COURSE DESCRIPTION: We will examine the notion of sin in the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, focusing upon such topics as the contrast between sin and suffering, the specification of sin, the causes of sin, and the distinction between mortal and venial sins. The primary text will be the *De Malo*.

REQUIRED TEXTS: none


MISSED EXAMS: Missed exams will receive a zero, except in cases of emergency. Students wishing to reschedule exams must contact me prior to the date of the exam.

CHEATING: Students who cheat on an exams and students who plagiarize on a paper will fail the course.

DISABILITY: If you have any disability for which accommodation may be requested, please contact Counseling Services/Disability Services, located on the second floor of Crooker Center at (713) 525-6953 or (713) 525-3162.

GRADE ASSESSMENT: Students' grades will consist of 215 points, broken down into the following elements:

1. test . . . . . . . . . . 100 pts.
2. paper. . . . . . . . . . 100 pts.
3. presentations . . . 15 pts.

These values may change slightly. Grades will then be determined by the following percentile curve:

- 100- 90 A;
- 90-80 B;
- 80-70 C

PRESENTATIONS: Student presentations will involve an analysis of the text for a given day. Students must turn in a two to three page analysis of the reading and present an analysis to the entire class. I will assign specific students to specific days.

Paper topics, with outline, due: March 3
Papers due: April 14
Final exam: oral by appointment
CLASS OUTLINE:

I. Free choice
   A. De malo 6
   B. PS Eardley, “Thomas Aquinas and Giles of Rome on the Will”
   C. Scott MacDonald, “Aquinas’s Libertarian Account of Free Choice”

II. The nature of evil
   A. Evil as a privation
      1. De malo 1, 1-2
      2. Peter Geach, “Good and Evil”
   B. Causes of evil
      1. De malo 1, 3
      2. Carlos Steel, “Does Evil Have a Cause? Augustine’s Perplexity and Thomas’s Answer”
   C. Sin and suffering
      1. De malo 1, 4-5

III. Sin and action
   A. Omissions
      1. De malo 2, 1
      2. Steven Jensen, “Omissions and Their Causes”
   B. Transgressions
      1. De malo 2, 2-3
      2. Dermot Mulligan, “Moral Evil: St. Thomas and the Thomists”

IV. The specification of sin
   A. De malo 2, 4
      2. Steven Jensen, “A Long Discussion Regarding Steven A. Long’s Interpretation of the Moral Species”
   B. De malo 2, 5
   C. De malo 2, 6
   D. De malo 2, 7

V. The effects of sin
   A. De malo 11-12

VI. The causes of sin
   A. Ignorance
      1. De malo 3, 6-8
   B. Passion
      1. De malo 3, 9-11
      2. Donald Davidson, “How Is Weakness of Will Possible?”
      3. Steven Jensen, “The Error of the Passions”
   C. Malice
      1. De malo 3, 12-14
      2. Thomas Brickhouse, “Does Aristotle Have a Consistent Account of Vice?”
      3. ST I-II, 29, 4
      4. Keith Green, “Aquinas’s Argument against Self-Hatred”

VII. Mortal and venial sins
   A. De malo 7, 1
   B. Peter Ryan, “Must the Acting Person Have a Single Ultimate End?”
   C. Steven Jensen, “Venial Sin and the Ultimate End”
   D. De malo 7, 2