

IDH2930, sec. 0195: (Un)Common Read (Fall 2020)
W | Period 9 (4:05PM – 4:55PM), online

SOCRATES AND THE VALUE OF SCIENTIFIC SCRUTINY IN THE POST-TRUTH ERA



[The Death of Socrates](#)

Instructor: Sara Agnelli

Meeting Time/Location: W 4:05PM – 4:55PM/Zoom class meetings: [register here](#)

This is a synchronous online course (i.e. the class requires students and instructor to be online at the same time).

Office Hours: Weekly virtual office hours will be posted in [UF e-learning](#)

Email: saraclassics@ufl.edu

Course Overview

Arguably the most influential thinker ever, Socrates was dedicated to reasoning. He sought knowledge more than anything. He used logical methods to pursue the truth with his willingness to question everything. He said he pursued knowledge because he knew nothing, and that people had to learn from experts, not follow the crowd. His determination to only accept the absolute truth with reasoning make him the first clear person in critical philosophy.

There is much about Socrates that is still relevant today and throughout the texts we will read during this course, we will discover how important he can still be for society. In uncertain times such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Socrates' story will inspire us to reflect on our responsibility for any personal choices that affect society.

Course Outline

Classes will combine student-centered activities with brief introductions to the day's reading. Accordingly, you will be expected to have read the assigned readings and be prepared to comment and participate in meaningful discussions.

W1	“The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing”: How Socrates is still relevant today (and needed more than ever)	09/07
W2	<i>reading</i> Euthyphro	09/09
W3	<i>reading</i> Euthyphro	09/16
W4	<i>reading</i> Euthyphro	09/23
W5	<i>reading</i> Apology	09/30
W6	<i>reading</i> Apology	10/07
W7	<i>reading</i> Apology	10/14
W8	<i>reading</i> Crito	10/21
W9	<i>reading</i> Crito	10/28
W10	<i>reading</i> Crito	11/04
W11	Quiz 1 (Holiday)	11/11
W12	<i>reading</i> Phaedo	11/18
W13	<i>reading</i> (Phaedo) Thanksgiving	11/25
W14	<i>reading</i> Phaedo	12/02
W15	“Prefer knowledge to wealth, for the one is transitory, the other perpetual.” + Quiz 2	12/09

Texts and Resources

Required

Plato, *The last days of Socrates. Introduction, Translation and Notes* by Christopher Rowe, New York: Penguin Classics, 2011. 256 pp. (Paperback \$14.00)

In addition, there are some readings which will be placed in canvas during the semester.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance, Class Participation & Homework Preparation (40%)

Attendance & Class Participation: Attendance *and informed participation at all class meetings is required*. This means that you show up to class on a regular basis and complete your assignments on time. The entire success of the course is that you *get involved, get interested and get motivated* to the history of a world which in many ways produced our own.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

1. Class begins promptly. A student is counted as being tardy if he/she connects after class has started.
2. A student is counted as being absent if he/she fails to attend the class.
3. The student's final grade will be deducted by 1% from his/her final grade for each unexcused absence after the second unexcused absence of the semester.

Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself as to what was covered in class. Except in the case of certified illness or other UF accepted excuse, there will be no make-up option for missed exams/assignments. Where possible, makes-ups should be arranged prior to absence. Alternatively, students should contact me on their return to classes.

Homework Preparation: you should complete the reading or viewing by the assigned class period and be ready to discuss it.

2. Quizzes (20%)

There will be 2 non-cumulative quizzes during the semester. These will consist of multiple choice and/or short paragraph answers and are scheduled for the week of November 9-13 and December 7-11 (online). Further details will be provided in class closer to the exam dates.

3. Final Project (40%)

As Martin Luther King once wrote in 1963:

“Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths... so we must see the need for non-violent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism.”

For this class, you will write a short study addressing Socrates' legacy and reception today.

Your paper should be 1-2 typed pages long (double-spaced, one-inch margins). Work on this final project will be divided into 3 parts: selection of the topic (due October 16, 10%), preliminary outline & bibliography (November 25, 5%), and the essay (due December 14, 25%). Your work must be submitted on the due date unless you have asked for and received permission to extend the deadline or unless you have a valid excuse. Essays will be graded with regard not only to content and organization, but also to presentation, grammar,

spelling, and punctuation. Your research should be documented accurately. Secondary sources, whether textual or internet based, must be acknowledged. Unattributed use of sources will earn you an E for the course. Papers must be emailed to saraclassics@ufl.edu by 11:59pm on December 14.

Break-down of final grade

Attendance, Class Participation & Homework Preparation 40%

2 in-class Quizzes 20%

Final Essay 40%

Grading Scale

A. 100–93 (4.0)	C. 76–73 (2.0)
A- 92–90 (3.67)	C- 72–70 (1.67)
B+ 89–87 (3.33)	D+ 69–67 (1.33)
B. 86–83 (3.0)	D. 66–63 (1.0)
B- 82–80 (2.67)	D- 62–60 (0.67)
C+ 79–77 (2.33)	E 59– (0)

Note: A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF’s Grading Policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

<https://student.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

Accommodation

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter to present to the instructor. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

[dso.ufl.edu/drc\(352\) 392 8565](https://dso.ufl.edu/drc(352)3928565)

Evaluate your Instructor

Students should provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at evaluations.ufl.edu. The University will announce specific times at the end of the semester for evaluation. Students may view summary results of these assessments at:

evaluations.ufl.edu/results

Honor Code

Familiarize yourself with the University of Florida Student Honor Code and obey it always. You can find the Student Honor Code online at:

dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code

Privacy

Our class sessions will be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the “chat” feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or

shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

Counseling and Wellness

Students who face difficulties completing the course or need counseling or urgent help should call the Counseling and Wellness Center. Do not wait until the end of the semester for help.

counseling.ufl.edu

Important Dates

October 16	Topic Selection
November 9-13	Quiz 1
November 20	Preliminary Outline & Bibliography
Week December 7-11	Quiz 2
December 14, 11:59pm	Final Project (to be emailed to saraclassics@ufl.edu)

Learning online requires flexibility and adaptability. You will likely need to develop new practices to ensure you stay engaged and participate actively in your courses. Learning online may require you to use new technologies, new practices, and to be flexible as your instructor, your fellow students, and you communicate and engage with the learning process and each other in different ways.

Please visit the following website to find more instructions and guidance:

<https://elearning.ufl.edu/keep-learning/>