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| Code of course: BBN-FIL-232/01 TANM-FIL-232/01 BMA-FILD-232/01 |
| Title of course: Introduction to Ancient Scepticism |
| **THE FIRST CLASS OF THE COURSE WILL BE HELD**  **ON THE WEEK OF 18th FEBRUARY** |
| Lecturer: Dr Máté Veres |
| Office hour, consultation (e-mail of the lecturer): mateveres8519 (at) gmail (dot) com |

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| General aim of the course:  (No knowledge of Greek or Latin is necessary.)  Ancient scepticism, unlike its post-Cartesian counterpart, was more than an epistemological challenge to overcome. Ancient sceptics pointed to cases of widespread disagreement among professional philosophers and scientists and argued that, since alleged experts have failed to deliver on the promise of rational persuasion, one should suspend judgement about all claims to knowledge and continue the investigation.  Furthermore, prominent sceptics presented this provisional outcome as the best way of life currently available for the philosophically inclined, since the alternative would be to restructure one's way of life around highly demanding but rationally unsatisfactory philosophical tenets, which would in turn lead to a deplorable life of the mind as well as to an unappealing way of living.  The course aims at introducing students to the main sources on ancient scepticism, focusing on works by Marcus Tullius Cicero and by Sextus Empiricus, and to situate these texts in the main interpretive debates in contemporary scholarship. In addition, the course will conclude with a glimpse into the medieval and Early Modern transformations of scepticism. |

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| Content of the course:  Topics to be discussed include:  - sceptical arguments against Stoic epistemology;  - sceptical arguments for suspension of judgement;  - scepticism about specific tenets in logic, ethics, and theology;  - the possibility and desirability of living a sceptical life;  - prominent anti-sceptical strategies in antiquity;  - highlights of the medieval and Early Modern influence of scepticism. |

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| Grading criteria, specific requirements:  Students are expected to attend all meetings of the course, having prepared the assigned reading material, and to actively participate in discussions. In-class participation will count towards 50% of your final grade. In addition, students will sit for a final written test which will count towards 50% of the final grade.  5 – 85-100 %  4 – 65-84 %  3 – 51-64 %  2 – 35-50 %  1 – 0-34 % |

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| Required reading:  The core readings of the course will be selections from the following works in translation:  Annas, J. and Barnes, J. (tr.), Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Scepticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.  Bett, R. (tr.), Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Ethicists*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.  Bett, R. (tr), Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.  Bett, R. (tr), Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Physicists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.  Brittain, C. (tr.), Cicero, *On Academic Scepticism*. Indianapolis / Cambridge: Hackett, 2006.  Long, A.A. and Sedley, D.N. (ed. and tr.), *The Hellenistic Philosophers,* volume I. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. |

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| Suggested further reading:  Bett, R. (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Scepticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.  Morison, B., 'Sextus Empiricus' in *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*.  Thorsrud, H. *Ancient Scepticism*. Stocksfield: Acumen, 2008.  Vogt, K.M., 'Ancient Skepticism' in *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*.  Further recommended reading will be made available throughout the course. |