University of St. Thomas Department of Philosophy

PHIL 4393 A (Fall term, 2016)

Human Nature in C. S. Lewis

Pre-requisite: Any three CORE philosophy courses from either sequence. (That is, completion of either the historical or the systematic tracks.), or MLA status. If there are any questions in the connection, please see me promptly.

Class meetings: Tu & Th 11:00-12:15

Texts: The required texts are the following, all by Lewis: Surprised by Joy; Mere Christianity; The Four Loves; The Screwtape Letters; The Great Divorce; The Problem of Pain; The Weight of Glory; The Abolition of Man.

While I realize this is quite a good deal of reading, I also recommend but do not require: Tom Howard, Beyond Narnia

Instructor: Dr. Rebard; office: Sullivan Hall, room 103; hours: M & W 10:00-12:00; Tu, Th, F 1:00-3:00, and of course by appointment. e-mail: rebard@stthom.edu

Objective: to understand C.S. Lewis as a great 20th century exponent of the ‘perennial philosophy’ in a long tradition construed as including Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Sts. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, and Blaise Pascal. As with the last three, Lewis sees the great marriage of human wisdom with Christian faith, and presents the landscape of reality.

It is to be noted early on that the great moral and social errors of modern and contemporary times are erroneous at least in part because they are rooted in false anthropology. Therefore, the accurate understanding of human nature is both personally and socially imperative, and especially timely.

Procedure: Classes will consist of prepared lectures by the instructor, always with generous opportunity and encouragement for questions, comment, and discussion with the students.

Grading: There will be two essay-format examinations and one original (non-research) philosophical and or theological essay. The topic of this essay must be presented to the instructor prior to the mid-term examination. The weight of the examinations and the essay are 30% for each instrument, and the remaining 10% depends on participation in the class. Attendance and participation are, then, contributory to the final grade. Ultimately, grading is a matter of the professional judgment of the instructor.