



NEW ORLEANS
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



LEAVELL
COLLEGE

Philosophy of Religion: PHIL5300-HYB

Fall 2022

James K. Dew, Jr., PhD
President
Professor of Christian Philosophy

Frost Building
jdew@nobts.edu

Teaching Assistant:

Alex Oakley

aoakley@nobts.edu

Note: Please contact Alex Oakley for all Canvas-related questions and myself for all content-related questions. ALWAYS include your name, Student ID, and Course Code (PHIL5300-HYB) in every email.

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A philosophical examination of fundamental religious beliefs and concepts with primary focus on the claims and warrants of Christian theism. Lectures and readings address classical and contemporary perspectives on the relationship of faith and reason, the nature of religious language, arguments for the existence of God, religious experience, the nature and persistence of evil, miracles, death and immortality, and the relationships of Christianity and other religious traditions. The course constitutes a call to intellectual accountability in relation to issues of ultimate concern to Christian faith.

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the semester, the student will:

1. Examine and assess key concepts and issues in philosophy and synthesize their connection with Christian thought.
2. Explain and defend intellectually responsible answers to objections to the Christian faith.
3. Demonstrate robust critical thinking skills and logical argumentation through research and writing.

COURSE TEXTS

The following textbooks are required:

(PACI)—Dew, James K., Jr., and Paul M. Gould, *Philosophy: A Christian Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. ISBN: 9780801097997

(PUT)—Allen, Diogenes, and Eric O. Springstead, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*, 2nd Ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007. ISBN:9780664231804

(READER)— Allen, Diogenes, and Eric O. Springstead, Eds. *Primary Readings in Philosophy for Understanding Theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992. ISBN: 9780664252083

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Quizzes (20% of final grade).** Quizzes cover the lectures and the readings. There is typically at least 1 quiz per week, but often there are 2 per week. All quizzes are cumulative, so you will need to stay fresh on all the content on a weekly basis. There are 27 total quizzes and there are no make-ups, even for excused absences. The lowest 4 quiz grades will be dropped. All quizzes are open-note, but closed book. You may, however, take as many notes from the readings as you like and use those notes in the quizzes, but you may not use the books in the quizzes. Each quiz is only open for 5 minutes so be prepared and sufficiently studied!
- 2. Exams (each exam 20% of final grade, 40% total).** Exams will be given over material from the lectures and assigned reading. Exams consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching, and/or short essay. Like the quizzes, everything is cumulative. Like the quizzes, they are open note, but closed book. Again, feel free to take notes from the readings as you read. You may use whatever notes you take for the exams, but you may not keep the books open.
- 3. Attendance and Participation (10% of final grade).** (1) Students must participate in all three threaded discussion posts throughout the semester. To get full credit for threaded discussions, students must make an original response to the original post (provided by the instructor) and at least 2 responses to classmates' original post. There is no word count requirement for discussion posts, but they must be thoughtful and well-constructed. Students will lose points for "this is a good point" or "well said" types of posts. Engage with the content, and provide meaningful feedback. (2) This is a weekend hybrid course, and students must be present for the entirety of the hybrid weekend to earn credit for this course. Students should also ask questions and engage with the professor and classmates to receive full credit for this portion of the course requirements.
- 4. Position Paper (20% of final grade).** Students will write a 10-12 page position paper dealing with one of the topics covered in the course. The student will write a paper expressing his/her position on that issue. It is imperative that the student (1) clearly states his/her position and (2) clearly makes a case for his/her position in the paper. Higher grades will be given to those papers that incorporate some research and demonstrate clear argumentation. See rubric on Canvas for more details.
- 5. Book Review (10%).** Students will write a 5-page book review of one of the books listed below. Students should spend no more than 1 page summarizing the book. The remaining 4/5 pages of the review should critically interact with the content of the book. Please see the book listing below, appended to this syllabus, for a list of books available for the book review. Students do **not** need to get approval for any books listed on the book review book list.

GRADING SCALE

A: 93 – 100

B: 85 – 92

C: 77 – 84

D: 70 – 76

F: below 70

COURSE SCHEDULE:

All assignments (quizzes, exams, written assignments) are due at 11:55pm of the Sunday of the week in the course schedule. For example, quiz on Lecture 1 will close at August 21, 11:55pm CT. Quizzes will NOT be reopened for any reason.

Week		Lecture	Reading	Assignments
1	UNIT 1 August 15	Lecture 1: Presocratic Philosophy Lecture 2: Classical Philosophy (Plato) Lecture 3: Classical Philosophy (Aristotle)	Reading 1: PUT: Ch. 1-3 (p. 1-64); READER: Plato (p. 1-38), Aristotle (p.39-58)	Quiz: Lectures 1-3 Quiz: Reading 1
2	August 22	Lecture 4: Postclassical/Early Medieval Philosophy Lecture 5: Late Medieval Philosophy	Reading 2: PUT: Ch. 4-6 (p. 65-112); READER: Aquinas (p. 98-110)	Quiz: Lectures 4-5 Quiz: Reading 2
3	August 29	Lecture 6: Renaissance/Reformation Philosophy Lecture 7: Early Modern Philosophy	Reading 3: PUT: Ch. 7-9 (p. 113-168); READER: Descartes, Locke, Kant (p. 111-152, 172-209)	Quiz: Lectures 6-7 Quiz: Reading 3
4	September 5	Lecture 8: Later Modern Philosophy Lecture 9: Enlightenment/Postmodern Philosophy	Reading 4: PUT: Ch. 11-12 (p. 187-230); READER: Heidegger, Gadamer (P. 248-280)	Quiz: Lectures 8-9 Quiz: Reading 4
5	UNIT 2 September 12	Lecture 10: Worldviews Lecture 11: Reason & Critical Thinking	Reading 5: PACI, p. 57-71;	Quiz: Lectures 10-11 Quiz: Reading 5
6	September 19	Lecture 12: What is Epistemology? Lecture 13: What is Knowledge? Lecture 14: What Makes a Thing True?	Reading 6: PACI, p. 11-14, 15-25;	Quiz: Lectures 12-14 Quiz: Reading 6
7	September 26	Lecture 15: What is Revelation and	Reading 7: PACI, p.	Quiz: Lectures 15-

		Do We Have It? Lecture 16: Reformed Epistemology Lecture 17: Intellectual Virtues	57-88;	17 Quiz: Reading 7
	October 3	FALL BREAK	NO CLASS	No Assignments
8	October 10	Lecture 18: What is Metaphysics pt. 1 Lecture 19: What is Metaphysics pt. 2 Lecture 20: Is reality Physical or Nonphysical?	Reading 8: PACI, p. 89-103	Quiz: Lectures 18-20 Quiz: Reading 8 Book Review Due 10.16
9	UNIT 3 October 17	Lecture 21: Universals and Particulars/Accidentals and Essentials Lecture 22: How do Things Change and Persist?	Reading 9: PACI, p. 104-130; READER: Aristotle (p.59-82)	Midterm due on Canvas (10.23) Quiz: Lectures 21-22 Quiz: Reading 9
10	October 24	Lecture 23: What is Free Will and Do We Have It? Lecture 24: What is Middle Knowledge? Lecture 25: What is Philosophy of Religion?	Reading 10: PACI, p. 131-143;	Quiz: Lectures 23-25 Quiz: Reading 10
HYBRID WEEKEND 28th-29th, _ *Must be present for entirety of classes on Fri and Sat* Hybrid Weekend Classes: Friday, October 28th, 1PM – 9PM & Saturday 8AM – 5PM				
11	October 31	Lecture 26: Are Humans Bodies or Souls? Lecture 27: Can We Survive Death pt. 1 Lecture 28: Can We Survive Death pt. 2	Reading 11: PACI, p. 144-162; 206-221; Dew Articles (On BB)	Quiz: Lectures 26-28 Quiz: Reading 11
12	November 7	Lecture 29: Cosmological/Teleological Arguments Lecture 30: Ontological Arguments Lecture 31: Moral Arguments	Reading 12: PACI, p. 163-177; READER: Anselm/Aquinas (p. 83-97)	Quiz: Lectures 29-31 Quiz: Reading 12

13	UNIT 4 November 14	Lecture 32: Miracles pt. 1 Lecture 33: Miracles pt. 2	Reading 13: PACI, p. 190-205; READER: Hume (p.153-171).	Quiz: Lectures 32-33 Quiz: Reading 13 Paper Due (4.17)
November 21 - THANKSGIVING BREAK; NO CLASS; NO ASSIGNMENTS				
14	November 29	Lecture 34: Problem of Evil pt. 1 Lecture 35: Problem of Evil pt. 2 Lecture 36: Problem of Evil pt. 3	Reading 14: PACI, p. 178-179;	Quiz: Lectures 34-36 Quiz: Reading 14
15	December 5	Lecture 37: Divine Hiddenness Lecture 38: Metaethics Lecture 39: Normative Ethics	Reading 15: PACI, p. 223-254	Quiz: Lectures 37-39 Quiz: Reading 15 Final Exam (12.7)

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

1. Attendance Policy: **Weekend Hybrid Classes:** Students are expected to attend and participate in the class sessions. Because of the nature of the intensive, students who miss any portion of the class may receive a grade of "F" for the course.
2. Policy for Late Submissions: There are no make-up quizzes or exams. Students are given very large windows of time before the close of quizzes and exams. Students may turn papers in up to two weeks late of the due day, with a letter grade and a half per week they are late.
3. Plagiarism Policy: A high standard of personal integrity is expected of all NOBTS students. Copying another person's work, submitting downloaded material without proper references, submitting material without properly citing the source, submitting the same material for credit in more than one course, and committing other such forms of dishonesty are strictly forbidden. *Although anything cited in three sources is considered public domain, we require that all sources be cited.* Any infraction may result in failing the assignment and the course. Any infraction will be reported to the Dean of Graduate Studies for further action.
4. Classroom and Online Decorum: Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of the others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times. Electronic devices should be used only for classroom purposes as indicated by the professor.
5. Special Needs: If you need accommodations for a disability, please set up a meeting with the professor for consideration of any modifications you may need.

6. Emergency Plan: In the event the NOBTS schedule is impacted due to a natural event, go to the seminary's website for pertinent information. Class will continue as scheduled through the Canvas site. Please note announcements and assignments on the course's Canvas site.

7. Technical Assistance: For general NOBTS technical help, go to www.NOBTS.edu/itc/Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
Canvas.NOBTS.com Click on the "Help" button for technical questions/support requests regarding the NOBTS Canvas System. You can also email questions to Canvas@nobts.edu.
ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY (Not for Book Review!)

- Corduan, Winfried. *No Doubt About It: The Case for Christianity*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997. ISBN 0805416471.
- Reese, William L. *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought*. Expanded ed. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996. ISBN 1573926213.
- Audi, Robert, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Bush, L. Russ, III. *A Handbook for Christian Philosophy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991. ISBN 0310518210.
- Copleston, Frederick. *A History of Philosophy*. Vol.1, *Greece and Rome*. Westminster, MD: Newman, 1959.
- Craig, Edward, ed. *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London: 1998.
- Edwards, Paul, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. New York: Macmillan, 1967.
- Gaarder, Jostein. *Sophie's World—A Novel About the History of Philosophy*. Translated by Paulette Møller. New York: Berkley Books, 1991. ISBN 0425152251.
- Honderich, Ted, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Lavine, T. Z. *From Socrates to Sartre: The Philosophic Quest*. New York: Bantam Books, 1984. ISBN 0553251619.
- Roth, John, ed. *World Philosophers and Their Works*. 3 vols. Pasadena: Salem Press, 2000.

Russell, Bertrand. *A History of Western Philosophy*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972. ISBN 0671201581.

Sahakian, William S., and Mabel Lewis Sahakian. *Ideas of the Great Philosophers*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1966. ISBN 1566192714.

Windelband, Wilhelm. *A History of Philosophy*. Vol.1, *Greek, Roman, and Medieval*. New York: Harper & Row, 1958.

Books to Review

- Evans, C Stephen. *Faith Beyond Reason: A Kierkegaardian Account*. Reason and Religion Series. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 1998.
- Feinberg, John S. *The Many Faces of Evil: Theological Systems and the Problems of Evil*. rev. and expanded ed. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2004.
- McCall, Thomas H. *Which Trinity? Whose Monotheism? Philosophical and Systematic Theologians on the Metaphysics of Trinitarian Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010.
- McCann, Hugh J. *Creation and the Sovereignty of God*. Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012.
- Morris, Thomas. *Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991.
- Nagasawa, Yujin. *Maximal God: A New Defence of Perfect Being Theism*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Plantinga, Alvin. *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Ward, Keith. *The Evidence for God: The Case for the Existence of the Spiritual Dimension*. London, England: Daron, Longmann and Todd Ltd., 2014.
- Williams, Clifford. *Existential Reasons for Belief in God: A Defense of Desires and Emotions for Faith*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2011.