

Course Unit Outline	
Unit Code	W7331
Unit Name	Metaphysics
Unit Weighting	9 cps
Type of Unit	Specialised
Prerequisites	W7106 and W7109
Academic Staff	Gerald Gleeson, STB (CIS 1978), MA (Cantab 1987), PhD (Leuven 1989), Associate Professor; John Owens, BA (Canterbury 1978), PhL (Angelicum 1980), DPhil (Munich 1987), Lecturer
Curriculum Objectives	This course unit address the most fundamental questions at stake in our understanding of reality in all its forms, by considering the perennial questions of being and existence, God and the human soul. This unit complements those approaches to theology which are shaped by philosophical concepts and modes of reasoning.
Learning Outcomes	At the end of this unit students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Outline the major approaches to the philosophy of being, existence and God in western thought b) Explain key principles in Thomistic philosophy, such as matter and form, potential and actual, essence and existence, nature and person. c) Critically reflect on the relationship between human reasoning and religious belief. d) Describe arguments for and against philosophical accounts of the divine attributes e) Note the metaphysical presuppositions of contemporary debates about God and human nature.
Threshold concept to be acquired in this unit	The nature of metaphysical reasoning. Transcendence and immanence.
Content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Historical overview, Platonism and Aristotelianism. 2. Thomas Aquinas on being and essence. 3. Matter and Form, and the Human Being. 4. Human reasoning and the existence of God. 5. The divine attributes. 6. Some discussion of modern and contemporary approaches to the knowledge of God.
Teaching Methods	Lectures, Seminar discussions and Student Presentations
Required Specialist Facilities or Equipment	n/a
Assessment Profile	<p>Assessments tasks are designed both to help students attain the unit outcomes and to enable teachers to assess student attainment. In this unit, the required assessment tasks will enable students to demonstrate how successfully they can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage critically with a selected philosophical text, e.g. in a short essay or seminar presentation [Outcomes a, b]. Early diagnostic task. 2. Reflect philosophically on at least one implication of metaphysical reasoning for a disputed question in philosophical theology, e.g. in a student presentation or oral examination [Outcomes b, c, d] 3. Critically reflect on the continuing relevance of Thomistic natural theology for contemporary western culture, e.g. in a long essay [Outcomes c, e]
Representative References	

1. Clarke, W Norris, *The Creative Retrieval of St. Thomas Aquinas*, New York: Fordham 2009.
2. Davies, Brian. *The Thought Of Thomas Aquinas*. Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1993.
3. Elders, L.J. *The Metaphysics of Being of St. Thomas Aquinas in a Historical Perspective*. Leiden: Brill, 1993.
4. Kretzmann, Norman and Stump, Eleonore. *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
5. Macquarrie, J. *Twentieth Century Religious Thought*. New ed. Harrisburg: Trinity, 2001.
6. Morris, T.V. (ed.). *God and the Philosophers*. Oxford: OUP, 1994.
7. Pasnau, Robert & Christopher Shields, *The Philosophy of Aquinas*, Oxford UK: Westview Press, 2004.
8. Pieper, J. *Guide to St Thomas Aquinas*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1986.
9. Ross, James. *Thought and World*. Notre Dame, IN.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008.
10. Stein, Edith. *Finite and Eternal Being*. trans. by Kurt F. Reinhardt. Washington: ICS Publications, 2002.
11. Stump, Eleonore. *Aquinas*, London: Routledge, 2003.
12. Te Velde, Rudi. *Aquinas on God: The 'Divine Science' of the Summa Theologiae* (Ashgate Studies in the History of Philosophical Theology). Surry: Ashgate, 2006.
13. Turner, Denys. *Faith, Reason and the Existence of God*. Cambridge: CUP, 2004.