**Diachronic Syllabus**

**DESCRIPTION:** Philosophy is a conversation about and by means of the classics. Philosophy resists fads, although occasionally something like progress seems to occur. This course takes up one set of issues that came to a head in the twentieth-century, namely philosophy of psychology (the nature of the soul, the mind-body problem, and so on). The course uses these issues to learn philosophical resources for better doing theology. In particular, the course ends with a close examination of those theologians known as the “Wittgensteinian Thomists.”

**April 30** Reprise: Philosophy of Psychology

**Reading:**


**Reflection:** Questions for in-class discussion of assigned essay.
For Further Study

April 23
Reading:
- Critical evaluation of classmate papers.
**Reflection:** Critical evaluation of all classmate papers. Please work hard at giving practical advice regarding ways to improve and clarify the paper.

April 16 No Class; Stander Symposium
**Reflection:** *****Penultimate draft of paper due Friday, April 17 so that we may read and critique other classmate papers for in-class discussion on April 23. Please distribute via email, and kindly include Maria in the distribution.

April 2 Wittgenstein and Religion
Reading:

**Reflection:** Precis as per assigned essays.

For Further Study

March 26 Fergus Kerr on Wittgenstein’s “Third” Period
Reading:

**Reflection:** Precis as per assigned chapters.

For Further Study
- Kerr, Fergus. "How to Understand Heidegger and Wittgenstein." In University of Dayton Department of Philosophy Colloquium. Dayton, OH, 2004

March 19 Wittgenstein’s philosophy of mind
Reading:
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Last Writings on the Philosophy of
Reflection: (1) Make a case for or against the claim that on Wittgenstein’s view the robot, Bandit-II, is a person. See “I’m Here to Make you feel better.” (2) Make a case for or against the claim that on Wittgenstein’s view, God is a person. See “To the brain, God is just another guy.”

For Further Study

March 12: Transubstantiation
Reading:

Reflection: Precis describing the presence of Wittgenstein's method in of Anscombe, McCabe, and Kerr.

For Further Study
- NB: The entire issue of Modern Theology 15(2) 1999 is devoted to various theological accounts of Eucharist.

March 5: Wittgenstein’s method
Reading:

Reflection: Paul Holmer attempts to do his work in a Wittgensteinian grid. How so? Compare what you are learning about Wittgenstein through this week's readings (in PI §1-188 and and OC §§1-215) to what you detect of Holmer's methods. (Bonus if you can spot what seems to be missing in Holmer's approach; this also makes him Wittgensteinian!)
February 24 (Tuesday, 3-5:30): Introduction to Wittgenstein

Reading:
- Kallenberg, Ethics as Grammar, chapter 3.
- Kallenberg, Ethics as Grammar, chapter 5

Reflection: Ten questions

February 19: NonReductive Physicalism as a theological position

Reading:
- Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies by Nancey Murphy

Reflection: Precís for Murphy with special attention to objections (for and against) that might be raised by Murdoch and McCabe (and Damasio, as a bonus).

For Further Study

February 12: Supervenience and NonReductive Physicalism

Reading:

Reflection: Precís.

For Further Study
- Supervenience Bibliography.1998.doc

February 5: Guest Lecture: D. B. Hart (candidate for a senior faculty position)

Reading:
- Murphy, Nancey. Anglo-American Postmodernity Anglo-American
Reflection: (1) please compose 5 questions for in-class discussion with Dr. Hart. (2) no precis are required for the other two essays.

For Further Study

January 29 Antonio Damasio
Reading:
• Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain

Reflection: (1) Please focus your Damasio précis on the chapters you will lead in discussion. (2) In the constructive section of your précis, try to hypothesize answers to any questions you raise about your chapters. Remember that Damasio is neither a philosopher nor a theologian. So, we ought not fault him for any specious claims or categories. Rather, we must use his writing as sort of “data” against which we do our philosophizing and theologizing. (And your constructive forays may be either philosophical or more explicitly theological in nature.) (3) In lieu of précis for the other chapters, write single questions per chapter to be used in-class discussion.


Paper 1 Instructions.doc

January 22 Herbert McCabe
Reading:
• On Aquinas
•  (Students unfamiliar with Aristotle are urged to consult Encyclopedias of Philosophy and/or Wallace Matson’s A New History of Philosophy for clarification as needed.)

Reflection: (1) What evidence do you see of Aristotle’s influence, via Aquinas of course, on McCabe’s thinking, especially on his conception of “the soul”? Or, how does he differ from Murdoch’s conception of the soul/human life/psyche, etc.? (2) What questions do you think he leaves unanswered? (Please practice concrete attempts at philosophizing. One only can improve by trying!) 

For Further Study

January 15 Iris Murdoch
Reading:
• The Sovereignty of Good
Students unfamiliar with Plato are urged to consult Encyclopedias of Philosophy and/or Wallace Matson’s *A New History of Philosophy* for clarification as needed.

**Reflection:** (1) What evidence do you see of Plato’s influence (as per last week’s lecture, etc.) on Murdoch’s thinking, especially on her conception of “the Good”? (2) What questions do you think she leaves unanswered? (Please practice concrete attempts at philosophizing. One only can improve by trying!)

**For Further Study:**

**January 8** No class—*Society of Christian Ethics* (Chicago)

**January 6, Tuesday** What is “philosophical theology”?

**Reading:**

REQUIRED READING: in addition to photocopied articles, the following books are required reading. I urge you in the strongest possible terms to purchase copies of these books. Inexpensive used copies can often be tracked down from “Fetch Book” <http://www.fetchbook.info/>. Because our discussion of texts will be very close (for that is the nature of philosophical theology), students are urged to thoughtfully mark up their books to better prepare them for in-class discussion.

**REQUIRED BOOKS**
- A Wittgensteinian Thomist of your choosing.... (TBD)

**RECOMMENDED BOOKS**
ASSIGNMENTS: Philosophical theology is a language, sui generis. There is no way to learn it except by practicing talking. This is risky business! But remember that you are in good company; we are all still at school. Conversation is obviously more interesting when all parties have something to say. Those that do the reading and writing before class will do much better in the oral participation component of the class, worth 30%.

DOCTORAL ASSIGNMENTS

- Weekly précis (2 pp. ea.), summarizing the reading as focused by the reading question AND going beyond the reading as an attempt by the student to do constructive thinking. Cumulative value of the precis is 20%.
- Paper #1: comparison of Iris Murdoch and Herbert McCabe with respect to their concept of “the Good.” Articulated process. Worth 15%.
- Paper 2.doc: Paper on an approved Wittgensteinian Thomist (e.g., Fergus Kerr, Peter Geach, Stanley Hauerwas, and perhaps even Rowan Williams, etc.). The paper must display constructive work. Worth 35%.

MASTER’S LEVEL ASSIGNMENTS

- Weekly précis (2 pp. ea.), summarizing the reading as focused by the reading question AND going beyond the reading as an attempt by the student to do constructive thinking. Cumulative value of the precis is 20%.
- Paper #1: comparison of Iris Murdoch and Herbert McCabe with respect to their concept of “the Good.” Articulated process. Worth 25%.
- Paper #2: Analytical book review of an approved Wittgensteinian Thomist (e.g., Fergus Kerr, Peter Geach, Stanley Hauerwas, and perhaps even Rowan Williams, etc.). Worth 25%.