



Department of Arts and Education  
PH3570 **Philosophy of Religion**  
Winter 2012  
University Transfer

Instructor: Tom Enders, PhD  
Office: C303  
Office phone: 780-539-2996  
E-mail: [tenders@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:tenders@gprc.ab.ca)

Room:  
Time:

Office hours: Wed. 4-5:30 and Thurs. 1:30-3 p.m. and by appointment

**Prerequisite:** None.

**Required Reading Material:**

- Michael Peterson, William Hasker, Bruce Reichenbach, David Basinger editors, Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Internet readings, class handouts, and Moodle postings.

**Useful internet sources for reference purposes:**

- Britannica Online Encyclopedia
- Citizendium
- Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy
- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
- Philosophy of Religion information at [www.philosophyofreligion.info/](http://www.philosophyofreligion.info/)
- Wikipedia

**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 2012:**

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).

**Credit/Contact Hours:** This is a three credit course with the equivalent of three hours of instructional time a week for a full term.

**Delivery Mode:**

Classroom sessions will be used for presentation and discussion of key concepts and arguments.

**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 the GPRC Calendar.

Please be informed that it is not the instructor's policy to allow exams or assignments to be rewritten, or extra work done to increase marks. You are welcome, however, to consult with the instructor prior to exams and assignment due dates.

**Transferability:** AF, AU, CU, CUC, KUC, UA, UC, UL

\* The grade of D or D+ may not be accepted for transfer to other postsecondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability.

**Student Responsibilities:**

\* You are expected to devote time in the classroom to the class itself. Use of cell phones and use of laptops for non-class purposes is unacceptable. It is also not acceptable to socialize or do work on other courses during the class.

\* You are strongly advised to keep a copy of your own of any work you submit for grading at least until you have your work returned to you.

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

\*\*You are expected to write the final exam in April when scheduled by the Registrar's Office - with possible exceptions in the case of compelling and urgent circumstances beyond your control. Take this into account when making any travel plans. Also note and observe other key dates during the term as provided in the Calendar.

**Statement on Plagiarism and Cheating:**

\* You are required to reference sources fully and properly for written assignments. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with College Calendar information pertaining to cheating and plagiarism, for which there are various penalties depending on the severity of the offense. The Calendar information on student misconduct can be accessed at:

<http://www.gprc.ab.ca/downloads/documents/Student%20Misconduct%20Plagiarism%20and%20Cheating.pdf>

**Topics**

- I. Introduction to philosophy and philosophy of religion. Realism and nonrealism.
- II. Who or what is God or a Supreme Being? What are appropriate responses? (fear, obedience, worship...?)
- III. Faith, reason and evidence for belief in God.
- IV. Psychological Explanations of Religious Beliefs
- V. Religious Experience.
- VI. Arguments for the existence of God.
- VII. Religion and Science
- VIII. Miracles.
- IX. Problem of Evil.
- X. Life After Death.
- XI. Religious Diversity and Pluralism.
- XII. Conclusion.