Overview

The class will consist of a close reading, first of Plato's dialogue *Philebus*, then of two sections of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (= EN).

The *Philebus* is one of Plato's last dialogues. Its governing question is: What is the good life for human beings? Socrates, the main character, and his interlocutor Protarchus consider three basic possibilities: a life of pleasure, a life of knowledge, and a life mixed with pleasure and knowledge. In the process they spend a good deal of time analyzing pleasure and knowledge, as well as how the governing question should be pursued. The dialogue, of course, has ethical content, but also metaphysical, methodological, psychological and a bit of epistemological content.

The sections from Aristotle's EN concern the nature and the value of pleasure. In them Aristotle, among other things, develops criticisms of Plato's views in the *Philebus*. Aristotle's treatments are also interesting in that his own constructive accounts of pleasure in EN book 7 and EN book 10 are different and, I think, incompatible. So there is a basic interpretive question regarding this fact. I believe the answer is that EN 7 was originally part of an earlier ethical treatise of Aristotle's, while EN 10 is part of a later, more mature ethical treatise. So it is also interesting to compare Aristotle's accounts with one another and see what development or at least alterations have occurred.

Materials

All reading materials are available on Blackboard. However I would recommend that you purchase a hardcopy of Plato's *Philebus* (trans. D. Frede, Hackett publishing company). This is available at the main campus bookstore. The versions of the Aristotle texts I have posted on Blackboard derive from the *Aristotle's Works*, published in two volumes by Princeton University Press and
edited by J. Barnes. (This would be too expensive to buy and not worth it unless you intend to study Aristotle's whole corpus at some point.)
If you really want a copy of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, I'd recommend T. Irwin's translation, 2nd ed., published by Hackett, or S. Broadie and C. Rowe's translation with light commentary, published by Oxford. But these translations will differ from the texts posted on Blackboard.

**Question Sets**

For each class meeting on which there is an assigned reading (i.e. almost all class meetings) I will post on Blackboard a question set relating to the reading. I encourage you to do these question sets as you do your reading. Class will basically be organized around the discussion of these question sets. (Note however that you will not submit your question sets to me. They are intended simply to guide your reading and thinking about the material in and out of class.)

**Grades**

One final paper = 100%

This paper is due on Monday December 18 by noon in my mailbox on the 7th floor of Anderson Hall.

Alternatively, you can take an incomplete for the course and finish the paper (at the latest) by June 18, 2018.

**Paper Assignment**

Socrates' argument for false anticipatory pleasure at *Philebus* 36-40 has generated a lot of secondary literature (I think more than any other passage of the dialogue). The literature on this subject extends at least from Gosling's 1959 article to the present.

Here is a partial list of the contributions up to 2008.

6. T. Penner, "False Anticipatory Pleasures: Philebus 36a3-41a6," *Phronesis* 15
(1970) 166-78 *
13. A. de La Taille, Platon: Philèbe (31b-44a), Paris, 1999

The assignment asks that you write a review of some of these contributions within this vein of secondary literature.

You must include the items that have an asterisk: #1, 5, 6, 9, 15, and 17.
You can add any additional others as you wish, including any additional papers, chapters, or discussions you find. But you are not required to add any.

The basic idea of the assignment is to guide you into a vein of scholarship in ancient philosophy and in doing so to inform you about how such philosophical research is, in mainstream Anglophone ancient philosophy, currently practiced. (Phronesis, where most of the articles have been published, is one of the two leading journals for ancient philosophy; Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy, where Evans' paper is published, is the other.)

You may, but need not, treat the secondary literature critically. Your main task is to summarize, distill, and re-present this vein of ideas.

If it helps, consider the title (or subtitle, if you prefer) of your paper as:
"Socrates' Argument for False Anticipatory Pleasure at Philebus 36-40: 50 Years of Interpretation (1959-2008)" (or something like that).

Plagiarism
Cite all sources you use. If you are caught plagiarizing, you will fail the course. Note also that in all cases of plagiarism the Philosophy Department policy requires that the instructor notify the Chairperson of the department.

**Conduct in Class**

[Note that the following is principally intended for an undergraduate audience. I don't imagine that graduate students will need admonitions regarding the following. Nevertheless, do review this and comply with it.]

I have strict policies regarding class conduct, above all with respect to texting in class, tardiness, and attendance. These policies should not mislead you to think that my grading policies are similarly strict. My grading policies are, I believe, in line with those of my colleagues in CLA.

Attendance is mandatory. If for some legitimate reason you cannot attend class on a given day, you must notify me by email before class. Except in the case of a serious emergency excuses after the fact will not be accepted. Each unexcused absence will result in a deduction of your final grade by a step, for example from B+ to B. Finally if for any reason you miss class, you are responsible for finding out what the assignment for the next class is, doing the assignment, and turning it in on time. Late work will not be accepted.

Arrive for class on time. If you arrive more than 20 minutes late more than once without a legitimate excuse, I reserve the right to deduct from your final grade as if your tardiness were an absence. Each subsequent such tardy attendance will be counted as an absence.

Do not use electronic devises such as smartphones to communicate or text in class. I reserve the right to fail you for the semester for doing this, even once.

Aside from an emergency, go to the bathroom before or after class.

Do not sleep in class. I reserve the right to dismiss you from class for doing this, and the dismissal will count as an absence.

Be attentive and engaged, and be respectful to the rest of your classmates and the instructor.

**Disability Statement**

This course is open to all students who met the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the
specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**Statement on Academic Freedom**

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has adopted a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy # 03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02

**Class meetings, readings, and assignment dates**

READINGS ARE DUE ON THE DATE GIVEN (NOT ON THE FOLLOWING CLASS MEETING)

**Tuesday August 29**

Introduction

**Thursday August 31**

*Philebus* 11a-14b

**Tuesday September 5**

*Philebus* 14b-20a

**Thursday September 7**

*Philebus* 20b-23b

**Tuesday September 12**

*Philebus* 23b-27c

**Thursday September 14**

*Philebus* 27c-31b

**Tuesday September 19**

*Philebus* 31b-33c

**Thursday September 21**
Philebus 33c-36c

Tuesday September 26

Philebus 36c-41b

Thursday September 28

Philebus 41b-47b

Tuesday October 3

Philebus 41b-47b

Thursday October 5

Philebus 47b-50e

Tuesday October 10

Philebus 47b-50e

Thursday October 12

Philebus 50e-55c

Tuesday October 17

Philebus 55c-59d

Thursday October 19

Philebus 55c-59d

Tuesday October 24

Philebus 59d-64b

Thursday October 26

Philebus 64b-67b

Tuesday October 31
EN 7.11
Thursday November 2

EN 7.12
Tuesday November 7

EN 7.13
Thursday November 9

EN 7.14
Tuesday November 14

EN 10.1
Thursday November 16

EN 10.2
Tuesday November 28

EN 10.3
Thursday November 30

EN 10.4
Tuesday December 5

EN 10.5
Thursday December 7