

**Paul McNellis, S.J.**

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**CLASS TIMES:** Thur 3:00-5:20 pm Gabelli study lounge 2<sup>nd</sup> floor**OFFICE HOURS:** MWF, 1:30-3:00 pm and by appointment.

**TEXTS:** Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*  
 E. F. Schumacher, *Guide for the Perplexed*  
 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Ostwald translation)  
 Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* (Penquin)  
 Owen Gingerich, *God's Universe* (Harvard)  
 P.D. James, *The Children of Men* (Time Warner)  
 Strunk and White, *Elements of Style* (Longman)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND REQUIREMENTS:****Course Description**

We go through life with mental maps of reality, in various degrees implicit or explicit. A Liberal Arts education presupposes such a map of the intelligible world. Is it accurate? What does your “map” of reality look like? How has it changed since freshman year?

The goal of the seminar is to help you see what kind of map you implicitly have now and to begin to ask what you want the map to look like ten years after graduation. In other words, how do you develop an “open” rather than “closed” map? How do you plan on continuing your education on your own after graduation?

There must be both poetry and prose in every life. What is the balance between the two in your life? (Poetry here is broadly understood, as Plato would have it; i.e., it includes theology.)

We will reread some classic texts you read as freshmen to see if you read them any differently as seniors. Such texts will include works by Aristotle, Plato, and Pascal.

**Format**

We will follow a seminar format, with the professor as facilitator and students taking turns leading the discussion. There is a good deal of reading and it is writing intensive: a short reflection paper is due each week and two longer papers will be assigned throughout the semester. Each class will begin with a short quiz on the assigned readings for the day.

Grade: 50% weekly quizzes and class participation.

50% written assignments.

## Readings

1. The Bible
2. Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*
3. E. F. Schumacher, *Guide for the Perplexed*
4. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
5. Plato, *The Republic*
6. Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*
7. Owen Gingerich, *God's Universe*
8. P.D. James, *The Children of Men*
9. A Workbook with further readings

There will be a short paper due each week (25 pts), one longer paper (50 pts), and a final paper (50 pts) and an oral final exam (200 pts). A participation grade of 140 points will be apportioned over all the classes (i.e. 10 points maximum for each of the 14 classes of the semester).

Attendance: Attendance is required for *all* classes. A first unexcused absence will deduct -20 points from your final grade; a second, -30.

## GRADING:

Final grade will be divided 50% on papers and class participation and 50% on the final exam.

Letter grade and percentage equivalents are:

A 96–100	B+ 88–89	C+ 78–79	D+ 68–69	A = excellent
A! 90–95	B 84–87	C 74–77	D 64–67	B = good work
	B– 80–83	C– 70–73	D– 60–63	C = satisfactory work

## Tentative schedule of readings

### **Week 1**

Jan. 19 Introduction to the course, and E. F. Schumacher, *Guide for the Perplexed*, chp. 1

### **Week 2**

Jan. 26 Schumacher, ch. 2-5

### **Week 3**

Feb. 2 Schumacher, ch. 6-8

### **Week 4**

Feb. 9 Schumacher, ch. 9-10 & Epilogue

### **Week 5**

Feb. 16 Owen Gingerich, *God's Universe*

### **Week 6**

Feb. 23 Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*

**Week 7** (Movie, Sunday, Feb 26, 5 pm, Stokes N201)

Mar. 2 *Blindsight* (2006), dir. Lucy Walker

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### **Spring Break March 4-12**

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### **Week 8**

Mar. 16 *Nichomachean Ethics*, Bk VIII-IX on Friendship (L. Kass)

### **Week 9**

Mar. 23 P.D. James, *The Children of Men*

### **Week 10**

Mar. 30 P.D. James, *The Children of men*

### **Week 11**

Apr. 6 Poets on Modern World & the Walking Wounded

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### **Easter Vacation, April 12-17**

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**Week 12** (Movie, Sunday, Apr 17, 3 pm, Stokes N201)

Apr. 20 *Das Leben der Anderen* (2006), dir. F.H. von Donnersmarck

### **Week 13**

Apr. 27 Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*

### **Week 14**

May 4 Last class, transcript assignment due

May 5-8, *Study Days*

May 9-16, *Final Exam TBD*, final paper (50 pts) presented at oral final exam.

