

## PHILOSOPHY 103: PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION SPRING 2020

This course focuses on doctrines common to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: that there is one, powerful, just God who created the universe, who has revealed herself to her creatures, and who requires certain conduct of us. We explore various questions raised by these doctrines, including: Can God's existence be reconciled with the existence of evil? Is there compelling evidence for God's existence? Should believers in God have evidence for the existence of God, or is faith without evidence permissible? Is the concept of God coherent? Do we have evidence for the existence of miracles? Is there an afterlife, and if so, is it just? How should we respond to the tremendous diversity of religious beliefs and practices? How should we understand religious language and faith in an increasingly scientific society?

### *Course objectives*

The aim of this course is for students to be able to:

1. Articulate an overview of issues in the philosophy of religion
2. Engage in reasoned, charitable, and detailed philosophical discourse about issues in the philosophy of religion with the class community
3. Become familiar with the methodology of philosophy
4. Learn the fundamentals of philosophical writing
5. Demonstrate improved philosophical writing in papers of increasing length throughout the semester.

### *Required text*

*Philosophy of Religion*, eds. Peterson, Hasker, Reichenbach, Basinger

### *Schedule of Readings and Assignments*

Articles marked with an "\*" are on Moodle, accessible through the college's portal. All other articles are in *Philosophy of Religion*.

January 22                      Introduction

*The Problem of Evil*

January 24                      Philosophy 103 syllabus  
Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence," 329-337

January 29                      Rowe, "The Evidential Argument from Evil" 365-374

January 31                      Adams, "Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God," 374-382  
Optional: Plantinga, "The Free Will Defense," 338-356

February 5                      **1<sup>st</sup> 2-page paper due**  
Ghaly, "Evil and Suffering in Islam," 383-391

February 7 \*Adams, "Must God Create the Best?"

February 12 \*McHarry, "A Theodicy"  
\*Hudson, "Hyperspace and Theism"

Arguments for the Existence of God

February 14 Anselm, "The Classical Ontological Argument," 133-134  
Gaunilo, "Critique of Anselm's Argument," 135-137  
\*Kant, "A Critique of the Ontological Argument"  
Plantinga, "A Contemporary Modal Version of the Ontological  
Argument," 138-147

February 19 **2<sup>nd</sup> 2-page paper due**  
Aquinas, "The Classical Cosmological Argument," 148-150  
Reichenbach, "The Cosmological Argument from Contingency,"  
151-160  
Mackie, "Critique of the Cosmological Argument," 170-176

February 21 **No class**

February 26 Paley, "The Analogical Teleological Argument," 177-179  
Hume, "Critique of the Analogical Teleological Argument," 180-186  
Kitcher, "At the Mercy of Chance?" 565-573

February 28 \*Monton, *Seeking God in Science*, 76-86

March 4 Saint Teresa, "Religious Experiences," 41-44  
James, "Religious Experiences as Feelings Forming the Root of  
Religion," 44-51  
Proudfoot, "Religious Experiences as Interpretative Accounts," 59-  
67

The Divine Attributes

March 6 Aquinas, "God is Omnipotent," 244-246  
Mavrodes, "Some Puzzles Concerning Omnipotence," 247-249  
\*Frankfurt, "The Logic of Omnipotence"

**Spring Break**

March 25 \*Augustine, "Divine Foreknowledge and Free Will"  
Pike, "Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action," 250-255  
\*Plantinga, "God's Foreknowledge and Human Free Will are  
Compatible"  
Optional: Basinger, "Middle Knowledge and Classical Christian  
Thought," 283-289  
Optional: Adams, "An Objection to Middle Knowledge," 290-293

March 27 Maimonides, "Negative Theology," 239-243  
\*Diller, "Being Perfect is Not Necessary for Being God"

*Faith, Reason, and Evidence*

April 1 Pascal, "The Wager," 100-102  
\*Lycan and Schlesinger, "You Bet Your Life: Pascal's Wager Defended"

April 3 **5-page paper due**  
**No class**

April 8 Kierkegaard, "Truth is Subjectivity," 116-119  
Clifford, "The Ethics of Belief," 103-108  
James, "The Will to Believe," 109-115

*Miracles*

April 10 Davis, "Is it Possible to Know that Jesus Was Raised from the Dead?," 457-464  
Hume, "The Evidence for Miracles is Weak," 465-471  
Swinburne, "Miracles and Historical Evidence," 479-483

*The Afterlife*

April 15 Hick, "Resurrection of the Person," 513-521  
"A Buddhist View of Rebirth," 522-523  
"A Hindu View of Rebirth," 524-528

April 17 \*Williams, "The Makropulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of Immortality"  
\*Fischer, "Why Immortality is Not So Bad"

April 22 \*Lewis, "Divine Evil"

*Religious Diversity*

April 24 \*Hick, "Religious Pluralism and Salvation"  
\*Craig, "'No Other Name': A Middle Knowledge Perspective on the Exclusivity of Salvation Through Christ"

April 29 Dalai Lama "Buddhism and Other Religions," 595-598  
Griffiths, "The Uniqueness of Religious Doctrines," 599-605  
Rahner, "Religious Inclusivism," 606-613  
Hick, "Religious Pluralism," 614-621

May 1 **6-page paper due**

\*van Inwagen, "Non Est Hick"

\*Plantinga, "Pluralism: A Defense of Religious Exclusivism"

*Religion in the Context of Naturalism*

May 6

Dennett, "An Evolutionary Account of Religion," 10-17

Gould, "Two Separate Domains," 538-545

Dawkins, "Science Discredits Religion," 546-549