



Fall 2018
Philosophy 290 Plato:
Plato on Art, Beauty, Love and Aesthetics

W 1800-2045 (SH 241) — Plato
Prof. Tom Leddy

You should all be familiar with at least some of Plato's early dialogues, works like the Euthyphro, the Apology, and the Crito. You may have also read some of Plato's Republic and at least one of his other middle dialogues, for example, the Phaedo. This course will focus on Plato's work on art, beauty, love and aesthetics. This will include reading his early work, the Ion, which provides a theory of inspiration, his Greater Hippias (on beauty), his Book X of Republic in which he notoriously kicks the imitative arts (including tragic plays) out of the ideal society, his Symposium, in which he offers, through Diotima, a theory of love and beauty, and his Phaedrus, in which he gives us a theory of rhetoric, love and madness. We will begin by reading a quick review of Plato's work as a whole as well as VIIth Letter in which he described his own career. Philebus, which deals with the nature of pleasure will also be relevant to this study. Guiding us through all of this will be the fifth volume of Guthrie's history of ancient Greek philosophy. Emphasis will be placed on the history of the secondary literature on Plato as well as some recent debates.

Texts:

Hamilton, Edith and Cairns, Huntington Collected Dialogues of Plato (Princeton U. Press) The Cooper translation is also acceptable.

Guthrie, W.K. History of Greek Philosophy Vol. 5 (Cambridge U. Press, 1986).