

## **PH-4214, Aquinas on Logical Demonstration: His Commentary of the Posterior Analytics**

Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology

Fall 2023

**Class Meetings:** Mondays, 12:40-3:30pm

**Instructor:** Fr. Raphael Mary Salzillo, O.P.

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**Office Hours:** TBA

**Prerequisites:** PH-1115, Aristotelian Logic (or equivalent). In addition, enrolled students should have had some experience reading texts of Thomas Aquinas, and some knowledge of Latin. Consult the professor if in doubt.

**Course Description:** In this course we will do a close reading of Thomas Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's Posterior Analytics, a work that examines the "matter" of logical demonstration. The focus of the course will be on the text of the commentary itself, though we will make use of some secondary sources as well.

The course presupposes that the student has had some experience reading the texts of Aquinas and has at least a semester of Latin, or equivalent. However, exceptions can be made, so prospective students are encouraged to speak with the professor if they are considering enrolling. Auditors may be permitted, with the professor's approval.

**Required Books:** None. Readings will be available online or provided on Moodle. In particular, a Latin-English parallel text of the Commentary is available online. Links to it will be provided on Moodle and/or directly by the professor.

**Optional Books:** For those who would like a physical copy of the Commentary, you can get this one for less than \$50 online:

*Commentary on Aristotle's Posterior Analytics*, Richard Berquist (trans)

ISBN-13 : 978-1883357788

I am not aware of a widely available and reasonably priced volume with the Latin text.

### **Student Learning Goals:**

1. To understand the principles of logical demonstration as articulated by Aristotle and elaborated by Thomas Aquinas.
2. To grow in one's ability to read, understand, and evaluate a medieval philosophical text.
3. To engage philosophically with the medieval (and ancient) philosophical texts that are read in the course, both in class discussion, and in writing.

### **Student Learning Outcome:**

The student will demonstrate success in each of the three learning goals through class participation, short assignments, and papers.

**Course Format:** The course will be run seminar style, with both attendance and active participation being required.

**Evaluation:** The course will be graded according to the following approximate weighting:

Participation:	20%
Discussion Questions:	20%
Final Paper:	60%

### Readings & Discussion

The central reading for this course is the text of the Commentary itself. Due to the quantity and difficulty of the reading, students will need to budget their time well, and staying a bit ahead (even a week or two ahead) on the reading will pay dividends, if it can be managed. Being prepared for class entails having carefully read the reading for the day, taken some notes on it, and coming to class with thoughts, questions, theses to test, and puzzles to present. The purpose of this course is to wrestle critically with the text in order to come to a deeper philosophical understanding of the ideas and arguments therein.

### Discussion Questions

Each student is to submit two substantive questions on the reading by 8pm the night before the class session in which the reading is due. These questions will be submitted online via a single post to the Moodle discussion board for that day. Thus, the questions will be visible to the whole class and students may also post responses to each others' questions (though only the posting of the questions is required). Sometime after the questions are due and before class begins the next day, each student is to read through the posted questions of his or her classmates.

The purpose of these questions is to focus our class discussion by assuring that each student comes to class having already engaged philosophically with the reading. The two questions together should not normally exceed 200 words in length. The questions should be "substantive" in that they engage with substantive issues in the text. Please do not ask questions that can be answered by a simple google search.

### Paper

There will be a final paper due the last day of the semester that will count for 60% of the course grade. The paper should be both exegetical and argumentative. It must have a clear thesis that is directly related to, and involves exegesis of, the text of the Commentary. The paper should not be over 5000 words long. In choosing a topic, keep the following principle in mind: It is *always* better to argue well for a narrow thesis than to argue sloppily for a sweeping thesis.

Prior to drafting the paper, students must submit a topic proposal (effectively, a long abstract) of no more than one page single spaced. Each student is required to get my approval of their topic informally before writing up this abstract.

Subsequently, each student must submit a detailed outline of the sections of their paper and what they plan to accomplish in each.

A full draft will be due to me two weeks before the end of the semester. I will read these drafts and give feedback in time for each student to revise the paper and turn in the final version. See the Schedule below for the due dates for the proposal, outline, and draft.

## Schedule of Class Sessions

**9/11 Getting Situated**

READING: Preface, Forward of St. Thomas, Book I: Lectio 1

**9/18 Pre-existent/Immediate Knowledge and the Demonstrative Syllogism**

READING: **Book I:** Lectiones 2-6

**9/25 Modes of Predication**

READING: Lectiones 7-12

**10/2 Various Features of Demonstration**

READING: Lectiones 13-17

**10/9 Principles and Demonstrative Science**

READING: Lectiones 18-22

**10/16 Demonstration “quia” and Demonstration “propter quid”**

READING: Lectiones 23-27

**PAPER TOPIC PROPOSAL DUE, by 11:59pm**

**10/23 – 10/27**

**NO CLASSES – READING WEEK**

**10/30 Syllogisms and the Different Species of Demonstration**

READING: Lectiones 28-30, 37-40

(Warning: Reading is 1.5x usual length)

**11/6 Science as a Mode of Knowing**

READING: Lectiones 41-44

(Warning: Reading is 1.3x usual length)

**11/13 The Middle Term and Demonstration of the “quod quid”**

READING: **Book II:** Lectiones 1-5

(Warning: Reading is 1.3x usual length)

**11/18 (Sat.)**

**DETAILED OUTLINE OF PAPER DUE, by 11:59pm**

(You should already have begin to write the paper by this point.)

11/20 **The “*quod quid*” Continued**

READING: **Book II:** Lectiones 6-9

11/22 – 11/24      **NO CLASSES – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

11/27 **Demonstration Through a Cause**

READING: **Book II:** Lectiones 10-12

(Reading is only about 60% of usual length)

12/2 (Sat.)

**FULL DRAFT OF PAPER DUE**, by 11:59pm

(I plan to have these back to you with comments by 12/6.)

12/4 **Definition**

READING: **Book II:** Lectiones 13-17

12/11 **Cause, Effect, and our Knowledge of the First Principles of Demonstration**

READING: **Book II:** Lectiones 18-20

12/15

**FINAL PAPER DUE**, by 11:59pm