

Module Title:	Franciscan Masters of Philosophy
Module Code:	503 PFMP
Level:	5
Credit rating:	20 credits
Duration:	200 hours
Teaching hours:	40
Academic Responsibility:	Séamus Mulholland OFM, PhD

Module aims:

- To introduce students to the major thinkers of the Franciscan Tradition, especially Bonaventure and John Duns Scotus, William of Occam
- To show the contribution of the Franciscan school not just to the history of Church but also to the history of European Thought
- To show the distinctive features of the Franciscan Philosophical endeavour
- To demonstrate how certain preoccupations of the Franciscan philosophers can be applied to areas as diverse as Human Rights and Environmental Ethics

Indicative Module Content:

It begins by exploring whether or not we can strictly speak of a Franciscan 'school' It will begin by examining the impact the philosophy of Robert Grosseteste, first teacher of the Friars at Oxford, and then moves to consider the complexity of the intellectual/philosophical/theological/logical formulations of primary Franciscan figures e.g. Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Roger Bacon, William of Ware, Richard of Middleton Duns Scotus, William of Occam, Peter John Olivi. Some attention will be paid to lesser figures such as Richard Rufus of Cornwall. The module seeks to show not just the importance of these figures but also to demonstrate that there was a specifically 'British' Franciscan philosophical method in European Scholasticism and also demonstrate how their philosophical endeavour continues to influence today.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module students should be able to :

1. Demonstrate a systematic understanding of the principle aspects of Franciscan philosophy and philosophers and be able to offer a coherent appreciation of that philosophy and Franciscan philosophers.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of Franciscan philosophy not just in the Franciscan Order but also in the history of European thought.
3. Think and work creatively and intellectually and be stimulated in their search for useful knowledge and insight into the endeavours of Franciscan philosophy and its practical applications.

Learning and Teaching Strategies:

The module will be taught through a variety of teaching methods: delivered lectures, question/discussion, power point presentation, philosophical text, response and discussion, problem setting and possible solutions from students, presentations by students (with feedback from peers), at least one of the presentations will involve the students working in groups.

Assessment:

The module will be assessed through two 2,500 word essays

Indicative Essay Titles

1. Select TWO ways in which Bonaventure responded to the impact of Radical Aristotelianism at the University of Paris and show how Bonaventure both understood Aristotelianism and why he urged caution in its use.
2. Examine the *Principle of Individuation* in common natures of Duns Scotus and show how it might be critically applied to TWO contemporary issues in philosophy today.
3. Peter John Olivi is regarded as one of the most brilliant and independently minded of all the Franciscan Philosophers. Critically assess the contribution of Olivi to the body of Franciscan Philosophy.
4. It has been argued that it is not possible to speak of a Franciscan 'school' of philosophy per se but rather one can only speak of philosophers who 'happened to be' Franciscans. By examining TWO aspects of the thought of TWO Franciscan philosophers show whether this statement is a valid or invalid way of describing the Franciscan philosophical endeavour.

Illustrative Bibliography:

Alluntis, F., and A.B. Wolter, *Duns Scotus, God and Creatures: The Quodlibetal Questions*, CUA, Washington, 1989

Adams, M., and N. Kretzmann, *William Ockham, Predestination, God's Foreknowledge and Future Contingents*, tr. Brill, Leiden, 2002 esp. pp. 80-92.

Boehner, P., *William of Ockham, Philosophical Writings*, tr. Franciscan Institute Publications, New York, Ed. 2, 1989 esp. pp. 22-4, 41-5

Catto, J. I., *The History of the University of Oxford*, [2 Vols], vol. 1, OUP, Oxford, 1999-

Cobban, A., *The Medieval English Universities: Oxford and Cambridge to c. 1500*, OUP, Oxford, 1999.

Courtenay, W., *Schools and Scholars in Fourteenth Century England*, OUP, Oxford, 2000

Freddoso, A. J., and F.E. Kelley, *William of Ockham, Quodlibetal Questions*, Brill, Leiden, 2002, esp. pp. 413-7, 506-8.

Hyman, A., and Walsh, J. J., *Philosophy in the Middle Ages* Hackett Publishing, Indianapolis, esp. pp. 560-604 (Scotus), 626-642 (Ockham).

Leader, D. R., *A History of the University of Cambridge*, CUP, 2000

Leff, G., *Paris and Oxford Universities in the 13th and 14th Centuries*, Penguin Press, London, 1999