

PL 772 INSIGHT & BEYOND, I Fall 2009

Class Meeting Time: Wednesdays, 4:30-6:50pm

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Office Hours: By appointment

“Thoroughly understand what it is to understand, and you will not only understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but also you will possess a fixed base, an invariant pattern opening upon all further developments of understanding.”

Lonergan, *Insight*

In writing his major philosophical work *Insight*, Bernard Lonergan set himself the task of developing a *methodical* way of treating philosophical, metaphysical, ethical and theological issues, and simultaneously moving beyond the impasses of modern philosophy. That method, he claimed, is the method of “self-appropriation” – of “making one’s self one’s own” by learning the structured relations among the activities of one’s own consciousness. In addition, Lonergan viewed his method as critical for humanity’s response to the challenge posed by the phenomena of historical existence.

Can the extravagant promises made by Bernard Lonergan in the “Introduction” to *Insight* be realized? That question forms the central theme of this **two-semester course**. During the **Fall and Spring semesters**, we will undertake a careful, detailed and critical investigation of all the chapters of Lonergan's *Insight*. This study of *Insight* will be supplemented by key selections from his post-*Insight* writings.

This course will be video recorded and be made available online students and scholars who wish to explore *Insight* and these post-*Insight* developments along with us. As student participants in this course, you will have the opportunity to benefit people across the globe through your comments, insights, and questions about the material for this course. In order for you to appear visually in these video recordings, I will need your explicit written permission. Forms will be distributed the first week of class. You may still participate verbally, even if you should you choose to not appear visually.

Course Requirements: (1) **Class preparedness (15%)**: that is to say, careful reading of the weeks assigned chapters, responses to study questions and exercises, and prepared notes of questions and comments for class discussion. (2) In addition, **short paper (4-5 pages)** will be assigned, asking you to describe an insight you have had. These papers will be due October 21!!! (15%) (3) **A term paper (of 20-25 pages) (40%)**. Proposals for your paper (a couple of paragraphs plus bibliography) are due no later than November 11!!! Completed papers are due no later than December 9!!! (3) **Take-Home Final Exam, December 16 (30%)**.

NO INCOMPLETES WILL BE ALLOWED FOR THIS COURSE!!!

Academic Integrity: **Plagiarism, cheating, or any other violation of academic integrity will not be tolerated.** Any such violation, no matter how seemingly minor, is a serious offense against both one’s own intellectual development and the larger intellectual community, and will

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therefore be met with severe consequences, up to and including a failing grade for the course. All such infractions will be reported to the student's academic dean. For detailed information and definitions on Boston College's academic integrity policy, visit:

<http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy.html#integrity>

BlackBoard Vista (BBV) Website: Elements of this course will be accessible on the BBV website for this class. These will include this syllabus, as well as short reading selections, the Echo 360 video recordings of this class, the PowerPoint presentations used in class, as well as reflection and study questions. As a student registered for this course, you will have automatic access to our course site. You may access it directly through the link <https://cms.bc.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct>

Echo 360 Class Recording: All of the sessions for both semesters of this course will be recorded via the Echo 360 course capture technology. These sessions will be available each week on the BBV website shortly after the conclusion of each class. The sessions will also be available to the global community later on, in edited form, through the Boston College Lonergan Institute website,

http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/cas/lonergan/center/insight.html

Reading List: Required: Lonergan, *Insight*
Lonergan, *Topics in Education*
Selected essays (BBV website)
Recommended: Lonergan, *Collection*
Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*
Flanagan, *The Quest for Self-Knowledge*
Cronin, *Foundations of Philosophy* (**online:**
http://www.lonergan.org/online_books/cronin/table_of_contents.htm)

Course Calendar **(Fall, 2009)**

<u>Class:</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
September 9	Introduction. Lonergan's intellectual biography and career. Overview of Lonergan's philosophy; structure and goals of <i>Insight</i> Class exercise in appropriation of an insight
September 16	<i>Insight</i> , "Introduction" & "Preface" <i>Understanding and Being</i> , Ch 1, Part. 1, "Self-Appropriation" (BBV Website) <i>Insight</i> , Chapter 1, §§ 1 & 2: Dramatic Instance & Definition
September 23	<i>Insight</i> , Chapter 1, §§ 2 – 5: Definitions, Conceptualism, Higher Viewpoints, Inverse Insights, Empirical Residue
September 30	<i>Insight</i> , Chapter 2, §§ 1 & 2: Why begin with Science? What is Science? Classical Heuristic Method

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October 7 *Insight*, Chapter 2, §§ 3 & 4: Systematic & Non-Systematic Processes;
Statistical Heuristic Method

October 14 *Insight*, Chapter 2, §§ 3 & 4 continued: Non-Systematic Processes,
Co-Incidental Manifolds & Statistical Methods
Insight, Chapter 3, “Canons of Empirical Method”;
Argument against determinism
Insight, Chapter 4: Overview

October 21 *Insight*, Chapter 4 §2, Complementarity of Classical & Statistical Methods:
Emergent Probability
Insight, Chapter 5 §2, Kinds of Spaces and Times

Short paper describing an insight due!

October 28 *Insight*, Chapter 5, “Space and Time”: Private Spaces & Times,
Public Spaces & Times, The Science of Physics, Space & Time

November 4 *Insight*, Chapter 5, Explanatory Space & Time: Special Reference Frames
Insight, Chapter 6 §1, Common Sense as Intellectual

November 11 *Insight*, Chapter 6 §§2.1-2.7: Patterns of Experience;
(*Re-recorded* Dramatic Pattern of Experience & Dramatic Bias
January 7, 2010) *Topics in Education*, Chapter 4 “Human Good as Developing Subject”

Term paper proposal due!

November 18 *Insight*, Chapter 6, §2.3: “The Aesthetic Pattern of Experience”
(*Re-recorded* *Topics in Education*, Chapter 9, “Art”
January 8, 2010)

November 25 THANKSGIVING BREAK – No Class

December 2 *Insight*, Chapter 7, “Common Sense and Its Object”
Topics in Education, Chapters 2 & 3 “Human Good as Developing Object”

December 9 *Insight*, Chapter 7 §8.6, Cosmopolis and Philosophy
Insight, Chapter 8, “Things”

Term paper due!

December 16 *Insight*, Chapters 9 & 10, “Judgment” & “Reflective Understanding”

FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE