siege of Ithome; Zeno
- 463-31: Public career of Pericles
- 462: Ephialtes limits the areopagus; pay for jurors; Anaxagoras at Athens
- 461: Cimon ostracized; Ephialtes killed
- 460: Empedocles of Acragas, philosopher; Aeschylus; Prometheus Bound; Democritus born
- 459-54: Athenian expedition to Egypt fails
- 458: Aeschylus' Oresteia; the Long Walls
- 456: Temple of Zeus at Olympia; Paeonius of Mende, sculptor
- 454: Delian treasury removed to Athens
- 450: Zeno of Elea, philosopher; Hippocrates of Chios, mathematician; Callimachus develops the Corinthian order; Philolaus of Thebes, astronomer

- 449: Alcibiades born
- 448: Peace of Callias with Persia
- 447-31: The Parthenon
- 445: Leucippus of Abdera, philosopher
- 443: Herodotus of Halicarnassus, historian, joins colonists founding Thurii (Italy); Gorgias of Leontini, Sophist
- 442-40: Melissos commanded the Samian fleet against Athens, defeating Pericles; Leucippus of Elea of Miletos, there being some debate about the place of his birth, was a contemporary of Melissos
- 442: Sophocles' Antigone; Myron of Eleutherae, sculptor
- 440: Protagoras of Abdera, Sophist
- 438: Pheidias' Athene Parthenos; Euripides Alcestis
- 437: The Propylaea
- 435-34: War between Corinth and Corcyra
- 433: Alliance of Athens and Corcyra
- 432: Revolt of Potidaea; trials of Aspasia, Pheidias, and Anaxagoras
- 431-04: Peloponnesian War
- 431-24: Euripides' Medea, Andromache, and Hecuba; Sophocles' Electra
- 431: (Nehemiah rebuilding Jerusalem; Rome completes conquest of Volscians)
- 431: Siege of Potidaea; Socrates, then aged 38, saves in battle the life of Alcibiades, aged 18, and gives up in his favor the prize of valor
- 430: Plague at Athens; trial of Pericles; Spartans invade Attica; Xenophon born about this time
- 429: Death of Pericles; Cleon in power; Sophocles' Oedipus the King; Plague continues
- 428: Spartans in Attica; probable year of Plato's birth, Revolt of Mytilene; Euripides' Hippolytus; death of Anaxagoras
- 427: Fall of Mytilene; reprieve of the Lesbians; Spartans in Attica; Embassy of Gorgias at Athens; Prodicus and Hippias, Sophists
- 425: Demosthenes' victory at Pylos, Spartans in Attica; Athens doubles tribute of the subject allies; siege of Sphacteria; Aristophanes' Acharnians
- 424: Battle of Delion; Athenians defeated by the Thebans, with their corps d'elite of friends afterwards known as the Sacred Band; Alcibiades rescues Socrates during the retreat; Thucydides, historian, exiled; Brasidas takes Amphipolis; Aristophanes' Knights
- 423: One year's truce; Aristophanes presents The Clouds in which Socrates is represented as an anarchic influence on young men; Zeuxis of Heraclea and Parrhasius of Ephesus, painters
- 422: Assault on Amphipolis; Cleon and the Spartan general Brasidas both killed; Autolykos, aged about 17, wins his first crown at the Panathenaic Games; the occasion of the party described in Xenophon's Symposium; Aristophanes' Wasps
- 421: Peace of Nicias; Aristophanes' Peace

- 420: Hippocrates of Cos, physician; Democritus of Abdera, philosopher; Polycleitus of Sicyon, sculptor; Olympic Games held – lavish displays by Alcibiades who enters seven chariots and wins first, second and fourth prizes
- 420-04: The Erechthem
- 419: Lysias, orator; Alliance with Argos engineered by Alcibiades
- 418: Athens re-enters the war; Spartan victory at Mantinea; Euripides' Ion
- 416: Melos reduced and captured by Athenians after siege; adult males massacred and non-combatants enslaved, Phaedo probably among them; Euripides' Electra
- 415-13: Athenian expedition to Syracuse
- 416: Agathon awarded the prize for Tragedy; the occasion of the party described in Plato's Symposium
- 415: First performance of Euripides' Trojan Women; preparations for Sicilian expedition/ mutilation of the Hermae and accusation of Alcibiades; Expedition sets out in early summer; Alcibiades recalled for trial but escapes to Sparta
- 414: Siege of Syracuse; Aristophanes' Birds
- 413: Dekeleia seized and fortified by the Spartans on advice of Alcibiades; Mykalessos in Boeotia seized by Thracians under Athenian command, with barbarous massacre of non-combatants, including children in school, Timaea, wife of King Agis, seduced by Alcibiades; Reinforcements sent to Sicily under Demosthenes, whose night attack is repulsed with heavy loss; Nicias agrees to leave but is delayed by eclipse of the moon (August 27th); Naval action in harbor and total defeat of Athenian fleet; Retreat of Athenian army followed by debacle; Euripides' Iphigenia in Tauris
- 412: Alcibiades campaigning in Ionian Islands; widespread revolt of Athenian subject allies; Sparta recognizes Persian claim to Ionia, in return for funds to finance her fleet; Isthmian Games held and Athenians invited; Alcibiades goes to Persians; is entertained by Tissaphernes; Euripides' Helen and Andromeda
- 411: Subversion of democracy in Athens; promise of electoral roll of 4,000 not implemented; political assassinations and reign of terror; Revolution in Samos crushed with help of Alcibiades, who has discarded the oligarch (according to Thucydides, because he had promised them more than the Persians would give); Counter-revolution in Athens by moderate conservatives under Theramenes, in time to prevent capitulation to Sparta; The Four Hundred oligarch overthrown; leaders in exile; Euboea captured by Spartans with crippling loss of food-producing land and private estates; The restored democracy recalls Alcibiades, who elects to remain in Samos in command of the fleet; Aristophanes' Lysistrata and Thesmophoriazusae
- 410: Alcibiades victorious in the Aegean; restoration of the democracy; Euripides' Electra performed
- 409: Agathon, and possibly Euripides, leave Athens for Macedon
- 408: Alcibiades recovers Byzantium and returns in triumph to Athens; Timotheus of Miletus, poet and musician; Euripides' Orestes
- 407: Lysander in command of Spartan fleet

- 406: Antiochos defeated by Lysander in battle of Notium (Cape Rain); Alcibiades deposed; Battle of Arginusae (the White Isles); Desertion of crews causes heavy loss of life; unconstitutional trial of the Generals; protest by Socrates; Offer of peace by Spartans; the demagogue Cleophon moves rejection; Death of Euripides and Sophocles; Euripides' Bacchae and Iphigenia in Aulis
- 405-367: Dionysius I dictator at Syracuse
- 405: Lysander, reappointed to command at Cyrus' request, blockades Lampsakos; Athenian fleet annihilated at Aegospotami (Goat's Greek); General revolt of subject allies (except Samos); Siege of Athens begun; Aristophanes' Frogs
- 404: Siege of Athens; Theramenes negotiates in Salamis; starvation compels surrender (April); Thirty Tyrants established in Athens by Lysander; Reign of terror; Alcibiades assassinated in Phrygia; Autolykos murdered; Theramenes procures nomination of 3,000 citizens entitled to civil rights
- 403: Kritias denounces Theramenes; Thrasybulos and the Seventy seize Phyle; judicial murder of Eleussinians; capture of Piraeus and Battle of Munychia; Kritias killed; King Pausanias of Sparta intervenes; proclaims amnesty and withdraws garrison; Restoration of the democracy
- 402: Lysander deposed
- 401: Cyrus II killed in war of succession against Artaxerxes;; his mercenary army of Ten Thousand Greeks left leaderless, their general, including Proxenos the friend of Xenophon, being treacherously killed by Tissaphernes; Xenophon rallies the despairing troops and with assistance of other junior officers marches them from Babylon to the Hellespont across wild and hostile country; Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus
- 400: Death of King Agis; his son barred from the succession on suspicion of Alcibiades' paternity
- 399: Xenophon in exile; Socrates indicted, tried, and executed after thirty days in prison, awaiting the return of the sacred gallery from Delos
- 399-60: Agesilaus king at Sparta
- 397: War between Syracuse and Carthage
- 396: Aristippus of Cyrene and Antisthenes of Athens, philosophers
- 395: Athens rebuilds the Long Walls
- 394: Battles of Coronea and Cnidus
- (?)393: Plato's Apology; Xenophon's Memorabilia; Aristophanes' Ecclesiazusae
- 391-87: Dionysius subjugates south Italy
- 391: Isocrates opens his school
- 390: Evagoras Hellenizes Cyprus
- 387: Peace of Antalcidas, or King's Peace; Plato visits Archytas of Taras, mathematician, and Dionysius I
- 386: Plato founds the Academy
- 383: Spartans occupy Cadmeia at Thebes
- 380: Isocrates' Panegyricus

- 397: Pelopidas and Melon Liberate Thebes
- 378-54: Second Athenian Empire
- 375: Theaetetus, mathematician
- 372: Diogenes of Sinope, philosopher
- 371: Epaminondas victorious at Leuctra
- 370: Diocoles of Euboea, embryologist; Eudoxus of Cnidus, astronomer
- 367-57: Dionysius II dictator at Syracuse; Dion plans reforms
- 367: Plato visits Dionysius III
- 362: Epaminondas wins and dies at Mantinea
- 361: Plato's third visit to Syracuse
- 360: Praxiteles of Athens and Scopas of Paros, sculptors; Ephorus of Cyme and Theopompus of Chios, historians
- 359: Philip II regent in Macedonia
- 357-46: War between Athens and Macedonia
- 357-46: Exile of Dionysius II
- 356-46: Second Sacred War
- 356: Birth of Alexander the Great; burning of second temple at Ephesus; Isocrates' On the Peace
- 355: Isocrates' Areopagiticus
- 354: Assassination of Dion
- 353-49: The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus
- 351: Demosthenes' Philippic I
- 349: Philip attacks Olynthus; Demosthenes' Olynthiacs I and II
- 348: Heracleides of Pontus, astronomer; Speusippus succeeds Plato as head of the Academy
- 346: Demosthenes' On the Peace; Isocrates' Letter to Philip
- 344: Timoleon rescues Syracuse; Demosthenes' Philippic II
- 343: Trial and acquittal of Aechines
- 342-38: Aristotle tutor of Alexander
- 340: Timoleon defeats the Carthaginians
- 338: Philip defeats Athenians at Chaeronea; death of Isocrates
- 336: Assassination of Philip; accession of Alexander and Darius III
- 335: Alexander burns down Thebes, and begins his Persian campaigns
- 334: Aristotle opens the Lyceum; battle of the Granicus; choragic monument of Lysicrates
- 333: Battle of Issus
- 332: Siege and capture of Tyre; surrender of Jerusalem; foundation of Alexandria
- 331: Battle of Gaugamela (Arbela); Alexander at Babylon and Susa
- 330: Apelles of Sicyon, painter; Lysippus of Argos, sculptor; Aeschines' Against Ctesiphon; Demosthenes' On the Crown
- 329--8: Alexander invades central Asia
- 327: Deaths of Cleitus and Callisthenes
- 327--5: Alexander in India

- 325: Voyage of Nearchus
- 324: Exile of Demosthenes
- 323: Death of Alexander; Lamian War
- 322: Deaths of Aristotle, Demosthenes, and Diogene

REMEMBER — any suggestions for improving the class are GREATLY APPRECIATED! Thank you.

KEEP SMILING!

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