

**Medieval Philosophy
Philosophy 304
Fall 2009**

Instructor: Philip M. Mouch

Where: MacLean 373

Office: Bridges 359c

When: T 6:00-8:30pm

Office Phone: 477-2331

Office Hours: MWF 11:30-1:00; MT 11:00-4:30

E-Mail: mouch@mnstate.edu

and by appointment

homepage: <http://www.mnstate.edu/mouch/304/304index.html>

Course Overview: We will be looking at some of the major figures from the Christian, Jewish, and Islamic traditions during the medieval period. Much of the period focuses on Platonic and Aristotelian views connecting, and conflicting, with various religious views. As a result, some of the questions that will come up include the existence and nature of God, universals, free will, and the nature of the mind, as well as the relationship between faith and reason. I expect the course to proceed in a seminar style.

Texts: The required texts for the class are:

Augustine. *On Free Choice of the Will*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993.

Maimonides, Moses. *The Guide for the Perplexed*. New York: Dover, 1956.

Aquinas, Thomas. *Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas*. New York: The Modern Library, 1948.

In addition to the above texts, there is a course packet in the bookstore which contains additional readings for Augustine as well as the readings for al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd.

Evaluation: There will be a total of three papers (5-7 pages) due over the course of the semester. I will also expect each student to lead discussion at least once during the semester. (We will figure out who will lead discussion when at the first meeting.) Students will be expected to turn in two-page summaries of the material on which they are to lead discussion. These summaries must be handed in to me no later than two hours before class. The papers are each worth 25% of your final grade. The leading discussion and the summary is worth 15% of your final grade. Participating in the class discussion makes up the last 10% of your final grade.

POLICIES:

(1) You are responsible for all assignments to be handed in. Late assignments will be penalized. Excuses such as you handed in the paper to my mailbox, slid it under my door, or gave it to a friend to hand in are unacceptable. I will take such papers, but if the paper never showed up for whatever reason, it will count as late. You should be in class to hand in all assignments; otherwise you take the risk of not getting credit for your work.

(2) The final drafts of all the papers are to be typed and double-spaced. Margins of an inch on the top and bottom and an inch and a quarter on the left and right sides of the page are standard. Twelve point fonts are also standard. You should proofread your papers. If there are more than three typos or spelling errors per page, I will return the paper to you, and it must be handed in, cleaned up, at the next class meeting. Such papers will count as a day late. Papers are due at the beginning of class, so be sure to check your printer to make sure you have enough ink well before the paper is due. Furthermore, plagiarism will not be tolerated. Refer to the Student Handbook for more information on Academic Honesty.

(3) You are expected to be in class and have done the reading for the day. It is simple courtesy to be in class on time and in your seat. If you have to be late for some reason, please enter the room and take your seat quietly, so as not to disturb the class. PLEASE TURN OFF ALL ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT (INCLUDING CELLPHONES, PAGERS, AND IPODS). Finally, do not stand up and walk out in the middle of the class period. This is distracting and rude to the other students and me. If you must leave early for some reason, please talk to me before class and sit near the door.

SWINE FLU: We have been told that there is a chance that, with a swine flu outbreak, we may have to avoid gathering in large groups to prevent the spread of the disease. With that in mind, we have been asked to plan for the possibility that we may need to find alternative ways to maintain our classes without meeting on campus. If a swine flu outbreak happens, I will get in touch with you over e-mail so that we can proceed. You should also check the above website for the course for instructions.

Readings: This is a likely reading assignment list. As we progress, we may make changes.

Aug 25	Introduction
Sept 1	Augustine
Sept 8	Augustine
Sept 15	Augustine First Paper Assigned
Sept 22	Maimonides First Paper Due
Sept 29	Maimonides
Oct 6	Maimonides
Oct 13	No Classes
Oct 20	Maimonides Second Paper Assigned
Oct 27	al-Ghazali Second Paper Due
Nov 3	Ibn Rushd
Nov 10	Ibn Rushd
Nov 17	Aquinas
Nov 24	Thanksgiving
Dec 1	Aquinas
Dec 8	Aquinas Final Paper Assigned
Dec 15	Final Paper Due

Students with disabilities who believe they may need an accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact Greg Toutges, Coordinator of Disability Services at 477-5859 (voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY), CMU 114 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.