

HUL 754: The Philosophy of Plato

Ist Semester, 2018-19

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Course description

This course is an intensive introduction to some of Plato's key ethical texts: the "early" works *Apology*, *Crito*, *Euthyphro*; and the *Republic*. Our main aim will be to engage with these works as philosophical texts, attempting to understand them not only in their own terms and contexts, but also critically, from the standpoint of contemporary philosophy in the analytic tradition. The literary and dramatic qualities of these dialogues will occupy us as well, but to a lesser extent.

The figures of Plato and his teacher Socrates played an important role in the thought of Indian intellectuals as diverse as Vivekananda, Iqbal, Gandhi, and Nehru. Can they speak to the contemporary Indian situation as well? This question will also occupy us, albeit in a minor key.

Pre-requisites and expectations

There are no pre-requisites except enthusiasm, and a willingness to work. Since we will be carrying on a sustained conversation from one class to the next, I expect you to attend every class.

Be warned that this is a demanding, reading- and discussion-intensive course.

Administrative matters

The course will meet once a week on Friday afternoons, most likely from 3-6 pm.

Class announcements and softcopies of the readings will be posted online on the class piazza site: piazza.com/iit_delhi/fall2018/hsl754. The access code is *hsl754*.

Hardcopies of the readings will be available in SCOOPS.

I have a strict prohibition on the use of electronic devices in class: you must bring hardcopies.

Evaluation

Pass-marks: 40% (ditto for auditors)
Attendance: mandatory.

20%: response-papers
20%: take-home mid-term exam I
25%: take-home mid-term exam II
35%: take-home final exam

Response papers

You will be required to submit five response-papers of about a page each during the course of the semester. Each will be graded out of five marks: I will choose the top four to compute your grade for this component of the course.

You must submit at least three response papers to pass this class.

Response papers are to be posted on piazza by noon on the day before class that week.

Exams

The schedule for your take-home exams is as follows:

Exam	Assigned	Due
Mid-term I	31 Aug	17 Sep
Mid-term II	5 Oct	19 Oct
Final	15 Nov	25 Nov

More information on the format and expectations for the exams will be made available closer to the date.