IMPORTANT: please notice that this schedule is TENTATIVE. It will change frequently depending on the speed we proceed on the class, and on what we want to follow up on. Please check this document on a regular basis and especially before you start preparing for class.

Readings: assignments are either linked to the syllabus or available on Bb on the Course Documents page under Readings.

Week 1: Introduction

January 17  Look over syllabus; get acquainted with course on Bb

1. Morality and happiness: the ancient Greek tradition

Week 2:

January 22 The Ring of Gyges

* Plato, Republic 357b-368c

January 24 Divisions of the soul

*Plato, Republic Book IV 434d-445b

Week 3: The value of justice, and divisions continued

January 29 Arguments for the intrinsic value of justice

*Plato Book IX, 580d-592a

Recommended:


January 31 Different divisions

*Jonathan Haidt, The Happiness Hypothesis, Ch. 1

Week 4
February 5 Different divisions continued
*”Ego, super-ego, and id” from Anthony Storr, *Freud*

February 7 Happiness and harmony
*Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* Book I. Ch. 1-3, Ch. 4 (first 3 paragraphs), Ch. 5, Ch. 7, Ch. 13

Week 5

February 12 First in-class exam

February 14 Happiness and harmony continued
* Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, Book II. Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9

2. The Judeo-Christian tradition

Week 6

February 19
* The Gospel of John

3. Human nature: the Enlightenment, psychology and biology

February 21
* Enlightenment (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Week 7 Humans in their natural state

February 26
*Hobbes, *Leviathan* excerpts

February 28
*Frans de Waal, “Morally evolved: primate social instincts, human morality and the rise and fall of “Veneer Theory”” from *Primates and Philosophers*

Week 8

March 5 Human bonds and happiness
*Jonathan Haidt, Ch. 6
March 7  
**Second in-class exam**

Week 9

**SPRING RECESS**

4. **Existentialism**

Week 10

March 19

*Kierkegaard, *The Sickness onto Death*, reading 1

March 21

*Kierkegaard, *The Sickness onto Death*, reading 1 continued NO NEW READING!

Week 11

March 26

*Kierkegaard, *The Sickness onto Death*, reading 2

March 28

*Kierkegaard, *The Sickness onto Death*, reading 3

Week 12

April 2

*The Sickness onto Death*, reading 4

April 4

**Film screening:**  
**THE MAN WHO WASN’T THERE** (dir.: Coen brothers, 2001)

Week 13

April 9

Discussion of the movie in the light of Kierkegaard’s philosophy

April 11

**Third in-class exam**
5. Buddhism

Week 14

April 16

Teasdale, ” How does mindfulness transform suffering? I: the nature and origins of dukkha” (read only up to p. 100)

April 18

*Teasdale, ” How does mindfulness transform suffering? I: the nature and origins of dukkha” continued (NO NEW READING)

Week 15

April 23

*Suzuki, Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind, Part 1

April 25

*Suzuki, Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind, Part 2

Week 16

April 30

Summary and recap

Short paper due May 5*