

PHL 235: Philosophy of Religion

24 lectures for Fall 2018

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Lecture hours: Tuesdays 1:00 to 3:00, Thursdays 2:00 to 3:00 in NE 3190

Instructor's office hours: Thursdays 3:30 to 5:00 in NE 6144

Course description

This course is an introduction to the philosophy of religion. We will focus on arguments for and against the existence of God. However, we will also examine some issues concerning the relation between religion and morality, the relation between religion and science, and religious pluralism.

Logistics

Evaluation: Three quizzes at 10% each (on Sep 25, Nov 6, Dec 4), two papers at 20% each (due on Oct 19 and Nov 23), and a final exam at 30% (date determined by registrar for Dec).

Quizzes: Quizzes will be taken in class. Only material from the lectures will be quizzed.

Papers: Topics and instructions for the papers will be posted to Quercus at least three weeks in advance of the deadline. Papers are to be submitted online via Quercus, which incorporates Turnitin.com. Late papers will be penalized at 5% for each calendar day, and papers more than one week late will not be accepted. To request an extension, please visit: philosophy.utoronto.ca/utm/utm-philosophy-undergraduate/utm-courses/special-consideration-requests.

Readings: All of the readings are freely available via Quercus. See Quercus for instructions on how to access these readings.

Turnitin.com: Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Academic integrity

By university regulation, plagiarism will automatically be reported to the Dean. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's ideas or words as if they are your own. You may use ideas and examples that come from others, but you must make clear that you are doing so. It is acceptable to quote, but when you do so, you must clearly provide a citation to the relevant work.

It is important to know that there are various forms of academic offense besides plagiarism. For more information please visit the following website about academic integrity: utm.utoronto.ca/academic-integrity. This site can help you get clear about what counts as an academic offense, how to prevent it, and the university's policies for dealing with suspected cases. Even if you plagiarize unintentionally, it still counts as an academic offense.

Lecture schedule

Sep 6 Introduction

Classical arguments for God's existence

Sep 11	al-Kindi	The kalam cosmological argument
Sep 13	René Descartes	The ontological argument
Sep 18	Blaise Pascal	The wager argument
Sep 20	G. W. Leibniz	The argument from contingency
Sep 25	William Paley	The teleological argument
Sep 27	Immanuel Kant	The argument from the highest good
Oct 2	William James	The pragmatic argument
Oct 4	A. E. Taylor	The argument from the experience of the holy

Arguments against God's existence

Oct 9	Reading week	
Oct 11	Reading week	
Oct 16	Sigmund Freud	The argument from wish fulfillment
Oct 18	Antony Flew	The argument from falsifiability
Oct 23	J. L. Mackie	The logical argument from evil
Oct 25	William Rowe	The evidential argument from evil

Religion and morality

Oct 30	Plato	The Euthyphro dilemma
Nov 1	Friedrich Nietzsche	Religion and the degeneration of morality
Nov 6	Jean-Paul Sartre	Atheistic existentialism
Nov 8	C.S. Lewis	Religion and moral objectivity
Nov 13	Linda Zagzebski	Moral skepticism, despair, and God

Religion and science

Nov 15	Richard Dawkins	Science and the discrediting of religion
Nov 20	David Hume	The irrationality of belief in miracles
Nov 22	Alvin Plantinga	Evolution and naturalism
Nov 27	Richard Swinburne	The fine-tuning argument

Religious pluralism

Nov 29	John Hick	Religious pluralism
Dec 4	John Hick	Religious pluralism (2)/Envoi