

GPRC 3570 **Philosophy of Religion**
Winter 2010
University Transfer
(AF, AU, CU, CUC, KUC, UA, UC, UL)

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Office hours: W 3-4:30; Th 1:45-3:15 p.m. and by appointment

Room: A314

Time: W 18-20:50

College Calendar Course Description:

General topics in the Philosophy of Religion. Selections from the following will be studied: The concept of 'religion,' the relationships between philosophy and religion, arguments for and against the existence of God, meaning and intelligibility in religious language, religion and morality, religion and 'the meaning of life,' implications of the study of religion in the social sciences.

Course Description 2010:

This course is an introduction to selected issues in the Philosophy of Religion such as: Who or what is God? How can we know if there is a God? Do philosophical arguments for and against the existence of God succeed? Can a good, loving God allow evil to exist? Do miracles occur? Is there life after death?

This is a course in Philosophy. It is not a course in theology, the history of religion, the sociology or psychology of religion or comparative religion, although there is some overlap with these fields.

As William Rowe writes (p. 1), the primary concern of philosophy of religion is "to assess the sorts of reasons that thoughtful people have advanced for and against religious beliefs." Philosophy of religion is "the critical examination of basic religious beliefs and concepts... To critically examine a religious belief involves explicating the belief, and examining the reasons that have been given for and against the belief, with a view to determining whether there is any rational justification for holding that belief to be true or holding it to be false" (p. 2).

Course requirements:

Midterm exam 25%

Final exam 30%

First assignment 20%

Second assignment 25%

Marks will be given in percentage figures before conversion to a letter grade.

Conversion table:

A+ 90 - 100	B+ 76 - 79	C+ 67 - 69	D+ 55 - 59
A 85 - 89	B 73 - 75	C 64 - 66	D 50 - 54
A- 80 - 84	B- 70 - 72	C- 60 - 63	F 0 - 49

For conversion of letter grades to the four-point scale see Calendar p. 43.

Please note that you are expected to write the final exam when scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Take this into account when making any plans.

Also note: You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with College Calendar information pertaining to cheating and plagiarism, for which there are a range of penalties (see pages 49-50). Also note and observe key dates during the term (pp. 16-20).

Students who miss an excessive number of classes may be denied the opportunity to write the final exam, as stated in the Calendar on p. 45.

Required Reading Material:

- David Shatz, Philosophy and Faith: A Philosophy of Religion Reader. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002.
- Assigned readings as specified below.

Useful internet sources for reference purposes:

- Britannica Online Encyclopedia
- Citizendium
- Encyclopedia of Science and Religion
- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
- Philosophy of Religion information at www.philosophyofreligion.info/
- EpistemeLinks Philosophy of Religion links
- Wikipedia

Provisional Proposed Schedule of Topics and Classes

- 6 January. I. Introduction to philosophy and philosophy of religion. Realism and nonrealism.
- 13 January. I. Introduction concluded.
II. Who or what is God or a Supreme Being? What are appropriate responses? (fear, obedience, worship...?)
- 20 January. II. Continued.
III. Faith, reason and evidence for belief in God.
- 27 January. III. Continued.

- 3 February. IV. Psychological Explanations of Religious Beliefs
V. Religious Experience.
- 10 February. V. Continued.
VI. Arguments for the existence of God.
- 17 February. VI. Continued.
- 24 February. **Midterm Exam.**
VII. Religion and Science
- 3 March. VII. Continued
- 17 March. VIII. Miracles.
- 24 March. IX. Problem of Evil.
- 31 March. X. Life After Death.
- 7 April. XI. Religious Pluralism.
- 14 April. Conclusion.