

## SPRING 2020 –METAPHYSICS (PH 2050)

### MEETING INFORMATION

**Room:** DSPT 3

**Time:** Thursdays at 9.40 am

**Instructor:** Marga Vega, [mvega@dspt.edu](mailto:mvega@dspt.edu)

**Office Hours:** By appointment

### DESCRIPTION

Metaphysics is the area of philosophy that attempts to get behind all appearances and to arrive at reasoned judgments about how things really are. Although this course presents a comprehensive introduction to Aristotelian and Thomistic metaphysics, we will situate questions in the greater philosophical tradition from Parmenides to Heidegger. Some of the topics that we will study are the nature of metaphysics as a science and its subject matter, the analogy of being, actuality and potentiality, causality, substance, individuation, the *esse-essentia* distinction, and the transcendentals.

### COURSE ORGANIZATION- METHODOLOGY

This is a hybrid course that combines online and in-class teaching. A weekly lecture delivered electronically before the Thursday meeting. A second in-class session will take place on Thursdays.

### ONLINE LECTURE

During the online session, the student will follow the audio slide show presentation and read the referenced texts.

### IN CLASS SESSION

- We will discuss the topics of the online lecture and readings.
- The instructor will add more comments or materials related to the online lecture.
- We will review Clark's questions at the end of the assigned chapter.
- We will devote sometime to questions on the online lecture.
- Each student will bring up a topic for discussion from the readings. Some readings will be presented by some the students (Feser's book).

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## STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

1. Acquire systematic knowledge of the main topics of Metaphysics (Institutional Goal A1: Integrative Thinking and A2: Intellectual Humility). To achieve this goal the student will follow the online lectures and complete the reading of the handbook *The One and the Many*, by C.W. Norris. The student will take an exam to ensure that a basic knowledge of the metaphysical notions has been acquired.
2. Become familiar with Aristotle's and Aquinas' texts on the nature of Metaphysics (Institutional Goal A2: Intellectual Humility). To achieve this goal the student will read up on the assigned readings for Aquinas and Aristotle.
3. Learn about different traditions and schools of thought and how they solved the problems presented by Metaphysics (Institutional Goal A1: Integrative Thinking, and A2: Intellectual Humility). To achieve this goal the student will read the book *Being and Some Philosophers* by E. Gilson. The student will have the opportunity to deepen on other historical and contemporary readings in Metaphysics.
4. Develop critical thought in metaphysical questions (Institutional Goal A3: Self-direction and B: Effective Leadership). To achieve this goal the student will write a critical review paper.
5. Improve writing and argumentative skills in Philosophy (Institutional Goal A1: Integrative Thinking and B: Effective Leadership). To achieve this goal the student will be encouraged to ask questions in class, relate topics of Metaphysics with her/his own interests, background and other philosophical disciplines. Participation during discussion sessions is encouraged. Student presentations and papers will help consolidate philosophical skills and learn philosophical methods.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. To goal 1. The student will exhibit command of metaphysical notions like act and potency, substance and accidents, causation, essence and existence, transcendentals, as well as of the principles and methods of Metaphysics.
2. To goal 2. The student will become familiar with Aristotle's and Aquinas' writings on metaphysics.
3. To goal 3. The student will be able to assess the differences in metaphysical approach of the Ancient and Medieval Metaphysics, Modern and Contemporary Metaphysics.
4. To goal 4. The student will be able to present the key points of the subject in a way that shows knowledge of the basic questions and personal criticism.
5. To goal 5. The student will be proficient in articulating a philosophical problem, critically assessing the arguments and providing her personal input.

## ASSIGNMENTS

In this course the student is expected to:

- READ THE REQUIRED READINGS EVERY WEEK and take notes for discussion.
- TAKE THE ONLINE LECTURE. Take notes for discussion. Read the referenced texts.

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- ATTEND IN CLASS SESSION and present notes for discussion as well as questions from Clark's book.
- READ *Being and Some Philosophers*. There will be a question about this book in the midterm exam and presentations at the end of the semester. 10% of the grade.
- MIDTERM EXAM. April 23<sup>rd</sup>. 40% of the grade. There will be study questions to prepare for this exam.
- WRITE A PAPER. Due May 21<sup>st</sup>. 50% of the grade. The paper is a critical review of a published paper provided by the instructor. The paper will assess a certain position on a topic and critically support, object or implement the views defended on it. The instructor will provide a list of papers to choose from. The goals of this review paper are:
  - To become familiar with secondary literature and scholarship in Metaphysics, as well as the latest research topics in the area.
  - To learn the craft and skill of writing scholarly papers by reviewing one of them.
  - To develop writing and argumentative skills.
  - To encourage the student's own thinking and critical appraisal.

## READINGS & BIBLIOGRAPHY

### REQUIRED BOOKS

- Aquinas, T. *An Introduction to the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas*, James F. Anderson ed., Gateway Editions, 1997. **ISBN-10:** 089526420X **ISBN-13:** 978-0895264206 [12.79 \\$](#)
- Clarke, W. Norris. *The One and the Many: A Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics*. University of Notre Dame Press, 2001. **ISBN-10:** 0268037078. **ISBN-13:** 978-0268037079. [24\\$](#)
- Feser, E. *Scholastic Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*. Editiones Scholasticae, 2014. **ISBN-10:** 3868385444, **ISBN-13:** 978-3868385441. [24.95](#).
- Gilson, E. *Being and Some Philosophers*, Pontifical Inst of Medieval Studies, 1952. **ISBN-10:** 088844415X **ISBN-13:** 978-0888444158 [17.85 \\$](#)

### FURTHER REQUIRED READINGS

- Aquinas, T. *Commentary to Aristotle's Metaphysics*. Excerpts
- Aquinas, T., *On Being and Essence*
- Aquinas, T. *On the Principles of Nature*
- Aristotle. *Metaphysics Gamma (Book IV)*, chp. 2-6, *Metaphysics Zeta (Book VII)*
- Wippel, J.F. "Essence-Esse Composition and the One and the Many" *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, CUA, 2000, p. 132-176.
- Wippel, J.F. "The Individuation of Material Substances" *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, CUA, 2000, p. 351-375.
- More brief texts from Aristotle and Aquinas will be provided.

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## RECOMMENDED READINGS (Not Required)

- Averroes. [\*The Incoherence of the Incoherence\*, “The Eight Discussion”](#)
- Descartes, R. [\*Meditations on First Philosophy. Fifth Meditation\*](#)
- Hegel, G., *The Science of Logic*, Vol. 1 “The Objective Logic”, Book One: [\*The Doctrine of Being\*](#)
- Heidegger, M. [\*What is Metaphysics?\*](#)
- Heidegger, M. [\*“Preliminary outline of esse \(ens\), essentia, and existentia in the horizon of the ancient and Scholastic understanding of them”\*](#), *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Indiana University Press, 1988, p. 83-99.
- Habermas, J. *Postmetaphysical Thinking*, MIT, 1994, Chp. 1, [sections 1, 2](#) and [section 3](#), pp. 3-55.
- Kant, I., *Critique of Pure Reason*, VI. Dialectic, [Antinomies](#).
- Ockham, W., [Ordinatio, I, dist. 2, q. 6.](#)
- Parmenides. [On Nature](#)
- Plato. [Phaedo](#)
- Plato. Parmenides
- Scotus, D. [Ordinatio, II, dist. 3, pars 1](#)
- Spinoza, B. [Metaphysical Thoughts. Essence, Existence](#)

## WORKS OF REFERENCE

- Aertsen, I, *Medieval Philosophy and the Transcendentals: The Case of Thomas Aquinas*, E.J. Brill, 1996.
- Anscombe, G. E. M. and P. T. Geach, *Three Philosophers: Aristotle, Aquinas, Frege*, Blackwell Publishers, 2002
- Bobik, J., *Aquinas on Being and Essence: A Translation and Interpretation*, University of Notre Dame Press; Reprint edition 1988.
- Caputo, D.J., *Heidegger and Aquinas: An Essay on Overcoming Metaphysics*, Fordham University Press (January 1, 1982)
- Crane, T. and K. Farkas (eds.), *Metaphysics: A Guide and Anthology*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Eco, U., *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Gilson, E. *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, Ignatius Press; New Edition (October 1999).
- Inwagen, P. van and D. Zimmerman, *Metaphysics: The Big Questions*, Blackwell, 1998
- Jaeger, W. *Aristoteles: Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung* (1923; English trans. by Richard Robinson (1902-1996), *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of His Development*, 1934)
- Kenny, A., *Aquinas on Being*, Oxford University Press, 2005.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair C., *First Principles, Final Ends and Contemporary Philosophical Issues (Aquinas Lecture)*, Marquette Univ Pr, 1990
- McInerny, R., *Being and Predication*, Washington, C.U.A., 1986.
- McInerny, Ralph M., *Aquinas and Analogy*, Catholic University of America Press; Reprint edition 1998.
- Montagnes, B, A. Tallon, E.M. Macierowski, and P.Vandavelde, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being According to Thomas Aquinas*, Marquette University Press; Revised edition, 2004.

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- Owens, J. *The doctrine of being in the Aristotelian Metaphysics: a study in the Greek background of mediaeval thought*, PIMS, 1963.
  - Owens, J. "Thomas Aquinas: Dimensive Quantity as Individuating Principle" *Journal Mediaeval Studies*, 1988: 50, 279-310.
  - Pasnau, R. and C.J. Shields, *The Philosophy of Aquinas*, Westview Histories of Philosophy S., 2003.
  - Ramirez, S. *De hominis beatitudine*, in *Opera Omnia* (Madrid: Instituto de Filosofia Luis Vives, 1970), vol.I, p.212, ff.
  - Spangler, P. and M. M. Conway, *Metaphysics of Aquinas*, University Press of America, 1996.
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## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Date	TOPIC	READINGS	
Week 1	February 6 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction	
Week 2	February 13 <sup>th</sup>	What is Metaphysics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark, Ch. 2.</li> <li>• Anderson, c. 1</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta.</i>, Bk. I, 1, 2, 3; and Bk. II, 1, 2; Bk. III, 4; Bk. IV, 1, 2, 3.; Bk. VI, 2; Bk. XI, 2, 3.</li> </ul>
	The Method of Metaphysics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark, Ch. 3</li> <li>• Anderson c. 2 &amp; 4</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta.</i>, Bk. III, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, Bk. VI, 1; Bk. XI, 7.</li> </ul>	
Week 3	February 20 <sup>th</sup>	Metaphysics and Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark Ch. 1</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta.</i>, Bk. VI, 1, 1; Bk. XI, 1, 7.</li> </ul>
	Transcendentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark Ch. 4, 16, 17, 18</li> <li>• Anderson Ch. 5-9</li> </ul>	
	The First Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aristotle's <i>Metaphysics</i>, Bk. 4</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta</i>, Bk. III, 15; Bk. IV, 1, 4, 5, 6; Bk. V, 1, 1; Bk. XI, 1, 1, 4, 5.</li> </ul>	
Week 4	February 27 <sup>th</sup>	Act and Potentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark Ch. 7</li> <li>• Feser Ch. 1</li> <li>• Aristotle, <i>Metaphysics</i>, Bk. IX.</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta.</i>, Bk. V, 14; Bk IX, 1-10.</li> </ul>
Week 5	March 5 <sup>th</sup>	Causality I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark, Ch. 6 and 9</li> <li>• Feser, Ch. 2</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta.</i>, Bk. I, 11, 14, 15, Bk. V, 4, 5, Bk. VIII, 1, 3, 4.</li> </ul>
Week 6	March 12 <sup>th</sup>	Causality II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark, Ch. 12 and 13</li> <li>• Feser, Ch. 2</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta.</i>, Bk. V, 2, 3.</li> </ul>
Week 7	March 19 <sup>th</sup>	Individuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark Ch. 10</li> <li>• Wippel, 351-375</li> </ul>

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		Categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anderson, Ch. 3</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta.</i>, Bk. V, 7, 9; Bk. VII, 1-3, 13, 14, 17.</li> </ul>
Week 8	March 26 <sup>th</sup>	SPRING BREAK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No assigned readings</li> </ul>
Week 9	April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Substance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark, Ch. 8</li> <li>• Feser Ch. 3</li> <li>• Aristotle, <i>Metaphysics</i> Bk. VII)</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta.</i>, Bk. III, 9, 10, 12; Bk. V, 10, Bk. XII 1-3.</li> </ul>
		Accidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark Ch. 11</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta.</i>, Bk. V, 15-20.</li> </ul>
Week 10	April 9 <sup>th</sup>	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No assigned readings</li> </ul>
Week 11	April 16 <sup>th</sup>	MIDTERM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No assigned readings</li> </ul>
Week 12	April 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>Esse</i> and Essence I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark Ch. 5</li> <li>• Feser, Ch. 4</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>De Ente et Essentia</i></li> </ul>
		<i>Esse</i> and Essence II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark, Ch. 19</li> <li>• Wippel, “Essence-<i>Esse</i> Composition and the One and the Many”, 132-176</li> </ul>
Week 13	April 30 <sup>th</sup>	Natural Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clark, Ch. 14</li> <li>• Anderson, Ch. 10</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologia</i>, Part I, q. 12</li> </ul>
		God’s Existence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Com. Meta</i>, Bk. II, 3-4; Bk. 12, 5-8, 11, 12</li> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Summa Contra Gentes</i> I, 10-13</li> </ul>
		God’s Essence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aquinas, <i>Summa Contra Gentes</i>, Bk. I</li> </ul>
Week 14	May 7 <sup>th</sup>	Gilson: Being and Some Philosophers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Being and Some Philosophers</i></li> </ul>
Week 15	May 14 <sup>th</sup>	Gilson: Being and Some Philosophers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Being and Some Philosophers</i></li> </ul>
Week 16 May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Paper Due	EXAM WEEK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No assigned readings</li> </ul>

