

**HUMANITIES 11500, SECTION 14**  
**PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES**  
University of Chicago, autumn 2005

Course Instructor: Jason Bridges  
Office hours: Friday, 10:30-12:00, Stuart 231C

Writing Intern: Nat Hansen  
Office hours TBA

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**READINGS**

Most of the course readings are drawn from the following books, available for purchase at the Seminary Coop Bookstore (in the basement of 5757 University Ave.):

*The Iliad of Homer*, translated by E. V. Rieu (Penguin Classics)  
Sophocles, *The Theban Plays*, translated by Woodruff and Meineck (Hackett Publishing)  
Plato, *Five Dialogues*, translated by Grube (Hackett Publishing)  
Plato, *Symposium*, translated by Nehamas and Woodruff (Hackett Publishing)  
Plato, *Protagoras*, translated by Lombardo and Bell (Hackett Publishing)  
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by Ross, Akkrill and Urmson (Oxford University Press)

There are numerous translations in print of each of the texts we will discuss. *You must use the translations found in the books listed above.*

The remaining course readings are available on electronic reserve, through the library's website (<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu>).

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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

First paper:	3 pages	due Oct. 20 <sup>th</sup>	worth 25% of course grade
Second paper:	5 pages	due Nov. 8 <sup>th</sup>	worth 30%
Final paper:	7 pages	due Dec. 7 <sup>h</sup>	worth 35%

The remaining 10% of the course grade will be based on class participation.

Further notes:

1. There will be a chalk website for the course (<http://chalk.uchicago.edu>), to which course documents will be posted.
2. The first two papers are to be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. A paper submitted after class will be considered late.
3. The third paper may be turned in to Professor Bridges' mailbox (Stuart 202) or submitted electronically through the course's chalk site.
4. Late papers will be docked a grade per day (e.g., B+ to B) unless you have received approval ahead of time from one of the course instructors.
5. No papers will be accepted after December 9<sup>th</sup>.
6. There will be a few additional short writing assignments throughout the course. Their purpose is to facilitate class discussion, and they will not be graded.
7. Regular attendance in class is required. Students are also required to attend writing seminars organized by the writing intern.
8. There is no final exam.

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

### Part I: Introduction

Meeting	Topic	Reading
1	Course overview	
2	<i>Contemporary perspective.</i> The subversion of responsibility	Thomas Nagel, "Moral Luck"

### Part II: The psychology of the *Iliad*

3	Homer's <i>Iliad</i> : Heroic motivation	<i>Iliad</i> , books 1, 2 (up to line 583), 3-4, 6, 8, 9
4	Did the Homeric Greeks lack the very idea of human agency?	<i>Iliad</i> , books 11, 16, 18, 19, 22 Snell, excerpts from <i>The Discovery of the Mind</i>
5	Did the Homeric Greeks ignore intention?	<i>Iliad</i> , book 24 Adkins, excerpts from <i>Merit and Responsibility</i> and <i>From the Many to the One</i>

### Part III: Responsibility and the tragedies

6	Greek tragedy and <i>Oedipus Tyrannus</i>	<i>Oedipus Tyrannus</i>
7	Responsibility and fault	<i>Oedipus at Colonus</i>
8	Assigning responsibility	Antiphon, <i>Second Tetralogy</i>
9	<i>Contemporary perspective.</i> Which comes first: holding responsible or being responsible?	Gary Watson, "Responsibility and the Limits of Evil"

### Part IV: Plato on piety, love and desire

10	The pious and the god-beloved	<i>Euthyphro</i>
11	Love and desire	<i>Symposium</i> , pp. 1-8, 25-60
12	"He was some kind of man."	<i>Symposium</i> , pp.61-end <i>Apology</i> <i>Phaedo</i> 115a3-end
13	<i>Contemporary perspective.</i> Which comes first: desire or value?	Wiggins, "Truth, Invention and the Meaning of Life"

### Part V: Plato and Aristotle on motivation

14	Plato on pleasure, the good, and weakness of the will	<i>Protagoras</i> 348c5-end
15	<i>Modern perspective.</i> The authority of desire	Hume, excerpt from <i>A Treatise of Human Nature</i>
16	Virtue and practical wisdom	Selections from books 2, 3 and 6 of the <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>
17	Weakness of the will revisited	Selections from book 7 of the <i>Ethics</i>
18	Taking stock	(no reading)