

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Introduction to Neoplatonism - 15526

Last update 01-09-2020

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Philosophy

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Antonio Vargas

Coordinator Email: antoniov@gmail.com

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Antonio Luis Costa Vargas

Course/Module description:

"Introduction to Neoplatonism" is an advanced course in ancient philosophy. Neoplatonism is late ancient school of philosophy based on the interpretation of Plato, but which contains elements from the Stoics and Aristotle as well. In order to enter the thought of the Neoplatonists, we will perform a close reading in class of a text of the founder of Neoplatonism, Plotinus, Egyptian philosopher who was born in 205 A.D. and died in 270. The text is "on the one and the good" – an essay on unity as such, the principle of being according to Plotinus, and how is can be known and how we can reach it. We will discuss arguments in metaphysics, the theory of knowledge and ethics. After three introductory lessons we will read together in every class a section of the text in Hebrew translation (Classes will be conducted in Hebrew). Before each class I will assign to the students added texts from ancient philosophy that form the background of the arguments to be discussed. Students needs not have any knowledge of ancient Greek, however patience and curiosity will be required for discussions about Greek terms and how they may be translated.

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Read Neoplatonic Texts
- Identify the sources of Arguments of Neoplatonic texts in Plato, Aristotle and the Stoa
- Understand the influence of Neoplatonic thought on the history of philosophy and theology
- Explain Neoplatonic philosophy in their own words

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

1. Intro to the course: Why study & teach Plotinus in Hebrew?
2. Intro to Plotinus: His Place in the History of Metaphysics till Today
3. Intro to Plotinus: Plotinus' Doctrine of Unity, The Roman Empire and Monotheism
4. On the One and the Good §1: Unity of Bodies and of the Soul
5. On the One and the Good §2: Unity of Intelligence and Being itself
6. On the One and the Good §3: How can Unity be known?
7. On the One and the Good §4: Cognition of Unity vs. Knowledge
8. On the One and the Good §5: Cognition of Unity and the Virtues
9. On the One and the Good §6: Unity vs. the Unit
10. On the One and the Good §7: Presence of Unity
11. On the One and the Good §8: Unity as the "center" of our being
12. On the One and the Good §9: Unity and the desire for the Good
13. On the One and the Good §10: Why is cognition of Unity not continual?
14. On the One and the Good §11: Conclusion

Required Reading:

אנאדות, תרגום מיוונית והוסיף מבוא והערות - נתן שפיגל, מוסד ביאליק, ירושלים. כרך א' - 1978,
כרך ב' - 1981.

And further background readings in ancient philosophy. In Hebrew if they are available, otherwise in English.

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 40 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 10 %
Project work 30 %
Assignments 20 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information: