

The Heights School

PHIL 209 Natural Philosophy

Mr. Anthony Hadford

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heights.edu/course/natural-philosophy

Course goals:

This course will introduce students to the western philosophical tradition in general, and specifically to some of its core branches: philosophy of nature, philosophy of man (the most unique part of nature), and philosophy knowledge (the most unique part of man). We will begin with some key questions: what is philosophy and why do we study it every other day along with theology at The Heights? What is the full scope of its expertise? Early in the semester, we will follow in the footsteps of Aristotle and begin our investigation of *physics*, or the material, sensible, and changeable world. The course's terminology and related concepts serve as a foundation for the next course in The Heights' philosophy sequence, "metaphysics".

Topics covered:

- The fact of “change” and its different modes (matter, form; privation)
- Aristotle’s theory of hylemorphism
- Four causes (material, formal, moving, final)
- The notions of “substance” & “accidents”
- Notion of life
- Powers of soul
- Human Nature
- Epistemology (especially man)

Course requirements and grading criteria:

1. **Class Participation** (25% of the total/quarter): includes a daily participation grade, in-class assignments, individual oral presentations / debates, group oral presentations / debates;
2. **Homework and Quizzes** (25% of the total/quarter): take home written assignments; brief quizzes on reading or podcast assignments;
3. **Tests and Papers** (50% of the total/quarter): there will be a test or paper each quarter;
 - a. Students may not “re-take” tests or quizzes;
 - b. Students may rewrite papers;
 - c. Students may request extra-credit assignments.

Homework Assignments: Students will receive homework assignments in class. In case a student is absent from class he should contact the teacher and / or a reliable classmate to obtain the assignment details.

Office hours: Students may sign up for a “dialogue” with Mr. Hadford to discuss any course material, homework assignments, tests / papers, and any general philosophical inquiries. Additionally, this is also when extra credit must be completed.

Successful Students

The key of any academically successful student is diligence. The acquisition of this virtue should be highly sought-after for its applicability not only to academic studies, but a wide variety of moments throughout one’s life. Students can even have little interest in a given subject, but still exhibit a diligence toward assignments or in tackling course difficulties, and therefore become a virtuous man.