## **History of Ancient Philosophy** (Semester 2)

## Prof. Gatti Maria Luisa

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The Course aims to introduce students to a critical understanding of the most significant problems and authors of ancient philosophy during the classical age, as well as the hermeneutics of their works, allowing a progressive and systematic acquisition of the vocabulary, the topics, and the concepts of philosophical thought. Particular attention will be paid to Cicero’s philosophy, with a focus on his political thought, emerging from the proems of the *De re publica* and the *Somnium Scipionis*.

The Course is divided into two parts.

1. The first part will offer a critical introduction of the topics, the currents, the authors, and the fundamental works of classical thought, starting from the texts, with a focus on vocabulary and argumentative strategies.

2. The second part will examine an important focus of ancient philosophy: Cicero’s thought in the context of Roman philosophy, in which ethical-political doctrines emerge as central elements. In particular, Cicero’s thought will be studied starting from the proems of the *De re publica* and the well-known *Somnium Scipionis*, that will be analysed from a critical perspective.

At the end of the course, students will be able to: know the most important thinkers, currents, topics, and works of ancient philosophy, including the vocabulary and the argumentative strategies characterising them; read and interpret the different types of texts by ancient philosophers, and improve their philosophical vocabulary. This will allow them to develop their knowledge of the history of ancient philosophy, also from the point of view of Roman and Cicero’s political thought, with professional competences that can be useful in the philosophical, literary, sociological, historical-political, educational, and communicative field.

***COURSE CONTENT***

*1. The key topics and authors of ancient philosophy*

*2. Cicero in the context of Roman philosophy; the proems of the ‘De re publica’ and the ‘Somnium Scipionis’*

***READING LIST***

G. Reale, *Il pensiero antico*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2001 (p. 3-102; 115-202).

Cicerone, *La Repubblica*, Bur, Milan 2008, or Idem, *Dello stato*, Mondadori, Milan 1994 (the proems).

Cicerone, *Il sogno di Scipione*, Sellerio, Palermo 2008, or Garzanti, Milan 2002.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The Course will be characterised by frontal lectures, held in class.

The lectures will include the use of teaching material related to the Course Content (PPT presentations, texts, maps, short essays) that will be made available on Blackboard. Students will be invited to prepare interventions, reports, in-depth studies – oral, written, or digital – focused on the teaching material and the different topics (to be defined with the lecturer); this will allow them to replace part of the final exam.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The assessment will consist in an oral exam based on the textbooks specified in the Reading list.

It will be mainly focused on the general part of the course (the pages of the textbook by Reale, *Il pensiero antico*, specified above), followed by questions on the texts by Cicero (the proems of the *De re publica* and the *Somnium Scipionis*).

Therefore, the final mark will result from the assessment of: 1) the general part of the course (with questions on Pre-Socratic philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle); 2) the single-subject part of the course (with questions on Cicero, the proems of the *De re publica* and the *Somnium Scipioni*s).

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

As this is an introductory Course, concerning the first period of the history of philosophy, there are no prerequisites in terms of content.

*Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.*