

Specific topic Spring 2023: Ancient theories of happiness

Ancient philosophers took the aim of ethics to be the ability to live a good life. Most often such a life was understood as a life of happiness. But what is happiness? In this course you shall learn about how ancient philosophers conceived of happiness. We shall analyze their arguments for various positions such as happiness consisting in contemplation, pleasure, virtue, or tranquility. Set texts will include passages from the Presocratics, Plato *Republic* IV, Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* I-II and X, Epicurus *Letter to Menoecus*, extracts from Cicero *On Moral Ends*, and from Sextus Empiricus *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*.