



Philosophy of Religion: PHIL5300**Fall 2022**

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Location TBD

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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. The student will examine and assess key concepts and issues in philosophy and synthesize their connection with Christian thought.
2. The student will explain and defend intellectually responsible answers to objections to the Christian faith.
3. The student will demonstrate robust critical thinking skills and logical argumentation through research and writing.

COURSE TEXTS

The following textbooks are required:

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

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

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

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and Participation (10% of final grade). Students will be graded on their participation in class discussion and activities. In addition to the lectures and readings for the course, students are expected to be present at all class meetings each week and engage with the lecture material. Students who are “present” in the discussion but do not participate will receive very little credit for that session. I EXPECT YOU TO ASK QUESTIONS!

Exams (each exam 25% of final grade, 50% total). Exams will be given over material from the lectures and assigned reading. Exams may consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching, short answer, and essay. Exams are not comprehensive. Each exam will cover the material covered in that section. Exams will be open note, but not open book.

Position Paper (25% of final grade). Students will write a 10-12 page (double-spaced) position paper dealing with one of the topics covered in the course. ***The student must get approval from the professor for their paper topic.*** The student will write a paper expressing her/his 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 clearly delineate their research and demonstrate clear argumentation. See rubric for more information and requirements.

Book Review (15%). Students will write a 5-page (single-spaced) 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

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

1. Attendance Policy: (Traditional and NOLA2U Classes) Students are expected to attend and participate in the class sessions. Any student missing more than nine hours may receive an automatic grade of “F” for the course. Three tardies will count as one absence.
2. Policy for Late Submissions: There are no makeup 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 Blackboard site. Please note announcements and assignments on the course's Blackboard 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!)

Audi, Robert, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Bush, L. Russ, III. *A Handbook for Christian Philosophy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.

Copleston, Frederick. *A History of Philosophy*. Vol.1, *Greece and Rome*. Westminster, MD: Newman, 1959.

Corduan, Winfried. *No Doubt About It: The Case for Christianity*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997.

Craig, Edward, ed. *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London, 1998.

Craig, William Lane, ed. *Philosophy of Religion: A Reader and Guide*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2002.

- Craig, William Lane and J. P. Moreland, eds. *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
- 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.
- 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.
- Moreland, J. P. and William Lane Craig. *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. 2nd Edition. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017.
- Morris, Thomas V., ed. *God and the Philosophers: The Reconciliation of Faith and Reason*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Reese, William L. *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought*. Expanded ed. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996.
- 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.
- Sahakian, William S., and Mabel Lewis Sahakian. *Ideas of the Great Philosophers*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1966.
- Windelband, Wilhelm. *A History of Philosophy*. Vol.1, *Greek, Roman, and Medieval*. New York: Harper & Row, 1958.

Books to Review

- Alston, William P. 1993. *Perceiving God: The Epistemology of Religious Experience*. (Cornell University Press).
- Craig, William Lane. 1979. *The Kalām Cosmological Argument*. Library of Philosophy and Religion. (Wipf & Stock).
- Craig, William Lane. 2001. *Time and Eternity: Exploring God's Relationship to Time*. (Crossway).
- Evans, C. Stephen. 1998. *Faith Beyond Reason: A Kierkegaardian Account*. Reason and Religion Series. (Eerdmans).
- Feinberg, John S. 2004. *The Many Faces of Evil: Theological Systems and the Problems of Evil*. Revised and Expanded Edition. (Crossway).
- Flint, Thomas P. 1998. *Divine Providence: The Molinist Account*. Cornell Studies in the Philosophy of Religion. (Cornell University Press).
- Gould, Paul M., ed. 2014. *Beyond the Control of God?: Six Views on the Problem of God and Abstract Objects*. Bloomsbury Studies in Philosophy of Religion. (Bloomsbury).
- Hasker, William. 1989. *God, Time, and Knowledge*. Cornell Studies in the Philosophy of Religion. (Cornell University Press).
- Hasker, William. 2013. *Metaphysics and the Tripersonal God*. Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology. (Oxford University Press).
- Helm, Paul. 2010. *Eternal God: A Study of God without Time*. 2nd Edition. (Oxford University Press).
- Loke, Andrew Ter Ern. 2014. *A Kryptic Model of the Incarnation*. Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Religion, Theology and Biblical Studies Series. (Routledge).
- McCall, Thomas H. 2010. *Which Trinity? Whose Monotheism? Philosophical and Systematic Theologians on the Metaphysics of Trinitarian Theology*. (Eerdmans).
- McCann, Hugh J. 2012. *Creation and the Sovereignty of God*. Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion. (Indiana University Press).
- Morris, Thomas V. 1986. *The Logic of God Incarnate*. (Wipf & Stock).
- Morris, Thomas V. 1991. *Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology*. (IVP Academic).
- Mullins, R. T. 2016. *The End of the Timeless God*. Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology. (Oxford University Press).

- Nagasawa, Yujin. 2017. *Maximal God: A New Defence of Perfect Being Theism*. (Oxford University Press).
- Oppy, Graham. 2014. *Describing Gods: An Investigation of Divine Attributes*. (Cambridge University Press).
- Oppy, Graham, ed. 2018. *Ontological Arguments*. Classic Philosophical Arguments. (Cambridge University Press).
- Plantinga, Alvin. 1980. *Does God Have a Nature?* Aquinas Lecture 44. (Marquette University Press).
- Plantinga, Alvin. 1989. *God, Freedom, and Evil*. (Eerdmans).
- Plantinga, Alvin. 2011. *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism*. (Oxford University Press).
- Plantinga, Alvin. 2015. *Knowledge and Christian Belief*. (Eerdmans).
- Rogers, Katherin A. 2000. *Perfect Being Theology*. Reason and Religion. (University of Edinburg Press).
- Swinburne, Richard. 1994. *The Christian God*. (Clarendon Press).
- Swinburne, Richard. 2004. *The Existence of God*. 2nd Edition. (Oxford University Press).
- Swinburne, Richard. 2013. *Mind, Brain, and Free Will*. (Oxford University Press).
- Swinburne, Richard. 2016. *The Coherence of Theism*. 2nd Edition. (Oxford University Press).
- Swinburne, Richard. 2019. *Are We Bodies or Souls?* (Oxford University Press).
- Ward, Keith. 2014. *The Evidence for God: The Case for the Existence of the Spiritual Dimension*. (Daron, Longmann and Todd Ltd).
- Ward, Keith. 2015. *Christ and the Cosmos: A Reformulation of Trinitarian Doctrine*. (Cambridge University Press).
- Williams, Clifford. 2011. *Existential Reasons for Belief in God: A Defense of Desires and Emotions for Faith*. (IVP Academic).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week		Lecture Topic	Readings and Assignments
1	Tuesday: 8/16 Thursday: 8/18	Syllabus and Pre-Socratic Philosophy Classical Philosophy: Plato and Aristotle	PUT: Introduction, Chs. 1-4 READER: Plato – pp. 1-38; Aristotle – pp. 39-58
2	Tuesday: 8/23 Thursday: 8/25	Postclassical and Medieval Philosophy Renaissance/Reformation Philosophy and Early Modern Philosophy	PUT: Chs. 5-8 READER: Aquinas – pp. 98-110; Descartes, Locke, and Kant – 111-152, 172-209
3	Tuesday: 8/30 Thursday: 9/1	Later Modern and Postmodern Philosophy Worldviews	PUT: Chs. 10-12 READER: Heidegger and Gadamer – 248-280
4	Tuesday: 9/6 Thursday: 9/8	Reason & Critical Thinking Introduction to Epistemology	PACI: Ch. 5, pp. 11-13
5	Tuesday: 9/13 Thursday: 9/15	Knowledge and Truth Reformed Epistemology	PACI: Chs. 2-3
6	Tuesday: 9/20 Thursday: 9/22	Intellectual Virtues What is Revelation and Do We Have It?	PACI: Chs. 4, 6
7	Tuesday: 9/27 Thursday: 9/29	Introduction to Metaphysics Is Reality Physical or Nonphysical?	Midterm Exam PACI: Ch. 7
<u>Fall Break: 10/4 – 10/6</u>			
8	Tuesday: 10/11 Thursday: 10/13	Universals and Particulars, Accidentals and Essentials How do Things Change and Persist?	PACI: Chs. 8-9 READER: Aristotle – pp. 59-82
9	Tuesday: 10/18	What is Free Will, Do We Have It, and Middle Knowledge	PACI: Chs. 10-11

	Thursday: 10/20	Are Humans Bodies or Souls?	
10	Tuesday: 10/25 Thursday: 10/27	Can We Survive Death? Introduction to Philosophy of Religion	PACI: Ch. 15; pp. 163-164
11	Tuesday: 11/1 Thursday: 11/3	The Coherence of Theism, Pt. 1 The Coherence of Theism, Pt. 2	
12	Tuesday: 11/8 Thursday: 11/10	Cosmological and Teleological Arguments Moral and Ontological Arguments	PACI: Ch. 12 READER: Anselm and Aquinas – pp. 83-97
13	Tuesday: 11/15 Thursday: 11/17	The Problem of Evil Divine Hiddenness	Position Paper Due. PACI: Chs. 13
<p><u>Thanksgiving Break: 11/21 – 11/25</u></p> <p>***Work on Book Reviews***</p>			
14	Tuesday: 11/29 Thursday: 12/1	Divine Interaction: Miracles and Prayer Metaethics and Normative Ethics	Book Review Due on 11/29 PACI: Chs. 14, 16-17 READER: Hume ***Final Exam on 12/1***