

“It has been well said of Aristotle, ‘Solet Aristoteles quaerere pugnam’; ‘Aristotle has a habit of seeking a fight.’ He is seeking a fight not because he loves fight and enmity but because he loves peace and friendship; but true peace and friendship can only be found in the truth.”

Leo Strauss¹

“It will not be possible to conceal much longer from anybody the fact that St. Thomas Aquinas was one of the great liberators of the human intellect.... Thomas was a very great man who reconciled religion with reason, who expanded it towards experimental science, who insisted that the senses were the windows of the soul and that the reason had a divine right to feed upon facts, and that it was the business of the Faith to digest the strong meat of the toughest and most practical of pagan philosophies”

G.K. Chesterton²

HONORS 2030: Humanities Colloquium
Aristotle and Aquinas: On Nature and Justice
Spring 2019

Through study of the writings of Aristotle and Aquinas, we will seek to understand what nature is and how it can be known, and then to consider the implications for understanding human nature and the question of how to live a good life, individually and in community with others. Attending to the influence of modern science as well as to the rise of modern society, we will ask what is living and true in the philosophy of Aristotle and Aquinas, respectively, and what has been superseded by modern discoveries.

Instructor: James Stoner
Stubbs 214 (tel: 578-2538); e-mail: poston@lsu.edu

Office Hours: M, 2:00-3:00, W, 1:30–3:30, and by appointment

Books available for purchase:

- Anthony Rizzi, *The Science Before Science* (Institute for Advanced Physics/AuthorHouse) [ISBN 9781418465049]
- Richard McKeon, ed., *Basic Works of Aristotle* (Modern Library) [ISBN 9780375757990]
- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (tr, Robert Bartlett & Susan Collins) (Chicago) [ISBN 9780226026756]
- Thomas Aquinas, *Summa of the Summa* [ed. Peter Kreeft] (Ignatius Press) [ISBN 9780898703009]
- Thomas Aquinas, *On Kingship* (Pontifical Institute for Mediaeval Studies) [ISBN 9780888442512]

¹ quoted in Thomas Pangle, *Leo Strauss: An Introduction to his Thought and Intellectual Legacy* (Johns Hopkins, 2006), p. 6

² *St. Thomas Aquinas: The Dumb Ox* (Doubleday, 1956), pp. 32-33

Course requirements:

- Attendance at every class and participation in class discussion [15%]
- Two 500-word essays on the reading, one on Aristotle, one on Aquinas [15%]
- Two in-class exams, one each on Aristotle & Aquinas (Feb. 27 & Apr. 10) [40%]
- Topic for final paper (due April 5)
- 2000-2500-word paper on a topic involving Aristotle and Aquinas, due at hour of scheduled exam [30%]

Grading scale:

A+ (98%-100%), A (93%-97%), A- (90%-92%)
 B+ (88%-90%), B (83%-87%), B- (80%-82%)
 C+ (78%-80%), C (73%-77%), C- (70%-72%)
 D+ (68%-70%), D (63%-67%), D- (60%-62%)
 F (below 60%)

Attendance, Integrity, and Access

University education is a great privilege, offered to all with the ability and the willingness to learn, without obstacles based on race, sex, or other aspects of personal identity. Students would be foolish to squander their opportunity by unexcused absence from class or by academic dishonesty. Please consult linked LSU policies.

Website and Reserve:

A course website, including material listed as “on-line,” is on Moodle. Many of the readings for the course are also available in the library on reserve, as are several secondary works on our principal authors. All of Aristotle’s works and the complete *Summa Theologica* by Aquinas are available on-line.

SYLLABUS:

Wed., 1/9 Introduction

Mon., 1/14 Rizzi, *The Science Before Science*, preface, ch. 1-3

Wed., 1/16 *The Science Before Science*, ch. 4-6

I. ARISTOTLE

Wed., 1/23 Aristotle, *Categories*; *Physics*, Book II, IV

Mon., 1/28 Aristotle, *De Anima*, Book I, ch. 1; Book II, ch. 1-2; Book III, ch. 6-13
 Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book I, ch. 1-2; Book XII

Wed., 1/30 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books I-II

Mon., 2/4 *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book III-IV

Wed., 2/6 *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books V-VI

Mon., 2/11 *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books VII-VIII

Wed., 2/13 *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book IX-X

- Mon., 2/18 Aristotle, *Politics*, Books I, III
- Wed., 2/20 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, Book I, ch. 1-6; Book II, ch. 1-4, 10-14
- Mon., 2/25 Aristotle, *Poetics*
- Wed., 2/27 In-class Examination on Aristotle

[MARDI GRAS BREAK]

II. AQUINAS

- Wed., 3/6 Leo Strauss, “On the Mutual Influence of Philosophy and Theology”
Peter Kreeft, Introduction to *Summa of the Summa*, pp. 11-22
Aquinas, *Summa of the Summa*, I, q. 1 (pp. 33-50)
- Mon., 3/11 *Summa of the Summa*, I, q. 2-7 (pp. 51-99)
[optional: Rizzi, *Science Before Science*, ch. 8]
- Wed., 3/13 *Summa of the Summa*, I, q. 8-12, 14-16, 19-20 (pp. 100-122, 134-147, 154-167)
- Mon., 3/18 *Summa of the Summa*, I, q. 44-49, 65, 103-105 (pp. 189-239)
- Wed., 3/20 *Summa of the Summa*, I, q. 75-76, 79-83 (pp. 243-260, 269-300)
- Mon., 3/25 *Summa of the Summa*, I-II, q. 1-2, 6, 8-9, 13, 18-21 (pp. 349-375, 400-432)
[optional: Rizzi, *Science Before Science*, ch. 9]
- Wed., 3/27 *Summa of the Summa*, I-II, q. 26-29, 55-89 (pp. 433-499)
- Mon., 4/1 *Summa of the Summa*, I-II, q. 90-97 (pp. 33-50) [read full text on the web]
- Wed., 4/3 Aquinas, *On Kingship*, Book I
- Mon., 4/8 *On Kingship*, Book II
- Wed., 4/10 In-class Examination on Aquinas

[SPRING BREAK]

III. ARISTOTELIANISM AND THOMISM TODAY

- Mon., 4/22 Rizzi, *The Science Before Science*, ch. 7, 10
- Wed., 4/24 review and conclusion
- Sat., 5/4 **FINAL PAPER DUE (3:00 pm)**