



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

**PHIL 403.2 Lec 01**  
**A Medieval or Renaissance Philosopher:**  
**The Arguments of Aquinas**

**Fall Term 2017**

**Course Outline**

**Lectures:** TR 14:00 - 15:15, SA 147

**Instructor:** J. J. MacIntosh  
**Office:** SS 1249  
**Phone:** 403-220-3164  
**Email:** [macintos@ucalgary.ca](mailto:macintos@ucalgary.ca)

**Three Notes about Email:**

- 1) Students wishing to get in touch with me via email should ensure that "Philosophy 403" or some other clearly identifying term occurs in the subject line. Otherwise there is a strong possibility that your message will be deleted unread as spam.
- 2) **If you email me to make an appointment please indicate the times when you are available.**
- 3) Please make sure your first and last names are clearly included in the body of any email message.

**Office Hours:** 13:00-14:50 on the following dates: September 15, 22, 27, October 2, 6, 13, 20, 25, November 3, 8, 17, 22, December 1, 6; OR by appointment.

Note that this means what it says. You are not limited to the times listed, but you may need to make an appointment. If you email to ask for an appointment please be sure to state clearly the times you are available.

**Course Description:** In this course we shall be dealing with some of the many philosophically interesting arguments of one of the world's great philosophers, St Thomas Aquinas. Although he is one of the cleverest and most interesting of philosophers St. Thomas is also, by those who do not share his faith, greatly unread. His (almost) always interesting arguments are frequently better than his detractors are aware; equally frequently they are less good than his defenders suggest. In this course we shall consider the strengths and weaknesses of Aquinas's arguments in three overlapping areas:

- I: Natural Philosophy (Necessity, Causality, Time, Infinity);
- II: Philosophical Theology (God's existence, God's attributes, Foreknowledge and freedom);
- III: Human Beings (The soul and immortality, Epistemology, Morality and method).

The following is a rough schedule which may be altered due to topic difficulty, class desires, extraneous factors, etc.

**Week 1.1: There is no class September 12. Our first class is September 14.**

Week 1.2, Sept. 14: Admin matters and introduction to the course: design and expectations; assignments set-up; historical background to Aquinas, including the life of thirteenth century students and teachers; previous and contemporary important philosophers, including Plato, pseudo-Dionysius, Augustine, Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Rushd, Maimonides, Albertus Magnus (others will appear as the arguments are discussed)

Week 2.1, Sept 19: A look at some important bits of Aristotle; elementary logic brush-up, including modal notions and a glance at supposition theory

Week 2.2, Sept 21: Aquinas overview and general discussion of our topics

Week 3, Sept 26, 28: Necessity: absolute and *per accidens*; Necessity: other forms

Week 4, Oct 3, 5: Causality, then and now: *relata* and precedence; causality: natural, divine, human, angelic

Week 5, Oct 10, 12: Time and motion; Time and humans, Time and angels, Time and God

Week 6, Oct 17, 19: Infinity, types of; Infinity and the world

Week 7, Oct 24, 26: God's existence: overview: ontological and design proofs, and Thomas's views about their flaws or deficiencies, fideism; God's existence, the five ways, ST and SCG

Week 8, Oct 31, Nov 2: God's attributes: types of attribute, Cambridge properties, communicable and incommunicable properties, simplicity, unity

Week 9, Nov 7, 9: God's foreknowledge and human and angelic freedom: problems—humans; problems—angels; the "solutions." Thomas on the Will will feature a guest lecturer, Nicole Wyatt, so to fit her timetable this topic may occupy a different week.

Week 10, Nov 14, 16: Souls: general; Souls and St Thomas (with a possible look at Locke, Hooke, and Harry Potter, as well as the usual suspects Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Descartes)

Week 11, Nov 21, 23: Epistemology, knowledge and the soul; memory and the afterlife

Week 12, Nov 28, 30: Morality and method: lying; morality and sexuality

Week 13.1, Dec 5, 7: Review of arguments, problems and test preparation

### **Prerequisites:**

Two previous courses in Philosophy one of which must be [Philosophy 301](#), [303](#), [305](#), [307](#), [309](#) or [311](#).

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

- The ability to understand and critically discuss philosophical arguments which assume concepts and context which may be unfamiliar
- The ability to engage in such critical discussion both orally and in writing
- General knowledge of the concepts and background of medieval philosophy
- Specific knowledge of some of the important philosophical arguments of St Thomas Aquinas

### **Required/Recommended Texts (including electronic resources):**

Background text: John Ackrill, *Aristotle the Philosopher*

Aquinas texts: Almost all of Aquinas's works are available on-line in English and Latin—<http://dhspriority.org/thomas/> and elsewhere —and those on-line sources will provide our texts for Aquinas.

In particular we shall be mining, in translation, *Summa Theologiæ* (often referred to as ST), *Summa Contra Gentiles* (the Summa against the Gentiles: SCG, a standard English translation is titled *On the Truth of the Catholic Faith*), *QD de Potentia Dei* (Disputed Questions on the Power of God: De Pot), *QD de Veritate* (Disputed Questions on Truth: De Veritate), and perhaps others.

In addition, a background knowledge of Aristotle's philosophical views are indispensable in reading Aquinas. Ackrill (above) is a reliable guide. Of course students at this level are expected to be familiar with, and to consult, on line resources such as the *Philosophers Index*, and the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

In addition the following are on reserve in the library:

- Copleston, F. C. *Aquinas* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955)
- Copleston, F. C.: *A History of Medieval Philosophy* (London: Methuen, 1972)
- Davies, Brian, *The Thought of St Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992)
- Geach, P. T., *God and the Soul* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969)
- Grant, Edward, *The Foundations of Modern Science in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- Kenny, A., ed., *Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1969).
- Kenny, A., *Aquinas on Mind* (London: Routledge, 1993)
- Leaman, Oliver, *An Introduction to Medieval Islamic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985)
- Leaman, Oliver, *Moses Maimonides* (London: Routledge, 1990)
- MacIntosh, J. J., *The Arguments of Aquinas: A Philosophical View* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2017)
- Maimonides, Moses, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, trans. M. Friedlander (New York: Dover, 1956)
- Marenbon, John, *Medieval Philosophy: an historical and philosophical introduction* (London: Routledge, 2007)
- McMullin, E., ed., *The Concept of Matter in Greek and Medieval Philosophy* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965)
- Weisheipl, James O., *Friar Thomas D'Aquino* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1974)

At some point toward the end of term 15-20 minutes at the beginning of class will be used for student surveys.

## Evaluation

- Marks will be based on two take home tests and class contribution. There will be no Registrar scheduled final exam.
- Tests: There will be two take home tests, each worth 40% of the final mark. The first take home test is due by 23:59, November 3. The second take home test is due by 23:59, December 8.

Electronic submissions are strongly preferred. (If this is impossible let me know and I will arrange for a hard copy submission.) Please make the subject line of your emailed submission *503 Your Last Name T1* (or *T2*, as appropriate). If possible, please send your test as an MS Word (preferred) or PDF attachment. The take home test questions will be posted two weeks before the test is due. If you wish, you may submit a rough draft of your answer at least one week before the test is due and I will, usually within 24 hours, reply with suggestions for improvement. Your answer should not be longer than 3,000 words (it's a test, not a term paper). Please ensure that your name is on your test as well as in the accompanying email. There will be no Registrar-scheduled final examination.

- In-class work: For each week after the second, a paper devoted to the following week's topic will be posted in advance on D2L. The first meeting of the week will be a presentation by the instructor on the topic; the second meeting of the week will begin with a short 15-20 minute presentation by each of 2-3 class members, responding to the posted paper, followed by class discussion. Your presentation, and participation in class discussion, will be worth 20% of the final mark. After your presentation, please let me have any slides or notes you have used in your presentation. A mark for your presentation will be available a week after your presentation; a mark for your remaining in-class discussion will be available after each take home test. If you wish to discuss your presentation we can of course meet on the preceding Wednesday.

- We are asked by the University to "Indicate when writing and the grading thereof is a factor in the evaluation of the student's work. (See [E.2 Writing Across the Curriculum](#) statement.)" Writing and the grading thereof is indeed a factor in the evaluation of your work. Your writing should be clear, coherent, and to the point. Your arguments should be plainly set out. You may find it helpful to consult the short notes on writing a philosophy paper on D2L.

### **Grading Method**

All marks will be on the standard university scale which ranges from A+ to F. Your mark may sometimes have a slash ("/") in it, thus: B/B+. In such cases the first mark is the official mark, the second shows which end of the mark you are closer to. An A-/B+ is an A- at the lower end; an A-/A is an A- at the upper end. Letter grade marks will be averaged by using GPA numerical equivalents.

### **Spelling and grammar**

In the take home tests, more than five grammatical or spelling mistakes on any one page will lead to your paper being returned for corrections before a mark is assigned. Corrections are due within two days of the return. Two examples of the same mistake count as two mistakes. Standard U.S. spellings (e.g., 'neighbor' for 'neighbour,' 'defense' for 'defence,' 'theater' for 'theatre,' etc.) are acceptable. Common mistakes in philosophy papers include: (1) misspellings of 'existence,' 'conceive,' 'argument,' and 'separate'; (2) the misuse of 'i.e.' for 'e.g.'; (3) the misuse of 'phenomena' and 'criteria' as singulars. They are plurals. The singulars are 'phenomenon' and 'criterion.' Finally there is (4) the increasingly common use of the contraction 'it's' as a possessive. Perhaps this now common error will become standard, but it has not become so yet, and just as we do not speak of "he's book," or "she's pen" so we should not refer to "it's colour."

Of course you should avoid sexist language. In particular, remember that 'man' and 'he' are not gender neutral, and that 'girl' is not an appropriate term for adult women. (No doubt these remarks will have little practical relevance for *this* class; I put them in mainly to ensure that they remain unnecessary.) To answer a FAQ in advance: when quoting a (translated) medieval author, should I keep the sexist language? — Answer: Yes. Quote accurately. You might notice, however, that although Aquinas and other authors we shall discuss were undoubtedly sexist, Latin does not impose the sexist language that translators into English often choose.

## **IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION**

### **Academic Honesty**

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment, an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw from the University. See the relevant sections on 'Academic Misconduct' in the current University Calendar. Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about correct referencing, consult your instructor.

### **Academic Accommodation**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](https://ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy).

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

### **D2L Help**

Desire2Learn is UCalgary's online learning management system. Important information and communications about this course may be posted on D2L. Go to <https://ucalgary.service-now.com/it> for help.

### **General Academic Concerns and Program Planning**

Have a question but not sure where to start? The Arts Students Centre is your information resource for everything in the Faculty of Arts. Drop in at SS102, call 403-220-3580, or email [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca) . Advisors in the ASC can also provide assistance and advice in planning your program through to graduation. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> for detailed information on common academic concerns

### **Advice on Philosophy Courses**

You may find answers to your more specific questions about a philosophy degree on the Department of Philosophy's website <http://phil.ucalgary.ca> , or contact one of Philosophy's Undergraduate Advisors. Jeremy Fantl ([jfantl@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jfantl@ucalgary.ca)), Allen Habib ([anhabib@ucalgary.ca](mailto:anhabib@ucalgary.ca)), Megan Delehanty ([mdelehan@ucalgary.ca](mailto:mdelehan@ucalgary.ca)).

### **Registration Overload/Prereq Waivers**

If you are seeking to register in a Philosophy course that is full or to get permission to waive the prereqs for a course, email the Department Manager, Tram Nguyen ([tram.nguyen1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:tram.nguyen1@ucalgary.ca)). Include the specific course information and your UCID number in your request.

### **Writing**

This course will include written assignments. Faculty policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services and other Student Success Centre Services, located on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library. Writing Support Services assist with a variety of assignments, from essays to lab reports. Students can book 30-minute one-on-one appointments online, sign up for 15- minute drop-in appointments, and register for a variety of writing workshops. For more information on this and other Student Success Centre services, please visit [www.ucalgary.ca/ssc](http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc) .

### **Protection of Privacy**

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor or teaching assistant.

### **Internet and Electronic Communication Devices**

The instructor reserves the right to establish course policies regarding the use of devices such as laptops, tablets, and smartbooks. If allowed, these devices must be used exclusively for instructional purposes and must not cause disruption to the instructor or to fellow students. Cell phones and paging devices should be set to silent mode during lectures. Audio or video recording of lectures is not permitted without the written permission of the instructor. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy

### **Emergency Evacuation:**

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints> . Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

### **Other Helpful Contacts**

- Safewalk and Campus Security: 403-220-5333.
- Faculty of Arts Student Representatives: 403-220-6552, [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca) , [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca) .
- Student Ombudsman: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>