

PHIL 400 [600]: HISTORY OF RELATIONS

COURSE DESCRIPTION	Sometimes described as the least of all beings, relations are metaphysically curious things. Are they in one or both of the relata or between them? Just what are they anyway? Can they be reduced to non-relational things? Despite the puzzles they generate, relations seem both indispensable and ubiquitous. In this course, we will look at a series of texts drawn from a variety of accounts of relations. Relations received more attention in the medieval period than at any other time and so medieval texts (e.g., Aquinas, Scotus, and Ockham) will feature prominently, but we will start with Aristotle and end with a number of modern texts (from Locke and Leibniz to Bradley and Russell). Prerequisites: at least two philosophy courses.
READINGS	Primary readings will be made available on the course website. I will make a bibliography of secondary sources available to provide additional background and for use when writing term papers. But our classroom discussions will focus on the primary source readings.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS	<p><i>Weekly preparation:</i> All seminar participants are expected to have read the assigned readings for the week carefully and critically and to come to seminar prepared to contribute pertinent questions and critical comments on the readings.</p> <p><i>Analytic reading responses:</i> These short papers (3–4 pages) should identify and present one of the main arguments being made in the text and provide a brief critical response. I will expect five of these over the course of the semester, to be turned in the day before we discuss the reading in class. You may select the readings on which you want to write.</p> <p><i>Term paper:</i> A 12–16 page [15-page minimum] paper in two drafts on a topic chosen by the student and approved by me. The first draft is due the 13th week; the final by the end of term. Your grade will be based on the quality of your first draft, on how well you respond to my comments on the first draft, and the quality of the final draft. [Giving and receiving critical feedback is a crucial part of a career in philosophy. To that end, we will set up a mechanism to have each first draft receive comments from three of your classmates. In other words, each of you will be responsible for writing one paper and for commenting on three other papers. I will review the comments to ensure that everyone is contributing to the effort but I will not correct misguided comments, since part of what you need to learn to do is distinguish between comments that require a substantive response, comments that suggest you should make your writing clearer, and comments that can just be ignored. Your grade will be based on your final paper, though I may cut your grade if I think you were freeriding either by turning in a half-baked first draft or by failing to provide good feedback to your colleagues.]</p>
GRADING	Class attendance and participation — 20% Reading responses — 30% Term paper — 50%

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE	Date	Readings
	Week 1	Aristotle, <i>Categories</i> 7; <i>Metaphysics</i> V.15; <i>Physics</i> V.2; and Augustine, <i>On the Trinity</i> V (excerpts)
	Weeks 2 & 3	Aquinas, <i>On the Power of God</i> q. 7, art. 8–11; <i>Commentary on Aristotle's Physics</i> V, lect. 3; and <i>Summa Theologiae</i> Ia.22.1–4
	Weeks 4 & 5	Scotus, <i>Ordinatio</i> I, dist. 30, qq. 1–2; II, dist. 1, q. 4 and 5; and IV, dist. 13, q. 1
	Weeks 6–8	Ockham, <i>Ordinatio</i> I, dist. 30, qq. 1, 2, 4, and 5; <i>Reportatio</i> II, q. 2; and <i>Quodlibet</i> VI, q. 25
	Week 9	Durandus, <i>On the Sentences</i> I, dist. 30, q. 2
	Weeks 10 & 11	Suárez, <i>Metaphysical Disputation</i> XLVII.1–5
	Weeks 12 & 13	Gassendi, <i>Exercitationes paradoxicae adversus aristoteles</i> ; Locke, <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> II.xxv; and Leibniz, excerpts
	Week 14	Bradley, excerpts
	Week 15	Moore, 'External and Internal Relations'; Russell, <i>Principles of Mathematics</i> ch. 26; and 'The Monistic Theory of Truth'