

COURSE OUTLINE/ **PHIL 355 ARISTOTLE**
Winter term 2013: T TH 11:30 – 13:00, EDUC 627

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This course is intended to give students a sense of the diversity of Aristotle's philosophical interests, together with some idea of how those interests are related. We will be concerned with two topics in particular: substance, and the nature of human character. We will begin with Aristotle's *Physics*, *Categories*, *On Generation and Corruption*, and *Generation of Animals*, all of which tell us something about substance: what it is, what it is not, how it comes into being and how it changes. *On the Soul*, a work concerned with questions in biology and psychology as well as epistemology, will serve as a bridge between the investigation of substance and Aristotle's moral and political philosophy. We will then turn to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which takes up explicitly the question of moral character and its development. Finally, we will read the first book of Aristotle's *Politics*, and consider the importance of conceptions of nature and political life with respect to moral character. Among other issues and problems we will investigate are: the categories and the theory of predication; form and matter; change; causation and explanation; perception and cognition; the role of choice in action and virtue; inequality and its justification.

Note on pedagogy: This course is taught in one of McGill's interactive classrooms. Students should expect to interact, with the instructor and with one another, during class time. This will require preparation in advance, and active participation during classes.

Texts: *A New Aristotle Reader*, ed. J. L. Ackrill, and a Coursepack, will be available at the Word Bookstore, 469 Milton Street. The Word accepts cash and personal cheques in payment.

Course Requirements: Reading summaries, to be submitted weekly for 10 weeks (20%); 4 quizzes (5% each, for a total of 20%); one assignment (30%); one take-home exam (30%). All work must be submitted in hard copy (except for the reading summaries) on the date and at the time indicated in order to avoid penalties. Students are advised to save electronic versions of all their work (including reading summaries). You are expected to have read the assigned material before each class.

Be advised that written work for this course may be submitted to text-matching software.

Grading criteria: To do excellent work in this course, you need to be able to do more than reiterate what Aristotle says (or seems to say), or what was said in class. An "A" indicates that you not only understand the material, but that you have also thought critically about it, grasping at least some of its subtleties and implications. A "B" reflects an above-average understanding of the material without any major errors; "B" work does not capture the complexity of the issues. A "C" suggests a struggle with the material that results in basic comprehension but is flawed by some significant misunderstandings or errors. A "D" indicates only a rudimentary comprehension of part of the material with most of the material being misunderstood. An "F" indicates no understanding either of the assignment or of the material.

Policy on the use of technology in the classroom:

Pursuant to McGill University's policy regarding electronics in the classroom, **the use of electronic devices (computers, iPads, cell phones, etc.) is not permitted in lectures.** All electronic devices must be turned off and stored during the class period. Exceptions will only be made with a note from the student disabilities office. The recording of lectures is not permitted

and is illegal without the consent of the instructor. Please consider these policies before enrolling for this course.

Policy on extensions:

No extensions will be granted without an appropriate medical note. Late work will be penalized at the rate of a third of a grade per calendar day past the due date. For example, a paper that is evaluated as a B, if one day late, will be assigned a grade of B-; the same paper, if two days late, would receive a C+.

Required syllabus statements:

McGill University values academic integrity. All students must, therefore, understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

COURSE SYLLABUS/ PHIL 355 ARISTOTLE

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Professor M. Deslauriers

January	8	Introduction, and instruction on the use of the room
	10	<i>Physics</i> I, 1-2, 5-9; <i>Generation and Corruption</i> (GC) I, 3 & 4.319b6-21: principles of change
	15	<i>Physics</i> II, 1-2: nature and the natural
	17	<i>Physics</i> II, 3-9: causation
	22	<i>Categories</i> 1-5: substance and accidents, subjects and predicates
	24	<i>Generation of Animals</i> (GA) I, 1-23; II, 1-3; IV, 1-3 (in Coursepack): sexual difference and sexual generation
	29	<i>Generation of Animals</i> (texts same as above): the resemblance of offspring to parents
	31	QUIZZ on <i>Physics</i> , GC, <i>Categories</i> , and GA
February	5	<i>On the Soul</i> I, 1 & 4.408a34-b29; II 1-2: problems associated with the soul, definition of the soul
	7	<i>On the Soul</i> II, 3-5: the reproductive soul & the sensible soul
	12	<i>On the Soul</i> II, 6, 8-12: sensation
	14	<i>On the Soul</i> III 1-3; <i>On Dreams</i> 2.459a23-b23, 460a32-b2, 3.461a30-462a8; <i>On Memory</i> 1: common sense and imagination
	19	<i>On the Soul</i> III 4-11: thinking
	21	QUIZZ on <i>On the Soul</i>
	26	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (EN) I, 1-8, 13: the good/ ASSIGNMENT DUE
	28	EN II, 1-7, 9: virtue
STUDY WEEK		
March	12	EN III, EN VII 1-10; <i>Movement of Animals</i> 6-11: action and the voluntary
	14	EN V 1-2, 5.1133b29-1134a16, 7.1134b18-1135a5; 8; 9.1137a5-26, 10: justice
	19	EN VI: intellectual virtue
	21	EN VII: weakness of will
	26	EN VIII – IX: friendship (in Coursepack)
	28	QUIZZ on the <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>
April	2	<i>Politics</i> I, 1-13: the household and the state (in Coursepack)
	4	<i>Politics</i> III, 1-4: constitutions and citizenship
	9	<i>Politics</i> VII 1-3, 13-15; EN X: the best life
	11	QUIZZ on the <i>Politics</i> / DISTRIBUTION OF FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM