*Philosophy 3600 Philosophy of Religion Fall 2020

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Office Hours Tues 1—3, Thursday 1—3

Class Tues/Thursday 3—415

Place MAIN 121

TEXT: Reading Packet in the bookstore

By the second week of the term a canvas page will be set up

Requirements You will write 5 two page papers on topics that are attached, with due dates. There will be a 4 question take home midterm and a 5 question take home final. Thus there will be about 18-19 pages of writing. Each question on the exams will require about a page of writing. Each paper will be worth 100 points. The exams will be worth 150 points. Thus there will be 800 points possible. I will offer two extra writing assignments. If you do 6 I will drop your lowest score. If you do 7 I will drop your lowest 2 scores. This does not count for exams.

THIS COURSE WILL WRESTLE WITH QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE CONTEXT OF WESTERN MONOTHEISTIC RELIGIONS. WE WILL NOT DEAL WITH ANY ISSUES FROM EASTERN RELIGIONS

Classes and Topics

Sept. 1 Introduction to the Class and an introductory discussion

Sept. 3 Introduction/ substance/ accident, act/potency, 4 causes Aristotle p. 5

Arguments for the Existence of God

September 8 Cosmological Argument
Aquinas p. 9 Aristotle p. 13

September 10 Cosmological Argument
Hume p. 16 Kant. P. 19

September 15 Ontological Argument
Whole section: Anselm, Descartes, Aquinas, Kant
September 17 Ontological Argument

FIRST PAPER DUE

September 22 Teleological/Design Argument, AQUINAS
Bonaventure p. 52, Paley, p. 57

SEPTEMBER 24 Teleological/Design Argument
Hume p. 63 Darwin p. 70

September 29 Overview of Proofs

Divine Attributes

October 1 Attributes of God: Introduction
Maimonides p. 76 Aquinas p. 83

October 6 Attributes of God: Simplicity, Immateriality, Immutability
Aquinas p. 90, p. 94, p. 99 Augustine p. 97

SECOND PAPER DUE

October 8 Attributes of God: Eternity, Omniscience
Aquinas p. 102, p. 108 Boethius, p. 110 Augustine p. 130

October 13 Attributes of God: Omniscience continued, and Oneness
Aquinas p. 134 Attributes of God: Omnipotence and Goodness
Aquinas p. 136, Samuel Clarke p. 139, Aquinas p. 142

Two Concepts of God

October 15

October 20 Process Theism

THIRD PAPER DUE

Religious Experience

October 22 Religious Experience
Paul, p. 226, Augustine, p. 228, Theresa, p. 232

MID TERM PASSED OUT
October 27 Religious Experience
Pascal p. 241, Kierkegaard, p. 242, James p.251

The Problem of Evil

October 29  God and Evil
Job p. 145, Augustine, p. 158, Leibniz p. 161

November 3  God and Evil
Voltaire p. 166, Schleiermacher p. 169

MID TERM DUE

November 5 God and Evil
Hume p. 180  Dostoevsky, p. 187

Miracles

November 10 Miracles
Bible p. 195, Aquinas, p. 200, Locke, p. 205

November 12 Miracles
Spinoza p. 210, Hume p. 215

Faith and Reason

November 12  Faith and Reason
Aquinas p. 269 Benedict p. 277, Locke p. 285

November 17  Faith and Reason
Pascal p. 290, Calvin p. 303

FOURTH PAPER DUE

November 19 Faith and Reason
Hobbes p. 293, Marx p. 299, Freud p. 310

Religion and Ethics ON ZOOM

November 24 Religion and Ethics
Paul 310, Aquinas , p. 311, Calvin p. 323

December 1 Religion and Ethics
Locke p. 335, Kant p. 330

FIFTH PAPER DUE
December 1  Pass out and go over final

IN EACH PAPER WHERE IT IS CALLED FOR YOU MUST HAVE ONE QUOTE FROM THE READING

1. Describe carefully one of Aquinas's 3 versions of the cosmological argument and show what sort of God it justifies

DUE SEPTEMBER 15

2. Describe the complexity design argument and show Darwin's critique

DUE September 29

3. Describe Boethius' way of understanding divine omniscience and human freedom. Show what kind of God this must be

DUE OCTOBER 15

4. Which concept of God do you believe in? Column A or Column B and Why? If you do not believe in a monotheistic God which one would you believe in if you did? NO QUOTE NECESSARY

DUE November 2

5. I will hand out an example of a recent supposed miracle. Describe it and use either Hume or Spinoza to criticize it

DUE NOVEMBER 24

EXTRA CREDIT

IF YOU DO 6 I WILL DROP YOUR LOWEST SCORE. IF YOU DO 7 I WILL DROP YOUR LOWEST 2 SCORES. DOES NOT INCLUDE EXAMS THESE EXTRA CREDIT ESSAYS WILL BE DUE LAST DAY OF CLASS

6. What is Leibniz's answer to the problem of evil?
7. What is “Pascal’s wager” and offer a criticism

DUE WITH THE FINAL
Some helps in writing a philosophy paper

1. You don’t need any library research. I don’t want to know what others think I want to know what you think about these topics, e.g. what solution do you think is best for reconciling a belief in God with the fact of evil and suffering in the world as we experience it.

2 Read the question carefully. Don’t tell me everything about a topic, e.g. the cosmological argument. Write about just what I have asked for.

3 Start by stating the foundation carefully, e.g. Paley’s design argument.

4. Then state the problem that I have raised about this belief. e.g. what does the cosmological argument justify about the existence of God.

5. If the question asked for a criticism or your own view give the criticism or your own conclusion clearly and precisely. Make sure your criticism or conclusion is specifically tied to the problem as you have stated it. Give reasons for your conclusion. Just saying “I don’t agree” without giving reasons is not enough.
Grading Grid

Spelling Error  2 points off
Grammar Error   2 points off
Clarity error   5 points off
Organization Error  5 points off
No quote if called for—5 points off
No argument if called for—5 points off

800 Points Possible

800—760  A
759—700  A—
699—680  B+
679—640  B
639—600  B—
599—550  C+
549—610  C
509—580  C—
1 Compare Marx's understanding of religion with Freud's

2 Compare Locke's understanding of the relation of religion and morality with that of Kant

3 Why does Spinoza criticize the idea of "interventionist" miracles?

4 What might Kierkegaard say about the case of Rodney Lundberg?

5 How does Boethius show the compatibility of God's knowledge of the future and human freedom?