



SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO SEMINARY, OVERBROOK

College Division • 100 East Wynnewood Road • Wynnewood, PA 19096

PHL 303/512: METAPHYSICS FALL 2016

Instructor: Michael E. Rombeiro, Ph.D.

Classroom: 1023; T/F: 10:20-11:35am

Course Description: Examination of being with particular emphasis on the following themes: faith and reason as distinct and complementary avenues for the knowledge of being, metaphysical vs. empirical attitude, intelligibility, the nature of substance, form and matter, the nature of causality, existence (*esse*) and essence, the one and the many, participation, the transcendentals, God as Pure *Esse*.

Course Objectives: To understand the central problems in classical metaphysics and the solutions proposed by some of the major philosophers of the ancient and medieval periods.

Fulfills Philosophy Department Goals:

1. Demonstrate facility in logic, including syllogistic logic, and philosophical argumentation; and to demonstrate ability to read, think, and write critically and analytically; and to demonstrate facility with advanced philosophical texts and materials.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the Western philosophical tradition in the development and articulation of Christian theology, as well as the role of philosophy in the Catholic intellectual tradition.
3. Demonstrate synthesis and critical analysis of the major topic areas in philosophical inquiry, including: metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, natural theology, the philosophy of nature, and philosophical anthropology.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of philosophy in the areas of Ancient, Medieval, Modern, and Contemporary philosophy.

Fulfills Degree Goals:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the major topic areas of philosophy, as well as its major historical areas, including the major figures in the history of philosophy.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in academic research and critical thinking, and facility with philosophical and theological resources.

Required Texts:

Kass, Leon R. *The Hungry Soul: Eating and the Perfecting of Our Nature*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Kass, Leon R. *Toward a More Natural Science: Biology and Human Affairs*. New York: The Free Press, 1985.

Klubertanz, George P. *Introduction to the Philosophy of Being*. Second edition. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005. (ISBN-13: 978-1597522632)

Thomas Aquinas. *Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas*. Edited by Anton C. Pegis. Modern Library, 1965. (ISBN-13: 9780075536536)

Recommended Texts:

Clarke, W. Norris, S.J. *The One and the Many: A Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001.

Gilson, Etienne. *Being and Some Philosophers*. Second edition. Toronto, Ontario: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1995.

Owens, Joseph. *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics*. Houston, Texas: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1985.

Wippel, John F. *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being*. Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 2000.

_____. *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas*. Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 1995.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation – Active and regular participation is required of all students. This means that all students should be prepared to both ask and answer questions about the assigned texts. The best way to prepare for such participation is to read thoughtfully the assigned texts for each class. The class schedule provides a guide as to when the various readings will be treated in class, but it is the instructor who will stipulate the actual date as the semester progresses. The class participation portion of the grade will be based on the student's ability to answer questions about the assigned text and whether the student comes to class prepared, with a copy of the assigned text and the course notes (if available). 5% of the class participation grade will be deducted each time a student comes to class without the assigned text or course notes, or has not completed the assigned reading.

Papers – There will be an 8-page research paper assigned for this course. Guidelines will be provided. *The paper must be turned in to the instructor at the beginning of class on the day that it is due. Papers will not be accepted by email or by any other means.* Late papers will be treated according to the SCBS College Policy for Handing in Academic Papers Late, which states: "Academic papers assigned to fulfill course work within the college and pre-theology curriculum should be outlined in an Instructor's course syllabus. The Instructor will assign a due date in the syllabus for any such paper(s). The due date may be delayed if the Instructor decides it is necessary. Every day that a paper is late to the instructor, an entire letter grade is docked. After four days, the paper receives a failing grade. Students may receive extensions on papers if there is prior notification of a family or medical emergency which is being addressed. The Instructor of the class reserves the right to give a paper extension not longer than two weeks beyond the close of the semester. In such a case the student will receive an incomplete until all course work is completed." This assignment partially fulfills the objectives of the Information Literacy Plan.

Examinations – There will be a test, a midterm exam, and a final exam. Except in the case of extraordinary circumstances, students are required to take tests and exams on the specified dates. A student who foresees a conflict is required to notify the instructor prior to the test date. The instructor reserves the right not to administer a make-up exam.

Attendance and Academic Honesty:

Attendance – Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary strives to inculcate the best standards possible in academic study and does so in consultation and collaboration with other accredited institutions of higher learning. St. Charles Seminary requires attendance at all classes at the assigned times (Catalog, p.34, 74). If for a serious reason the seminarian must be absent, please inform the instructor, preferably *prior* to the absence. Excessive, unexcused absences are grounds for a reduction of grade. Out of respect for others in the class, please be prompt in arriving for class.

Academic honesty – As indicated in the Seminary policy, “no instance of plagiarism, cheating or falsification of research work, examinations or academic records will be tolerated and will make the seminarian liable to dismissal” (Catalog, p. 34, 74). A failing grade for the course will be assigned where there is evidence of academic dishonesty.

Incomplete Work – Failure to fulfill any of the requirements of this course will result in an F for the course.

Assessment/ Grade Determination: Grades will be determined according to the following factors and scale:

<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Assessment Tool</i>	<i>Percentage of Grade</i>
To formulate questions effectively and to articulate responses and arguments clearly and coherently.	Class Participation	10%
To demonstrate comprehension of the subject-matter; to present and explain philosophical problems and arguments logically.	Test	15%
To demonstrate comprehension of the subject-matter; to present and explain philosophical problems and arguments logically.	Midterm Exam	20%
To be able to conduct research on a discipline-specific issue; to analyze and to evaluate competing arguments; to argue effectively for a thesis.	Paper	25%
To demonstrate comprehension of the subject-matter; to present and explain philosophical problems and arguments logically.	Final Exam	30%

Assessment/ Grade Determination: Grades will be determined according to the following factors and scale:

Class Participation	10%	A+ Outstanding	4.0	97-100%
Test 1	15%	A Excellent	4.0	93-96%
Midterm Exam	20%	B+ Superior	3.5	89-92%
Paper	25%	B Very Good	3.0	85-88%
Final Exam	<u>30%</u>	C+ Good	2.5	81-84%
	100%	C Satisfactory	2.0	77-80%
		D+ Fair	1.5	73-76%
		D Passing	1.0	70-72%
		F Failing	0.0	<70%
		I Incomplete	0.0	N/A
		W Withdrawal (no penalty)	0.0	N/A

Seminary Grading System: See also Catalog, p. 36. “Letter grades are used to indicate the quality of a seminarian’s performance in a course. Professors assign grades as the result of class work, reports, research papers, examinations, or a combination of the above.”

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Met. = Aristotle, *Metaphysics*

K = Klubertanz, *Introduction to the Philosophy of Being*

TD = Kass, "Teleology, Darwinism, and The Place Man: Beyond Necessity and Chance," in *Toward a More Natural Science*

WEEK	TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENTS
1 (Aug. 26)	Introduction to Philosophy		
2 (Aug. 30, Sept. 2)	Metaphysics: Theoretical Knowledge Astronomy and Wonder	<i>Met.</i> , Book I, ch. 1-2; <i>K</i> : I Power Point: Hubble Images	
3 (Sept. 6, 9)	Study of Being vs. Divine Science Presocratics: The Search for Being	<i>Met.</i> Bk. IV, c. 1; Bk. VI, c. 1; <i>K</i> : II <i>Met.</i> I.3-10	
4 (Sept. 13, 16)	The Ten Categories of Being The Principles of Change	<i>K</i> : XI-XII <i>K</i> : IV	
5 (Sept. 20, 23)	Form and Matter Biological Form and Materialism	<i>K</i> : V.39-41 Kass, <i>The Hungry Soul</i>, selection	
6 (Sept. 27, 30)	Plato's Theory of Forms	Plato, <i>Phaedo</i> (99d-102e)	TEST 1 (Tues.)
7 (Oct. 4, 7)	Essence and the Problem of Universals	<i>K</i> : V.41	
8 (Oct. 11, 14)	Parmenides: The One and the Many	<i>Parmenides' Proem</i>	PROPOSAL (Tues.)
9 (Oct. 18, 21)	Analogy of Being	<i>K</i> : III	
10 (Oct. 25, 28)	Act and Potency	<i>K</i> : VI	MIDTERM (Fri.)
11 (Nov. 8, 11)	Continued		
12 (Nov. 15, 18)	Efficient and Final Causality Evolutionary Biology and Teleology	<i>K</i> : VII-VIII <i>TD</i>	PAPER (Tues.)
13 (Nov. 29, Dec. 1)	Essence- <i>Esse</i> Composition	<i>K</i> : V.43-47	
14 (Dec. 6, 9)	The Transcendentals	<i>K</i> : X	
15 (Dec. 13)	Review		FINAL EXAM (TBA)