

- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
- www.unine.ch/lettres

Seminary II : Aristote : Posterior Analytics (2PH2176)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
Pilier principal M A - philosophie	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	6
Pilier secondaire M A - philosophie	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	6

ph=période hebdomadaire, pg=période globale, j=jour, dj=demi-jour, h=heure, min=minute

Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Automne

Equipe enseignante

Kathrin Koslicki

Contenu

This seminar focuses on Aristotle's theory of demonstrative knowledge [episteme], as developed in the Posterior Analytics. We begin by filling in some of the background required to make sense of Aristotle's philosophical project in the Posterior Analytics and examine briefly the notion of analysis in Greek geometry; Plato's conception of definition; Aristotle's syllogistic logic, as laid out in the Prior Analytics; and Aristotle's conception of cause or explanation, as discussed in Physics II. In our reading of the Posterior Analytics, we will be especially concerned with Aristotle's conception of demonstration (Posterior Analytics, A); definition and essence (Posterior Analytics, B) and the role these notions play in demonstration; as well as the distinction between deduction and induction (Posterior Analytics, B.19). We will conclude this seminar by comparing Aristotle's ideal of demonstrative knowledge, as set out in the Posterior Analytics, with his approach to the actual practice of science, as illustrated for example in such biological treatises as History of Animals, Generation of Animals, and Parts of Animals. Throughout, we will study the relevant Greek primary texts (or translations thereof) and will accompany these readings with some selections from the vast secondary literature on Aristotle's conception of science and his philosophy of science.

Forme de l'évaluation

Internal methods of assessment:

- (1) A paper (60% of internal evaluation grade)
- (2) In-class presentation (20% of internal evaluation grade)
- (3) Attendance, participation, discussion forum (20% of internal evaluation grade)

(1) The paper should be approximately 12 pages long (~3000 words). Guidelines and a detailed grading rubric with criteria of evaluation will be made available. Students will receive assistance in finding a suitable topic as well as feedback on a draft before handing in the final version of their papers. (2) Students will be asked to give an in-class presentation of approximately 15-20 minutes at some point during the semester. The in-class presentation should ideally help students find and develop a paper topic, although it is not required that the topic of the presentation will also become the topic of the paper. (3) Attendance and participation, in class and on the discussion forum, are expected and required. Students will receive high marks for participation, if they are successful at demonstrating their engagement with the material discussed in this seminar, e.g., by contributing to class discussions and the discussion forum regularly and in a constructive way. Work that is not submitted by the required deadline, without good cause, will not be accepted and will automatically result in a failing grade for that assessment.

External methods of assessment: MA students in Philosophy are required to take a 30-minute oral examination on the material covered in this seminar. The internal and external evaluation grade each count for 50% of the final grade for this seminar.

Due Dates: Papers are due on the last day of classes, Tuesday, December 21, 2021, and will be returned to students with comments and a grade. If the grade is not satisfactory (below 4), students will have the opportunity to hand in a revised version of their paper by January 31, 2022.

Assessment criteria: level of preparedness; clarity of oral and written expression; specification of technical terms used; structure (e.g., plan, logical organization of ideas); ability to highlight key points; persuasiveness of arguments; originality and creativity of positions defended; speed of reflection during oral presentations.

Language of instruction: This seminar will be conducted in English and French.

Documentation

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Aristotle: Posterior Analytics, transl. with a commentary by Jonathan Barnes, 2nd Edition, Clarendon Aristotle Series, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993.

David Bronstein: Aristotle on Knowledge and Learning: The Posterior Analytics, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, 2016.

Additional readings will be made available on Moodle.

Pré-requis

None.

Forme de l'enseignement

Seminar, 2 hours per week, Tuesday, 14:00-16:00, Fall semester.

Objectifs d'apprentissage

Au terme de la formation l'étudiant-e doit être capable de :

- Examine how key notions Aristotle develops in the Posterior Analytics are applied in philosophy, e.g., deduction, induction, demonstration, definition, essence, cause, and explanation.
- Identify the principal positions in Aristotle's epistemology and philosophy of science.
- Formulate well-reasoned arguments orally and in writing for the acceptance or rejection of arguments and theories regarding Aristotle's epistemology and philosophy of science.
- Describe the main influences and connections between Aristotle's theory of demonstration and other areas of philosophy as well as connected disciplines.
- Recognise how prominent figures in the Aristotelian and neo-Aristotelian tradition have influenced, and are influenced by, their successors and predecessors.
- Define key concepts and principles used in Aristotle's epistemology and philosophy of science.
- Discuss central texts concerning Aristotle's epistemology and philosophy of science.
- Analyse the principal historical and contemporary theories concerning Aristotle's theory of demonstration and definition.
- Work with other students to contribute to group projects.
- Write well-organized and well-reasoned argumentative papers on a particular text, problem, or position advanced in Aristotle's epistemology and philosophy of science.