Loyola University New Orleans

The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas
PHIL A408, TR 11:00-12:15

Dr. Mark Gossiaux, Bobet Hall 434
Office Phone: 865-3053. Email: gossiaux@loyno.edu
Office Hours: TR 2:00-3:30, and by appointment

Course Description

Thomas Aquinas (1224/5-1274) is widely recognized as the most important and influential philosopher-theologian of the Latin Middle Ages. This course offers an introduction to Thomas’ central philosophical positions. It examines Aquinas’ views on the relationship between faith and reason, his philosophy of nature, his metaphysics of being, his theory of human nature, his analysis of human knowledge, and his defense of human freedom. In studying Aquinas’ philosophy we shall note the Greek (Aristotle, Neoplatonism) and Arabic (Avicenna, Averroes) sources for his thinking, and we shall draw contrasts between his positions and those of earlier thinkers such as Augustine, and later medievals such as Duns Scotus and William of Ockham.

Goals and Objectives

This course has been designed to satisfy Goal 1, Objectives 1-2; Goal 2, Objectives 2-4; Goal 3, Objective 2; and Goal 4, Objective 2 of the Department’s Goals and Learning Objectives for Major courses (see http://chn.loyno.edu/philosophy/documents/Goalsandobjectiveshomepage.PDF).

Texts


Requirements

Students are expected to have assigned readings completed for class discussion. Class attendance is required, and more than four unexcused absences will result in a lowering of one’s final grade (after the fourth absence, one full grade, and then one further grade for every two additional absences). All students are required to complete two exams (midterm and final) and to submit
two papers: a short textual explication (4-5 pages), and a longer research paper (10-12 pages). Details for the papers will be discussed in class. Grades will be weighted as follows:

- Short paper 20%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Research paper 30%
- Final Exam 30%

Acts of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) will not be tolerated, and will result in a failing grade for the assignment or course.

Accommodations for Disabilities

A student with a disability that qualifies for accommodations should contact Disability Services at 865-2990 (Academic Resource Center, Room 405, Monroe Hall). A student wishing to receive test accommodations (e.g., extended test time) should provide the instructor with an official Accommodation Form from Disability Services in advance of the scheduled test date.

*This syllabus is subject to change.

Schedule of Readings

15: Aquinas’ Philosophical Sources.
20: De Trinitate, q. 2, aa. 1-3 (M 126-38).
22, 27: ST I, q. 1, aa. 1-8 (P 5-14).
29: De principiis naturae, cc. 1-3 (M 18-24).

Feb. 03: De principiis naturae, cc. 4-6 (M 24-9).
05: De ente, cc. 1-2 (M 30-7).
10: De ente, c. 3 (M 37-40).
12: De ente, c. 4 (M 40-3).
17: Short Paper Due.

17: De ente, cc. 5-6 (M 44-9).

19, 26: ST I, q. 75 (P 682-94).

Mar. 03: Midterm Exam Due.

03, 05: ST I, q. 76 (P 695-718).

10: ST I, q. 77 (P 719-32).

12, 17: De Trinitate, q. 1, aa. 1-4 (M 110-26).

19, 24: ST I, q. 84 (P 793-811).

26, 31: ST I, q. 85 (P 812-29).

Apr. 02: ST I, q. 86 (P 830-5).

14, 16: ST I, qq. 86-7 (P 777-92).

21, 23: De malo, q. 6 (M 552-64).

28: Review; Research Papers Due.

May 05: Final Exam.