

## **Medieval Philosophy**

### **Phil 3030A, Spring Semester, 2018 (CRN 11185)**

Department of Literature and Philosophy  
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

Georgia Southern University

Location: Info Technology Building 2205

Credit Hours: 3

Last Day to Add/Drop: January 11

Last Day to Withdraw without Academic Penalty: March 5

### **Professor: Dr. Guy Schuh**

E-Mail: gschuh@georgiasouthern.edu

Office Phone: 478-8537

Office Location: Newton Building, 3308E

Class Meets: T/TH 2:00-3:15

Office Hours: T/TH, 3:30-5:30; F, 2:30-3:30

**Note:** I will have to miss one Friday office hours per a month for faculty meetings. I will notify you in advance and will be free to meet later that afternoon by appointment.

### **Course Description**

We will examine several issues in Medieval Philosophy (see reading schedule for topics). We will be especially concerned to see how Christian thinkers responded to difficulties or challenges to Christianity that stem from the Ancient philosophical tradition that preceded Christianity.

### **Required Texts**

*City of God* by Augustine. Translated by Henry Bettenson. Penguin. ISBN: 0140448942.

*The Nature of the Gods* by Cicero. Translated by P.G. Walsh. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 0199540063

\*All other readings are available through folio. Electronic readings should be printed out and brought to class.

### **Reading**

Students are expected to bring hard-copies of all readings to class; students are also expected to have done each reading in advance of the class they are assigned.

### **Technology**

Unless you have received permission from me or from the Student Disability Resource Center, please do not make use of earphones, computers, tablets, cell phones, or other electronic devices during class; use of these during class time will result in an absence for that day.

## Assignments

- One 2-3 pg. paper (**25%**). There will be three opportunities to do a shorter paper. Students must choose **one** of them. The first opportunity is for a reading in the **first** unit. The second opportunity is for a reading in the **second** unit. The third opportunity is for a reading in the **third** unit. Students can either write an exegetical paper, addressing a question or interpretive difficulty in one of the readings, or they can write a critical paper, challenging, or responding to a challenge, directed at a position taken by a philosopher in one of the readings. More information will be provided in class closer to the paper due dates.
- One class presentation (**25%**). All class presentations require an accompanying handout. Both on the handout and in their presentation, students must (a) analyze and outline a section of the reading and (b) present a difficulty or perplexity about that section for the class to discuss. Students should check in with me before-hand to delineate a section of the reading for their presentation.
- Final, 4-6 pg. paper (**40%**). The final paper is on a topic arranged in advance with me. Students are permitted—even encouraged—to expand their short papers into their final paper in light of feedback.
- Participation (**10%**). If, for whatever reason, you have difficulty speaking in class, discussing material with me during office hours also counts toward your participation grade.

## Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are required and will be reflected in your final grade. Class begins promptly at 12:30. If you are not present when the roll is called, you will be counted as late. Two late arrivals will be counted as one absence. After 3 unexcused absences, every additional absence will result in a 5% deduction in your final course grade.

## Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honest Honor Code as published in the *Georgia Southern University Student Conduct Code*. If you do not know the school definitions of cheating and plagiarism, familiarize yourself: <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/fye/students/first-year/academic-honesty/>

All instances of plagiarism and/or cheating will be reported to the appropriate university officials. At a bare minimum, the assignment in question will receive a failing grade. Additional penalties will vary with the circumstances.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Present and explain the thought of a philosopher—or a philosophical position—accurately and clearly.
- Compare alternative philosophical positions, identifying their strengths and weakness as well as the central arguments for them and their support. Demonstrate an ability to think through complex issues with Clarity.
- Present an independent evaluation of or response to the material. Support one's own philosophical positions with well-reasoned argumentation, providing a thesis that is properly stated, focused, and clear, and defending this thesis in a way that is well-organized and well-supported.

## Disability Accommodation Statement

This class complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations must:

- (1) Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC), and,
- (2) Provide a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating what you need may be for academic accommodation.

This should be done within the first week of class. Students with these particular needs should contact the Student Disability Resource Center, Hampton Hall, 912.871.1566.

**Note:** All information contained in this syllabus, including the course schedule and assignments, is subject to revision as the professor deems necessary.

## Schedule

### Christianity and Ancient Natural Theology

**Week 1.** Jan. 9. Introduction; Plato, *Republic* 379a-383c; Plato, *Timaeus*, 27c-30c; Plato, *Symposium* 202b-d; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1178b5-30; Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*, paragraph 123; Epicurus, *Principle Doctrines*, 1.

Jan. 11. Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods*, Book 1

**Week 2.** Jan. 16. Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods*, Book 2

Jan. 18. Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods*, Book 3

**Week 3.** Jan. 23. Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 7

Jan. 25. Augustine, *City of God*, Books 6-7

**Week 4.** Jan. 30. Augustine, *City of God*, Books 8-9

Feb. 1. Augustine, *City of God*, Book 10

**Week 5.** Feb. 6. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*. First Part. Questions 5 and 6.

Feb. 8. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*. First Part. Question 19.

### Could God Create the World?

**Week 6.** Feb. 13. Aristotle *Metaphysics* Lambda, Chapters 6-10

Feb. 15. Al-Ghazali, *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, Problem 1, pgs. 13-32 **First Paper Opportunity**

**Week 7.** Feb. 20. Al-Ghazali, *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, Problem 1, pgs. 32-53

Feb. 22. Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, book 2, chapters 13-15

**Week 8.** Feb. 27. Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, book 2, chapters 16-19

March 1. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part. Question 46

**Week 9. March 6.** Augustine *Confessions*, Book 11; *City of God*, Book 11, chapters 4-6

### Grace and Original Sin

**March 8.** Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 2, chapters 1-2, 4; Book 3, chapters 6-9; Book 4, chapter 1. **Second Paper Opportunity.**

**Week 10.** Spring Break.

**Week 11.** March 20. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 1, chapter 5; Book 4, chapter 3; Book 9, chapter 8.

March 22. Plato, *Protagoras*, 353a-357e; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 7, chapters 1-6

**Week 12.** March 27. Paul, Letter to the Romans

March 29. Augustine, *On Nature and Grace*, chapters 1-50

**Week 13.** April 3. Augustine, *On Nature and Grace*, chapters 50-84

April 5. Augustine, *City of God*, Books 2, 5

**Week 14.** April 10. Augustine, *City of God*, Books 13-14, 19

April 12. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part of the Second Part. Questions 109, 114.

#### **Are God's Attributes Consistent?**

**Week 15.** April 17. Anselm, *Prologion*, 1.7-1.11. **Third Paper Opportunity.**

April 19. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part, Question 25

**Week 16.** April 24. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part, Question 21

April 26. No class. Book of Job Make-up Assignment.

**Week 17.** May 3. **Final Paper Due.**