Ancient Metaphysics and Natural Philosophy Reading List

Major and minor lists will be specified from the following (with supplementation where suitable). A major list will normally cover Plato, Aristotle and either Presocratics or the Hellenistic schools, or one of either Plato or Aristotle, together with either Presocratics or the Hellenistic schools. A minor list will normally cover either Plato and Aristotle, or one of either Plato or Aristotle together with either Presocratics or the Hellenistic schools. These lists contain at least 80% of what is required by a good grounding in the subject; overlap is expected with texts studied in courses in ancient philosophy. The student's final list will be worked out in consultation with faculty in the subject area.

Presocratics

In Kirk, Raven and Schofield (eds.) The Presocratic Philosophers (Cambridge, 1983), chapters on:
- Heraclitus
- Parmenides
- Anaxagoras
- Empedocles
- Democritus


Sedley, ‘Two Conceptions of Vacuum’, Phronesis 27 (1982), 179-83


Plato

Hippias Major

Phaedo

Symposium (Diotima’s speech)

Republic V-VII

Parmenides (with Gill commentary, Hackett 1996)

Sophist

Timaeus (with Cornford commentary, Plato’s Cosmology, Humanities Press 1952)

Philebus (passages relevant to metaphysics)

Laws X and XII 966c-68a

[optionally: Plato’s ‘unwritten doctrines’ in Findlay, Plato: The Written and Unwritten Doctrines (Humanities Press, 1974), Appendix I]


Vlastos, ‘Reasons and Causes in the *Phaedo*’ in Vlastos, (ed.) *Plato*: vol. 1
Fine, *Plato on Knowledge and Forms* [chapters 10-15]
Patterson, *Image and Reality in Plato’s Metaphysics* (Hackett, 1985)
Nehamas, ‘Plato on the imperfection of the sensible world’ in Fine (ed.) *Oxford Readings in Philosophy: Plato*, vol. 1
Robinson, *Plato’s Earlier Dialectic* (Cornell, 1941) [excerpts]
Johansen, *Plato’s Natural Philosophy*, Cambridge 2004

**Aristotle**

*Categories*

*On Generation and Corruption* Bk II. ch. 9-10
*Meteorology* Bk I ch. 1
*Physics* Books I, II, VIII [optionally III & IV]

*On the Soul*

*On the Heavens* Book I

*Metaphysics* Books I, III, IV, VI-IX, XII

[optionally Theophrastus *Metaphysics* eds. Ross and Fobes (repr. Olms 1967)]


‘The Platonism of Aristotle’ in Logic, Science and Dialectic
Menn, ‘Aristotle and Plato on God as Nous and as the Good’ Review of Metaphysics 45 (1992)

Hellenistic Philosophy
Inwood and Gerson, Hellenistic Philosophy (Hackett, 1997), relevant sections
Long and Sedley The Hellenistic Philosophers (Cambridge 1987), sections 4-25 (Epicureans), 27-30, 43-55 (Stoics)
Sextus, Outlines of Scepticism (Anna and Barnes, Cambridge 1994), Book III to s. 167
Lucretius, The Nature of Things Books I and II (tr. Ferguson Smith, Hackett 2001)

Konstan, ‘Epicurus on Up and Down: Letter to Herotodus 60’ Phronesis 17 269–78 (1972)
O’Keefe, Epicurus on Freedom (Cambridge 2005)

Annas, Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind (University of California, 1992), chapters 2, 3, 6, 7