

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a close reading of the entirety of Plato's *Republic*. We begin with various arguments against the desirability of the just life in the dialogue's early books, and move on to Glaucon and Adeimantus' challenge to Socrates to show that justice in itself is better than injustice. From there we turn to Socrates' description of the parts of the soul, and evaluate his analogy between the soul and the city. We will consider the political and social construction of Socrates' ideal city as well as the disorder and lack of unity inherent in deviant political constitutions. Metaphysics and epistemology are the focus of the middle books of the *Republic*, where we examine Socrates' claims about knowledge and belief, as well as his images of the divided line, the sun, and the cave. We will consider whether the philosopher-rulers sacrifice their own good in order to rule, and whether Socrates has adequately proven that the just life is the happiest. In the final books of the *Republic*, we evaluate Socrates' claim that the just life is the most pleasant, and consider his proof for the immortality of the soul as well as his attacks on art and poetry.

READINGS

We will be using the translation by G.M.A. Grube, revised by C.D.C. Reeve, which can be found in either of the following volumes: *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. by John Cooper. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997. ISBN: 978-0872203495 (or) *Plato. Republic*. 2nd ed. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1992. ISBN: 978-0872201378.

In addition, we will read several secondary sources, including:

- Julia Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (selections), and "Plato's *Republic* and Feminism"
- Eric Brown, "A Defense of Plato's Argument for the Immortality of the Soul at *Republic* 10.608c-611a"
- John Cooper, "Plato's Theory of Human Motivation"
- Gail Fine, "Knowledge and Belief in *Republic* V"
- Richard Kraut, "The Defense of Justice in Plato's *Republic*"
- Jessica Moss, "What is Imitative Poetry and Why is it Bad?"
- Susan Okin, "Philosopher Queens and Private Wives: Plato on Women and the Family"
- David Sachs, "A Fallacy in Plato's *Republic*"
- Malcolm Schofield, "Music all Pow'rful"
- Rachel Singpurwalla, "Plato's Defense of Justice in the *Republic*"
- Nick Smith, "Plato's Divided Line"

REQUIREMENTS

- Presentation paper (max. 2000 words)
- Designated questioner of other students' presentation papers
- Term paper

* Fulfills the graduate distribution requirement in ancient philosophy.