



## **KIIS Greece, Winter 2022-2023**

### **PHIL 440 / PS 430: Topics: Plato's Political Ethics**

**Instructor:** Dr. Audrey L. Anton

**Email:** audrey.anton@wku.edu

**Instructor's office hours:** on site and by appointment

*Syllabus subject to change*

#### **1. Course Description:**

Few authors have had the impact on Greek culture and Western thought in general as did Plato. Famous for highlighting the connections between ethics, culture, and politics while critiquing the status quo of his day, Plato's writings endure and provide commentary on even the most pressing current issues. Whether it be the tension between the interests of individuals and their communities, the legitimacy of law and government, or the relationship between freedom and the good life, Plato's dialogues provide ample examples of critical debated opinions on how society ought to function.

To explore these aspects of Plato's thought, this course studies the political and ethical doctrines espoused in a handful of Platonic dialogues. We begin with Plato's *Crito* and *Apology* to consider what, if anything, an individual owes their state—including whether one is obligated to preserve its institutions. From here, we study *Republic*, where Socrates and his interlocutors craft an ideal city with the ultimate aim of showing that virtue is good in itself (i.e., its own reward) and that justice is the virtue of the soul. We conclude with portions of Plato's *Laws*, where the application of ideal principles is shown to be difficult, as rational persuasion is no guarantee of compliant behavior.

In addition to studying these texts, students will examine philosophy's impact on Greek culture in a variety of real-world experiences, including (but not limited to) the exploration of various sites (both archeological and those mentioned in Plato's dialogues), museums, architecture, and through navigating the modern physical and cultural landscape that persists.

#### **2. Overall KIIS Program Student Learning Outcomes:**

KIIS provides high-quality education abroad programs for students from all diverse backgrounds that promote deep international learning, are integrated into the curriculum, and encourage critical and creative thinking. Our goal is to help students understand the wider world and develop personal and professional skills for lifelong enrichment. We strive to go beyond generalizations and cultural stereotypes to help foster a nuanced appreciation of the world in which we live.

Students participating on KIIS study abroad programs aim to:

- 1) Understand contemporary issues of their host country/countries (i.e. KIIS program location).
- 2) Develop skills to interact comfortably in a global setting.
- 3) Understand other cultures.

Prior to your KIIS study abroad program, and again at the conclusion of your program, KIIS will ask each student to a) answer a few multiple-choice questions, and b) write a short reflective essay (two paragraphs in length) related to the elements detailed above. There is no right or wrong answer, and your responses will not affect your grade in any way. The purpose of the exercise is to help KIIS measure the effectiveness of its study abroad programs.

#### **3. Course Objectives and Specific Learning Outcomes:**

The KIIS Greece program has developed the following student learning outcomes for all courses in the program:

After having completed the KIIS Greece program, students will have

- honed their knowledge of Greece and Greek society, from antiquity to the 21st century;
- synthesized academic concepts with real world experiences;
- observed Mediterranean life in rural settings, in middle-sized towns, and on islands, as well as in the megalopolis of Athens;
- interacted with ordinary Greeks on a regular basis;
- exhibited confidence in their abilities to function competently in another culture;
- articulated an understanding of what it means to be the stranger in another land;
- articulated the relationship between ideas and place (i.e., geography, landscape, buildings, monuments) as that relationship reflects the past, the present, and the recreation of the past in the present;
- clarified their personal values, both as U. S. citizens and as individuals;
- deepened their appreciation for the values of others;
- improved their oral and written communication skills in English.

#### **4. Major Topics Covered in the Course:**

- The relationship between the individual and the State
- The purpose of Law
- The importance of freedom
- The justification for patriotism
- Assessing different forms of government
- Education (moral and other)
- Civic Responsibility
- Virtue and the good life
- The relationship between Ethics and Politics
- ... and more!

#### **5. Fulfillment of General Education Requirement:**

At Western Kentucky University (WKU), this course fulfills a History requirement for the Philosophy major and minor (Category II) and can count towards the minimum number of General Education courses a student must take at or above the 300-level. This course may fulfill some General Education requirement on your campus. Please be sure to explore this possibility with your campus KIIS representative. Dr. Anton is happy to supply any additional information your school may need.

#### **6. Required Readings and Materials:**

Required Texts:

Plato. *Five Dialogues*. Edited by G. M. A. Grube. 2nd ed. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Pub. Co, 2002.

Plato. *The Republic*. Edited by G. R. F. Ferrari. Translated by Tom Griffith. Tenth edition. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Plato. *Laws*. Translated by Benjamin Jowett. Great Books in Philosophy. Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2000.

#### **7. Graded Assignments:**

##### **Participation:**

Frequent and thoughtful participation in class discussions will account for the participation portion of the student's final grade, which is **10%**.

##### **Short Papers**

Students will write short papers in response to prompts provided by the instructor. Some of these will require exegesis (clearly summarizing the main points and arguments of a text). Others will require a critical/reflective aspect (going beyond what is in the text). Some prompts will require both. These writing assignments account for **30%** of the final course grade.

## Activities and Quizzes

Students will engage in *place as texts* activities, which may be assigned to individuals or groups. In addition, the instructor will administer “pop” quizzes on readings during class meetings. The point of these quizzes is 1. To encourage careful reading and 2. To assess reading comprehension. The frequency of these quizzes will depend on how prepared students are (i.e., if students demonstrate that they’ve read texts carefully, pop-quizzes may not be necessary and, therefore, may occur less frequently). The average grade of these assignments (each instance of both types) will account for **30%** of the final course grade.

## Theme Paper

Students will also write a paper of 5-7 pages on a theme that appears throughout multiple Platonic dialogues selected from a pre-approved list or in consultation with the instructor. This paper will count for **30%** of the final course grade.

Scale:

90 – 100 A

80 – 89 B

70 – 79 C

60 – 69 D

Below 60 E (F)

Your college or university may award plus and minus grades, but KIIS must follow WKU's practices, and WKU does not use pluses or minuses.

## 8. Attendance Policy:

KIIS program participants are expected to be punctual to and in attendance at all classes, presentations, meetings and required excursions, and to remain with the program for the full academic period. Unexcused absences from classes and/or mandatory meetings will result in a lowering of the student's final grade, as will excessive tardiness. Multiple unexcused absences could result in expulsion from the program. Any absence from an academic class session must be excused for medical reasons.

## 9. Disability Accommodation:

KIIS will make every reasonable effort to provide accommodations for program participants with special needs or disabilities, but we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Be aware that many foreign countries do not have comprehensive legislation comparable to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As a result, businesses and other establishments operating in foreign countries may not be able to provide accommodations.

If you have a disability accommodation need, we recommend you contact your KIIS Campus Representative, <https://www.kiis.org/about-kiis/contact-us/campus-representatives/> early in your program selection process so that s/he has time to discuss any specific needs, including which KIIS programs may be best suited. You also are welcome to contact KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning, [maria.canning@wku.edu](mailto:maria.canning@wku.edu), to discuss your disability accommodation needs (e.g. housing, transportation, excursions, class schedule, etc.).

Immediately after acceptance, notify KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning, or KIIS Admissions and Enrollment Specialist, Haley McTaggart, [haley.mctaggart@wku.edu](mailto:haley.mctaggart@wku.edu), if you have a special need or disability that might require any form of accommodation abroad. Failure to notify KIIS may prevent you from participating on your KIIS program.

If you require any accommodations abroad, you must provide KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning, or KIIS Admissions and Enrollment Specialist, Haley McTaggart, an accommodation letter from your home campus' disability accommodation office that lists the accommodations you are eligible to receive. Please do not request accommodations directly from your KIIS Program Director

or other KIIS Faculty; the KIIS Office will notify your KIIS Program Director and/or Faculty after we have received your above accommodation letter.

In some cases, you may need to make arrangements for a caregiver to join you on your KIIS program, should your physician, campus disability accommodation office, or KIIS make such a recommendation or require it.

#### **10. Title IX / Discrimination & Harassment:**

Recent attention to gender discrimination and sexual harassment at colleges and universities reminds us of the importance of adhering to standards of ethical and professional behavior. KIIS Study Abroad is committed to supporting and encouraging safe and equitable educational environments for our students, faculty, and program directors. Students, faculty, and program directors are required to be civil and treat each other with dignity and respect. As such, harassment and/or discrimination of any kind will not be permitted or tolerated.

Sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual/dating/domestic violence) and sex discrimination are violations of KIIS policies. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to a) KIIS Assistant Director Maria Canning (+1-859-200-1000) or KIIS Executive Director, John Dizgun (+1-270-227-2288), b) WKU's Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson (270-745-5398 / [andrea.anderson@wku.edu](mailto:andrea.anderson@wku.edu)) or WKU's Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe (270-745-5429 / [michael.crowe@wku.edu](mailto:michael.crowe@wku.edu)) or Joshua Hayes (270-745-5121 / [joshua.hayes@wku.edu](mailto:joshua.hayes@wku.edu)). Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a KIIS program director and/or faculty member, KIIS program directors and faculty are considered "Responsible Employees" of Western Kentucky University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator.

If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center, <https://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/> at 270-745-3159.

For more information on KIIS Title IX, see <https://www.kiis.org/students/health-safety/title-ix-clery/>; additional Title IX resources can be found here <https://www.wku.edu/eeo/titleixbrochure2020.pdf>.

Everyone should be able to participate on a KIIS program, attend a KIIS event, or work in a KIIS environment (e.g., KIIS office) without fear of sexual harassment or discrimination of any kind. Be respectful of each other.

#### **11. Academic Honesty Policy:**

Cheating, plagiarism (submitting another person's material as one's own) or doing work for another person which will receive academic credit are all impermissible. This includes the use of unauthorized books, notebooks, or other sources in order to secure or give help during an examination, the unauthorized copying of examinations, assignments, reports, term papers, or the presentation of unacknowledged material as if it were the student's own work.

Disciplinary action may be taken beyond the academic discipline administered by the faculty member who teaches the course in which the cheating took place.

#### **12. A Warning:**

Please be aware that some of the material in this class may trigger disturbing thoughts or memories. Many of the works of art are explicit or nudes. Please feel free to step out of class if you feel uncomfortable or threatened.