PHIL 3600
Philosophy of Religion
Utah Valley University
Fall, 2015

INSTRUCTOR: Brian D. Birch
OFFICE LOCATION: CB411h
OFFICE HOURS: by appointment
CONTACT INFORMATION: brian.birch@uvu.edu, (801) 863-6363

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to engage students in the central issues in analytic philosophy of religion. Using logical analysis and related critical methodologies, students will absorb, reflect, and articulate arguments relating to religious belief and practice.

The objectives of this course are as follows:

1) To challenge students to think critically about religious concepts and about the nature of religious belief.
2) To enable students to understand and coherently articulate various approaches to the main philosophical issues that arise concerning religious belief.
3) For students to appreciate the historical background and contemporary relevance of philosophical inquiry in the study of religion.

TEXTS
1. Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings (Oxford University Press)
2. Reserve readings in Canvas (specified below)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING
1. Students are required to complete the assigned readings and actively participate in class discussion.
2. Students are required to complete a midterm and final examination consisting of essay questions taken from the curriculum, lectures, and class discussion.
3. Students are required to submit a final paper between 2500 and 3000 words. All paper topics must be selected in consultation with the instructor. A précis and preliminary list of sources will be submitted by October 31st.

GRADING BREAKDOWN
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Exams: 200 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>376 – 400 = A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>296 – 307 = C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper:</td>
<td>100 points</td>
<td>360 – 375 = A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>280 – 295 = C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation:</td>
<td>100 points</td>
<td>348 – 359 = B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>268 – 279 = D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>400 points</td>
<td>336 – 347 = B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>256 – 267 = D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>320 – 335 = B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>240 – 255 = D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>308 – 319 = C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 – 239 = E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 2 0 – 3 3 5 = B -
3 0 8 – 3 1 9 = C +
Schedule and Readings

Course Introduction: Distinctions and Landscape
- No reading

Section One: The Concept of God
- Boethius, “God Is Timeless” (POR)
- Nicholas Wolterstorff, “God Is Everlasting,” (POR)
- Nelson Pike, “Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action” (POR)
- William Hasker, “The Openness of God: A Philosophical Perspective” (Canvas)
- Sterling McMurrin, “The Concept of God” (Canvas)

Section Two: Arguments for the Existence of God
- St. Anselm “The Classical Ontological Argument” (POR)
- William Paley, “The Analogical Teleological Argument” (POR)
- David Hume, “Critique of the Analogical Teleological Argument” (POR)
- Robin Collins, “Anthropic Teleological Argument” (POR)
- D.Z. Phillips, “From World to God?” (Canvas)

Section Three: Divine Action & The Problem of Evil
- Paul Helm, “Providence: Risky or Risk Free?” (POR)
- John Sanders, “Risk and the Divine Character” (Canvas)
- Dennis Potter, “Finitism and the Problem of Evil” (Canvas)
- J.L. Mackie, “Evil and Omnipotence” (POR)
- John Hick, “Soul-Making Theodicy” (POR)
- David Griffin, “A Process Theodicy” (Canvas)

Section Four: The University Debate
- “Theology and Falsification,” Antony Flew, R.M. Hare, and Basil Mitchell (Canvas)
- John Hick, “Eschatological Verification” (Canvas)

Section Five: Religious Epistemology I - Religious Experience
- William Lane Craig, “Classical Apologetics” (Canvas)
- William P. Alston, “Religious Experience as Perception of God” (POR)
- Michael Martin, “Critique of Religious Experience” (POR)
- Nelson Pike, “Mystic Visions as Sources of Knowledge” (Canvas)
- D.Z. Phillips, “Mysticism and Epistemology: One Devil of a Problem” (Canvas)
Section Six: Religious Epistemology II - Reformed Epistemology

- Alvin Plantinga, “Is Belief in God Properly Basic?” (Canvas)
- Alvin Plantinga, “Son of Great Pumpkin?” (Canvas)
- Keith DeRose, “Voodoo Epistemology” (Canvas)

Section Seven: Wittgensteinian Approaches

- Peter Winch, “Understanding a Primitive Society” (Canvas)
- Peter Winch, “Meaning and Religious Language” (Canvas)
- D.Z. Phillips, “The Meaning of Religious Beliefs is Their Use” (Canvas)

Section Eight: Religious Diversity

- John Hick, “Religious Pluralism” (POR)
- Brian Birch, “John Hick: Religious Practices as Responses to the Real” (Canvas)
- Dennis Potter, “Religious Disagreement: Internal and External” (Canvas)

Students who need accommodations because of a disability may contact the UVU Accessibility Services Department (ASD), located on the Orem Campus in LC 312. To schedule an appointment or to speak with a counselor, call the ASD office at 801-863-8747. Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals, email nicole.hemmingsen@uvu.edu or text 385-208-2677.

UVU is dedicated to providing quality academic experiences for students. Help us identify areas where we can improve our teaching by participating in the Student Ratings of Instructor (SRI).