

PHL-D501 Philosophical Foundations of Thomas Aquinas, 3 credits
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Description:

This course is an investigation of foundational emphases in Aquinas's philosophy of reality, God, and human nature. In the opening weeks, we will familiarize ourselves with important parts of the medieval lore that Aquinas and other medieval authors expected their audiences to know. This includes familiarity with Aristotle's *Categories*, Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and Boethius's *De Divisione*. In the following weeks we will examine texts from Aquinas that will help us to understand his system of metaphysics, including a secondary focus on (i) his arguments for God's existence and (ii) his commitment to, and understanding of, divine simplicity. In the second half of class, we will examine Aquinas's philosophy of human nature, focusing in particular on the nature and powers of the human soul.

Objectives:

1. To introduce students to central themes in Aquinas's thought so that they are equipped to study his work more generally.
2. To prepare the students to study Aquinas's ethics in PHL-D515 ("The Virtuous Life in the Thought of Thomas Aquinas")

Procedures:

The class will consist of a combination of lectures and class discussion.

Evaluation:

Student performance will be evaluated on the basis of one examination, a student presentation, and a conference-ready paper (i.e., a high quality paper of roughly 3000 words).

Texts:

Most readings are available online. In the single instance where this is not the case, I will make the reading available to students.