

PHIL 241 Philosophy of Nature

Intersession, 2017

Course Outline

Class Start Date & End Date

May 9 to June 13.

Class Meeting Time, Location, and Room

Tues. & Thur. 1:15-4:05pm **Room:** St. Eugene de Mazenod

Instructors Name: Jason West, Ph.D.
Office: NTC 2-01
Office Hours: By appointment
Telephone: 780-392-2448
Email: Jason.west@newman.edu

Course Description

Philosophical inquiry into various aspects of nature and the universe, including issues arising from changing views of science and cosmology. The theological importance of various views of nature and God in historical and contemporary times.

Course Objectives

- 1) To develop an understanding of the major questions in philosophy of nature;
- 2) To show the importance of philosophy of nature in Catholic theology and ethics;
- 3) To be able to integrate arguments from this course with knowledge you have from other disciplines and everyday life;
- 4) To develop research skills and the ability to critically engage with philosophical arguments.

A philosophical examination of nature. We will try to examine the relations between a philosophical understanding of nature and a scientific one. What does philosophy contribute to science and vice versa? Specific questions such as artificial intelligence, the big bang, evolution, the existence of God, etc. will also be discussed. You should do the assigned readings and bring the text to every class.

Course Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment 1: Three one page reflections on assigned topics from the readings. Value 30%

Assignment 2: Explain and assess the hylemorphic theory of substance. Make substantial use of at least 2 sources beyond the text. 5 pages. Value 35%

Take home exam. Value 35%

Textbooks

D.Q. McInerny, *The Philosophy of Nature*. Third Edition. Fraternity Publications, 2014.

Recommended Reading

1. Antony Rizzi, *The Science Before Science*.
2. William Wallace, *The Modeling of Nature*.

Course Requirements

This class comprises 36 hours of instruction and seminar-style discussion. Students must attend all classes and are expected to prepare for each week by doing the assigned reading and being able to participate in class discussions. Discussions will review the assigned readings.

Course Schedule

May 9 What is philosophy of Nature? McInerny, 1-17
May 11 What is science? Realism and idealism as approaches to nature. McInerny, 18-63
May 16 What is nature? What is matter? McInerny, 64-107
May 18 Substance. McInerny, 108-132 **Assignment 1 due**
May 23 Hylemorphism. McInerny, 133-157
May 25 Change. McInerny, 158-182
May 30 Efficient causality. McInerny, 183-212
June 1 Final causality. McInerny, 213-236
June 6 Material being as finite and the infinite. Place and space. McInerny, 237-287
June 8 Philosophy of nature and empirical science. McInerny, 316-347 **Assignment 2 due**
June 13 The origin of material being. McInerny, 348-374
Take home exam due June 16 by email.

General Academic Information

Late Submission Policy.

Late work will be penalized 10% per weekday late.

Course Attendance

No credit will be given for a course if the student has been absent, for any reason whatever, from one-third or more of the lectures and/or seminars scheduled for the term. Likewise, no credit will be given if term assignments or other assignments are or remain incomplete.

Leave of Absence and Policy for Incompletes

Extensions to an incomplete grade may be granted in extenuating circumstances, but may not exceed 16 weeks following the end of the course. Students who fail to complete course work by the agreed deadline will have a grade assigned which is based on work completed.

Academic Integrity

Acts of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) are subject to an appropriate penalty. The grade "F" may be assigned to a student guilty of such acts by the professor of the course in which the infraction occurred. A second offense against academic integrity renders the student liable to automatic dismissal from NTC. Further details are available in the Student Handbook in the Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Grievances

Students may appeal grades received; the procedure is outlined in the Student Handbook in the Grade Appeal Policy. For other grievances, students will refer to the Student Grievances Policy also outlined in the Student Handbook.

NOTE: The GPA is computed on the basis of cumulative grade point (letter) values, not percentage values. All courses are included in this calculation except those exceeding degree requirements and/or received as transfer credits from other recognized institutions.

Grading System

Undergraduate Studies C.Th., Dip.Th., B.Th.			Graduate Studies M.T.S., M.Div., M.Th., G.C.C.S.A., M.R.E.		
Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point	Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent	A+	4.0	Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0		A	4.0
	A-	3.7		A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3	Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0		B	3.0
	B-	2.7		B-	2.7
Adequate	C+	2.3	Adequate	C+	2.3
	C	2.0		C	2.0
	C-	1.7		C-	1.7
Marginal	D+	1.3			
	D	1.0			
Fail	F	0.0	Fail	D+	1.3
				D	1.0
				F	0.0

Written Assignments - Style and Format

Newman Theological College requires that all written work be submitted in acceptable academic format and style. Please note the following regulations:

Regulations

Research papers, book reports, article summaries, reflection papers, and essays should be double-spaced, printed on one side only, and submitted on white, 8.5" x 11" paper.

A standard type style, such as Times New Roman, with a 12-point font size, must be used. The instructor will specify the most recent edition of the style manual to be used:

1. Kate Turabian, "A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
2. Joseph Gibaldi & William Ahters, eds., "MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers" (New York: Modern Language Association of America).

3. American Psychological Association "Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association" (Washington: APA Publications).

Copies of these standard references may be purchased in the NTC bookstore.

Ignorance of standard form is not considered an acceptable excuse for deviation from required standards of format and style.

Academic Regulations

The following Academic Regulations are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Changes in Registration: Add/Drop/Withdraw Notice
- Course Work
- Final Examination Schedule
- Incomplete Grade Policy
- Inclusive Language

Related Academic Matters

The following Related Academic Matters are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Grade Reports & Posting
- Glossary of Academic Terms

Other Related Policies

The following policies are located in the Student Handbook for your reference:

- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Grade Appeal Policy

Recording of Lectures

Audio or video recording of lectures, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior consent of the instructor. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Student Services, contact Doreen Bloos at 780-392-2450 ext. 2212; Email doreen.bloos@newman.edu.