TRIVIUM:
ART OF LOGIC

SEMINAR SYLLABUS

[WINTER 2022]

DESCRIPTION

The Trivium always exists as a whole: any attempt to divorce logic from grammar and rhetoric, or any of these three from each other, such that one studies one and not the others, results in an inadequate command of each and therefore an inadequate command of language. Thus, although this study *focuses* upon logic, it does not do so to the exclusion of its sisters in the Trivium. Propositions are studied in the context of sentences, and syllogisms and complex arguments in the contexts of paragraphs and essays.

The primary channel of study along which we will progress in this course concerns logic as a reflective art whereby we consider our own powers and operations of intellectual understanding, especially as these unfold through language (with a particular eye to the English language, but also sometimes with regard to Latin). We will therefore contemplate the three acts of the intellect, the nature of terms, of propositions, of syllogisms, and rigorously practice the ability of instilling these reflective considerations into our common use of language and efforts at linguistic communication.

METHOD

The Art of Logic course is 13 weeks long, with one brief recorded lecture and one discussion session each week. Each discussion session is structured around a reading from *Logic as a Liberal Art: An Introduction to Rhetoric & Reasoning* by R.E. Houser. Participants are expected to have read the assigned reading and listened to the lecture prior to the session, so that they may engage in a semi-structured discussion directed and moderated by the instructor and ask insightful questions about language. Moreover, *continual discussion* will foster that participation and engagement throughout the week. Participants will be expected to partake in these discussions on a regular basis and will be challenged to do so directly.

In addition, there are practice problems included in the reading, and discussion sessions may go over certain of these problems to demonstrate the application of logical reasoning.

READING

There is one primary text for the Art of Logic course: *Logic as a Liberal Art: An Introduction to Rhetoric & Reasoning*, by R.E. Houser (Catholic University of America Press, 2020). Secondary recommended texts include but are not limited to: Sr. Miriam Joseph's *The Trivium: The Liberal Arts of Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric*; Scott Sullivan's *Introduction to Traditional Logic*; Jacques Maritain's *Formal Logic*; John of St. Thomas' *Outlines of Formal Logic*. The instructor may provide supplementary readings from semiotics, as well. **Readings are subject to change**.

LECTURE

Each week there will also be a 15-20 minute audio or video lecture, posted to Teams at the beginning of the week. This lecture will be based upon the assigned reading, but will also stray into related topics, or may use the reading as a launching point for addressing some related issue (perhaps one more general, or perhaps one more specific).

DISCUSSION

Though study of logic can mostly occur asynchronously, a discussion period may be fruitful to deepening our understanding and increasing our conversance with the nuances of the acts of the intellect as well as their expression in language. Accordingly, a once-a-week discussion session will be held on **Mondays** from **6:00-6:45pm ET**. If sufficient interest is had, an additional session will be held at another time.

Each discussion session will begin with a brief synopsis of the week's material and a focusing on whichever aspects of that material seem most pressing. Beyond the direction provided by the instructor, participants are encouraged to bring their own concerns explicitly into view and to engage with the instructor and one another in civil debate and collective inquiry.

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

Each Lesson in Houser's *Logic as a Liberal Art* contains a problem set which students may complete at their own pace and on which they may receive feedback from the instructor, if so desired. Many other logic textbooks offer their own problem sets as well.

SESSION SCHEDULE

Discussion on January 17	**Origins of Logic** Lecture: Art of Reasoning Readings: - Lesson 5. Aristotle Invents Logic—Twice. - Lesson 6. Aristotle Organizes the Logic of Discovery and Proof.
Discussion on January 24	**Signs of What** Lecture: Logic and Semiotics Readings: Lesson 7. Language, Thought, and Reality.

	• Lesson 8. Categories: Working toward Definitions by Answering the "What?" Question.
Discussion on January 31	Distinctions of Terms Lecture: Concepts and Expression Readings: • Lesson 9. Clarifying Concepts through Division and Collection of Terms. • Lesson 10. Aristotle's Predicables.
Discussion on February 7	Relation between Cause and Definition Lecture: Logic and Science Readings: • Lesson 11. Answering the "Why?" Question: Causes. • Lesson 12. Different Kinds of Definitions.
Discussion on February 21	Basics of Propositions Lecture: Role of the Copula Readings: • Lesson 13. Statements and Propositions. • Lesson 14. Properties of Categorical Propositions.
Discussion on February 28	Kinds and Contexts of Propositions Lecture: Language and Thinking Readings: • Lesson 15. Recognizing the Kinds of Categorical Propositions. • Lesson 16. Categorical Propositions in Context.
Discussion on March 7	Manipulations of Propositions Lecture: Dexterity of Linguistic Thinking Readings: • Lesson 18. Opposition. • Lesson 19. Conversion. • Lesson 20. Obversion.
Discussion on March 14	Conditional Propositions Lecture: Contingency and Necessity in Thinking Readings: • Lesson 21. Hypothetical Propositions. • Lesson 22. Advanced Conditional Propositions.
Discussion on March 21	Modes of Inference Lecture: A Complex History and a Curious Question: Two or Three? Readings: • Lesson 23. Two Kinds of Reasoning.

Discussion on April 4	## Basics of Categorical Syllogisms Lecture: Illation and the Argument Readings: • Lesson 24. The Categorical Syllogism. • Lesson 25. Validity of Categorical Syllogisms.
Discussion on April 11	## Extensions of Arguments Lecture: Rhetorical Presentation of Illative Inference Readings: • Lesson 28. Enthymemes and Epicheiremas. • Lesson 29. Extended Categorical Arguments.
Discussion on April 18	## Hypothetical Arguments Lecture: Revisiting Contingency and Necessity Readings: • Lesson 30. Hypothetical Arguments. • Lesson 31. Advanced Hypothetical Arguments.
Discussion on April 25	## Induction and the Complex Argument Lecture: Ordering Thought toward Truth Readings: • Lesson 32. Induction. • Lesson 33. Complex Arguments.