**PHRA 4310 – Poetry & Creative Intuition**  
**Fall 2015**  
**Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology**  
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**Course Overview.** Students in this seminar course will examine the relationship between creative intuition (sometimes called connatural knowledge) and the fine arts, particularly poetry. Focusing on the work of Jacques Maritain, students will develop a scholastic understanding of how this kind of knowledge is engaged during the creative act. Using contemporary authors, students will then examine how poetry functions to bring humans towards a deeper (connatural) knowledge of transcendent aspects of key human experiences such as suffering, death, resurrection, and the environment. Students will engage the material through seminar discussion. A research paper and class presentations will be used to assess mastery of the material.

**Goals.** This course is designed to help students understand:

1. connatural (affective) knowledge;
2. the role of connatural knowledge in human creativity, especially poetry;
3. how connatural knowledge aids the human person in experiencing the Transcendent and in negotiating key experiences of human life.

**Learning Outcomes.** At the end of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to

1. define connatural knowledge using scholastic terminology (see Institutional Goal A.1);
2. compare and contrast the scholastic understandings of connatural knowledge with ideas of Jacques Maritain, particularly as presented in *Creative Intuition in Art & Poetry* (see Institutional Goals A.1-3);
3. discuss poetry not only from an "analytical" perspective but also from a "connatural" perspective (see Institutional Goals A.1-3; and B.3);
4. apply the principles learned in this course to a chosen research topic (see Institutional Goals A.1-3, and B.1-3);
5. present their ideas in a formal presentation which is both informative and facilitates group involvement (see Institutional Goals A.1-3).

**Course Requirements.** This course is conducted as an upper-division seminar. As such, students are expected to play a more active role in each class session. Regular attendance is expected, and normally students may not miss more than one class period during the semester. Student learning is assessed in three areas: a) class participation; b) a research paper; and c) a class presentation on a portion of the research work. The assessment is guided by a set of common rubrics related to the DSPT institutional core abilities (see “Rubrics for assessing student skills”).

**I. Reading Assignments & Discussion.** Students will complete all reading assignments and come to class prepared to engage in a significant discussion on the materials. Students are expected not only to know the facts related to the assignment, but also to make deeper connections between various readings, and so to draw conclusions and follow implications.
You will be graded on class participation using the classifications defined in the “Rubrics” and by the following criteria.

**Required Course Materials.** Most of the required readings listed in this syllabus are available through the GTU Moodle system. Where indicated, books are also available on reserve in the GTU Library. Thus, there are no materials which need to be purchased for this course. The “enrollment key” for the Moodle site is simply the 4-digit course number.

**IMPORTANT:** In order to comply with copyright laws, materials for each session are available on Moodle only for the week prior to the date of the class. For example, if the class meets on Monday, February 4th, then you will have access to the required reading materials only from January 28th through February 4th. After Feb. 4th, the materials will no longer be accessible. There are a few self-assessment assignments posted on Moodle. While these are non-graded assignments, their timely completion is also one of the course requirement.

For those who have not had a course similar to the DSPT course, "Philosophy of Nature," you may find the following resources helpful introductions to the required vocabulary:

Klauder, Francis J. *Knowledge of the Heart, a Christian Epistemology: An Integrated Study of Human Knowledge*. Bangalore, India: Kristu Jyoti Publications, 1997. This book introduces terms used in the scholastic philosophical system. It also provides an historical overview of how the term “connatural knowledge” came to be used by the scholastics. N.B. This book may be difficult to obtain. It is available for purchase through Salesiana Publications. See me if you have problems.


**II. Research Paper.** Each student will write a research paper, of 15-20 pages in length, on a topic of their choosing, related to the materials covered in the course. Papers must conform to proper research format and style, including a properly formatted bibliography, according to the most recent edition of Kate Turabian: *A Manual for the Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. The work must demonstrate not only the ability to report and summarize the work of other scholars, but also the ability to draw relevant conclusions. Personal opinions and conclusions must flow from your research work. This paper is due **Tuesday, December 15, 2015**. No late papers will be accepted; no exceptions.

**Outcomes:** In this exercise you will demonstrate your ability to:

- integrate principles of connaturality with ideas related to your own personal interest;
- explore the relationship between this topic and other components of the life, e.g. contemplation, mysticism, charity, etc.;
- communicate the results of your research in a professional format.

**III. Class Presentation.** Each student is required to present a synopsis of their research project to the class for analysis and discussion. Presentations should be clear, concise, and organized. The total presentation time of 30 minutes is to be organized as follows:

1) a 15 minute summary which includes:
a) the problem or topic of exploration, including any background information
b) how you have integrated ideas from this course into your research
c) (tentative) conclusions
d) the topic for discussion with the members of the class – which may be a question or dilemma which has arisen for you as a result of your research;

2) 15 minutes of discussion.

**Outcomes:** In this exercise you will demonstrate your ability to:

- summarize your work in an organized way;
- convey that summary to others in a way which helps them to engage the material;
- effectively lead a group discussion.

**Proposal/Outline:** To facilitate your successful completion of both the paper and presentation, you also must submit a proposal and outline of your research project, including a preliminary bibliography, by **Tuesday, November 3, 2015**. The document should include a brief description of the proposed topic, a thesis statement, the proposed methodology, and a sample bibliography. Students may find it useful to consult the "Thesis Proposal Guidelines," posted at the DSPT website. In addition to focusing your ideas for the research paper, this exercise is intended as a practice preparation for the thesis proposal requirement for MA and PhD students.

**Course Grade.** In determining the final grade, these three components will be weighted as follows: Class Participation: 40%; Research Paper: 40%; Class Presentation: 20%.
SYLLABUS

Classes are held Tuesdays from 2:10 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in DSPT 2.

September 8 – Introduction
BEFORE COMING TO THIS FIRST SESSION: Please ensure that you have done the at-home review exercise on Moodle, and come prepared to ask any questions about the definitions.

a. Review of syllabus and course expectations
b. Review of basic principles of philosophical anthropology: 1) human as composite; 2) rational soul (intellect/will); 3) human passions; and 4) human body as “icon”
   i. Summa Theologica Ia QQ 75-76; IaIIae QQ 22-25

September 15 – Scholastic Definition of Connatural Knowledge

e. Optional reading: For an interpretation of White, see Ann Conrad Lammers, In God’s Shadow, Chapt.2, especially pp. 56-65.

September 22 – Jacques Maritain on Connatural Knowledge: Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry [available on the “Reserves” shelf in GTU Library]:

a. Chapters 1-2
b. Optional reading:
   ii. Summa Theologica, IaIIae, Q57, On the Intellectual Virtues.

September 29 – Jacques Maritain on Connatural Knowledge: Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry

a. Chapter 3 – Role of preconscious in poetry & art
b. Chapter 4 – Creative Intuition and Poetic Knowledge
October 6 - no class

October 13 – Virtue and the Fine Arts: Contemplation, Wisdom and Charity
a. Plotinus – Ennead Treatises [available on the “Reserves” shelf in GTU Library]:
   i. I.6, “On Beauty”
   iii. V.8, “On the Intelligible Beauty”
b. St. Thomas Aquinas:
   i. Summa Theologica, IaIIae Q27, a. 2, on the causes of love; and Q28, a.1-2, on the effects of love.
   ii. Summa Theologica, IaIIae, Q45, a 2-3, on the relationship of connaturality to wisdom and charity.
c. Maritain, Chapter 5, "Poetry and Beauty"

October 20 – The Work of the Poet: Wonder and "Symbolization"

October 27 – Reading Week (Academic holiday): no class.


November 10– Integration Exercise: "Learning via connaturality"
a. Watch movie, “Contact” – science (speculative knowledge) versus poetry (connatural/intuitive knowledge).
b. Listen to "Les Roses" N.B. Please follow precisely the format described at Moodle for this exercise.

November 17 – Thematic Explorations, theological considerations: Human Suffering
November 24 – Thematic Explorations: Human Suffering, Death, and Resurrection (preliminary list)


d. Li-Young Lee, *Book of my Nights*: "The Eternal Son," "Restless".

e. N.B. Students are welcome to suggest works by other poets

December 1 – Thematic Explorations: Environment


e. N.B. Students are welcome to suggest works by other poets

December 8 – Mystical Poetry


December 15 – Class Presentations

December – Class Presentations
Selected Bibliography


Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica*.


