

## **PHL 610 Philosophy of Religion**

**Fall 2008**

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**Course Description:** Deals with the problems that arise in relating the facts of human experience to the truths of the Christian faith.

**This course intends to:** a) survey the major issues which are related to the philosophical analysis of religion, b) look carefully at the Arguments for the Existence of God, Divine Attributes, Faith and Reason, Theodicy, Immortality and the Afterlife, and c) learn to think critically about religion and faith.

### **Texts**

Thomas Jay Oord, *Philosophy of Religion: Introductory Essays*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2003.

Charles Taliaferro and Paul Griffiths, *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

### **Requirements**

Philosophical essays. There will be two philosophical essays in the course. Each essay will be worth up to 100 points.

Research paper. Each graduate student will write a research paper on a topic approved by the professor. The topic must reflect a theme associated with philosophy of religion.

Criteria for evaluation: grasp of issues – 70 pts, use of appropriate primary and secondary sources – 30pts, integration of material treated in class – 25 pts, clarity of argument, grammatical issue – 15 pts. Total points - - 140 points.

Participation. The quality of this class is dependent upon the active participation of each member of the class. A student can participate in class in two ways: a) comments/question made in class and b) blackboard discussion. This assignment will be 100 points. Criteria for evaluation: Degree of insight in questions/comments – 50 pts; Connection of comments/questions to assigned reading – 25 pts; and Spread of comments/questions over the semester – 25 points. All participation must be completed by **December 5 @ 11:59pm.**

## **Academic Policies**

1. All work will be due no later than **December 5 @ 11:59pm.**
2. All work submitted late will be reduced by 20%.
3. All work must be submitted through the assignments function of Blackboard set up for this class.
4. All grades are open to reasonable and respectful review.
5. It is expected that all work turned in for this class reflect the labors of the person whose name appears on the paper. If there is any evidence to the contrary of this the student will receive a zero for the assignment. This includes any cheating an examination.

## **Grade Scale**

A	440-396
B	395-352
C	351-308
D	307-264
F	263-000

## **Class Schedule (Class will meet 9:00-12:35)**

### September 9

A Short Introduction to Philosophical Reflection  
Oord: 187-200

### September 16

Religious Identity  
Taliaferro and Griffiths: 1-43

### September 23 and 30

Theism and Divine Attributes  
Taliaferro and Griffiths: 45-97  
Oord: 91-182

### October 7

Explanations of Religion  
Taliaferro and Griffiths: 99-225

### October 14 – **Philosophical essay #1 is due**

Theistic Arguments  
Taliaferro and Griffiths: 227-293  
Oord: 13-88

### October 21

Reading and Research Week

October 28 and November 4

Evils and Goods

Taliaferro and Griffiths: 357-448

Oord: 201-216

November 11

Religious Values

Taliaferro and Griffiths: 449-552

Oord: 217-230

November 18 (**Research paper is due**) and December 2

Personal Identity and Death

Taliaferro and Griffiths: 553-599

Oord: 275-288

**Philosophical essay #2 as scheduled by the Registrar**

**Selected Resources**

Beilby, James K., ed., *For Faith and Clarity: Philosophical Contributions to Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.

Bunnin, Nicholas and Tsui-James, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996.

De Vries, Hent, *Philosophy and the Turn to Religion*. Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1999.

Evans, C. Stephens, *Philosophy of Religion: Thinking about Faith*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1982.

Gustafson, James M., *A Sense of the Divine: The Natural Environment from a Theocentric Perspective*, 1994.

Helm, Paul, ed., *Faith and Reason*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Hick, John, *Philosophy of Religion*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1973.

Kellenberger, James, *Introduction to Philosophy of Religion*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007.

- Machuga, Ric, *In Defense of the Soul: What It Means to Be Human*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books/Brazos Press, 2002.
- Meister, Chad and Copan, Paul, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.
- Murray, Michael J., ed., *Reason for the Hope Within*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.
- Rowe, William L., *Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction*. Fourth Edition. Belmont, CA: Tomson and Wadsworth, 2007.
- Stewart, David, *Exploring the Philosophy of Religion*. Fifth Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2001.
- Stump, Eleonore and Murray, Michael, ed., *Philosophy of Religion: The Big Questions*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1999.
- Tilghman, B.R., *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1994.
- Wainwright, William J., *Philosophy of Religion*. Second Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1999.
- Yandell, Keith E. *Philosophy of Religion: A Contemporary Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge, 1999.

