2015-2016 UST Philosophy Annual Prize Competition

The Thomas D. Sullivan Medal in Philosophy

The Department of Philosophy invites UST undergraduate students to participate in a prize competition for the best essay in philosophy.

Essays — 3500 words or less on any philosophical topic — must be submitted by midnight, 15 December 2015.

The authors of the three best submissions will receive the Thomas D. Sullivan Medal in Philosophy and a “Tom and Ginny Sullivan Scholarship” — of $1000, $500, or $100 — applied to Spring 2016 UST tuition bills.

For further details, see www.stthomas.edu/philosophy. From our home page, click on Student Resources, then Essay Contest.
Spinoza suggests that we are both mortal and immortal—that we will die never to return and that we will continue to exist eternally. Making sense of these seemingly contradictory claims reveals a surprisingly practical, interesting, and even promising view of personal immortality.

Jeffrey K. McDonough
Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University

Co-sponsored by the University of St. Thomas College of Arts and Sciences and the UST Department of Philosophy.
How Can the Best Become the Worst?
Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus on the Sin of the Devil

Thurs., Nov. 5, 2015       12:00-1:00pm       JRC 126

How can people under optimal psychological conditions do evil?
For Socrates, evildoing presupposes ignorance; for Aristotle, it presupposes a momentary obstruction of knowledge caused by passions. But according to Christian teaching, some angels sinned, despite being “ideal agents” who are infallible, have all naturally attainable knowledge infused in them from creation, and lack passions as well as any innate inclinations to evil. Paradoxically, the best and most intelligent angel, Lucifer, is thought to have sinned first and to have led others into sin. This talk gives a brief account of two rival explanations of the sin of the Devil, by Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus. Hardly any other topic could bring into clearer light the different conceptions they have of free choice and its connection with happiness.

Tobias Hoffmann
(School of Philosophy, Catholic University of America)

Co-sponsored by the University of St. Thomas College of Arts and Sciences and the UST Department of Philosophy.

Contact Kim Schumann in Disability Services at 651.962.6315 or kjschumann@stthomas.edu for any accessibility requests.
At first glance, the traditional doctrine of divine simplicity appears to be in conflict with the traditional doctrine that God acts freely. After setting out the apparent conflict, professors Grant and Spencer consider the cases for and against the three most popular means of reconciling the doctrines. Each approach has some surprising implications about how we should understand God’s action.
How do you know you are not in the MATRIX?

It seems obvious that we can know things like “here are two hands,” “there are other people in the room,” and “I am walking on campus now.”

But if you are in the matrix right now, then none of these things are true. Moreover, everything would appear to you just the way things appear now. So how do you know these things?

How do you know you are not in the Matrix?

Philosophers have asked these sorts of questions for thousands of years, even if they did not put them in terms of the Matrix. This talk looks at some of the best answers and asks whether they are any good.

John Greco, Ph.D., Saint Louis University

Thurs., Feb. 18, 2016  12:00—1:00pm  JRC126

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University of St. Thomas Department of Philosophy * JRC 241 * www.stthomas.edu/philosophy * 2.5350
In critique and analysis of Roger Ames' conception of Confucian Role Ethics, Dr. Laumakis will argue that the real difference between the thought of Aristotle and Aquinas and that of Confucius has to do with two different conceptions of the kinds of things we are—human beings or human becomings.
Fr. Robert Spitzer

“Indications of Creation in Contemporary Science”

Thursday, April 7th, 7:00pm; OEC Auditorium

This lecture is organized by the Classical Theism Project which is funded by The John Templeton Foundation and hosted by the University of St. Thomas Department of Philosophy & College of Arts and Sciences.

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Should Christians Forgive Offenders Who Do Not Ask for Forgiveness?

Dr. Marie George
(St. John’s University, New York City)

Wednesday, April 20, 2016
3:30-5:00pm in MHC 204

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Aquinas

on Natural Character Flaws and How to Combat Them

Dr. Marie George
(St. John’s University, New York City)

Thursday, April 21, 2016
12:00-1:00pm in JRC 126
PHILOSOPHY COLLOQUIUM

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2016 12:00-1:15pm
MHC 205 (Murray-Herrick Center)

FEATUREING: STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

CONGRATULATIONS

ZACHARY McEACHRAN
FIRST PRIZE
Quantum Entanglement and Emergence

ZACHARY WALD
SECOND PRIZE
The Arbitrariness of Color and Universals

MATTHEW GOLDMAMMER
THIRD PRIZE
“That for the sake of which”: An Examination and Defense of Aristotelian Teleology

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SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY & RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CATHOLIC ENGAGEMENT IN PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

The aim of this conference is to cultivate sober perspective and insight into the history and current state of engagement with philosophy of science among Catholic intellectuals with an eye to “What now?” sorts of questions. It will explore a broad range of issues, approaches, and figures, encouraging productive cross-fertilization, collaboration, and exploration among philosophers, theologians, and scientists today.

JUNE 26-28, 2016

Free and open to the public. Registration required.
Registration and Information: stthomas.edu/philosophy/CEPOSconference

Hosted and sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences and Department of Philosophy. Cosponsored by the Terrence J. Murphy Institute, the Department of Theology, the Science and Theology Network, and the International Research Area on Foundations of the Sciences (Pontifical Lateran University).

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