

Syllabus

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PHL-293: Exploring God's Existence

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Course Description

Students will develop a working knowledge of the most common arguments given for the exist-ence of God in philosophical and apologetic literature. Students will learn the structures, strengths, and weaknesses of various arguments

Credit Hours: 1

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Identify the typical forms and features of each argument for God's existence and what each argument seeks precisely to prove.
2. Describe what are commonly taken to be the major strengths and weaknesses of each argument for God's existence.
3. Provide a critical analysis of one of the arguments in a short essay, stating why in the student's opinion the argument is compelling or not.

Course Goals

1. Theistic arguments have been a staple of philosophical discussion since the beginnings of Western philosophy in ancient Greece. In this course students will learn what these arguments are and how they function, with the aim of increasing students' awareness of some of the ways in which the truth of theism can be supported or suggested by means of philosophical arguments.
2. Students after having taken the class will have a better understanding of the philosophical dimension of the Christian faith and be able to see how philosophy can potentially help Christians to provide reasons for their faith.

Course Textbook

Groothuis, D. (2011). Christian apologetics: A comprehensive case for biblical faith. Downer's Grove, IL: Intersivarsity Press.

Grading Scale

Grade	Quality Points Per Credit	Percentage	Score
A	4.0	95% - 100%	347- 365

A-	3.7	92% - 94.9%	336- 348
B+	3.3	89% - 91.9%	325- 335
B	3.0	85% - 88.9%	310- 324
B-	2.7	82% - 84.9%	299- 309
C+	2.3	79% - 81.9%	288- 298
C	2.0	75% - 78.9%	274- 287
C-	1.7	72% - 74.9%	263- 273
D+	1.3	69% - 71.9%	252- 262
D	1.0	65% - 68.9%	237- 251
F	.0	0% - 64.9%	0 - 236

Grading Policies

Your grading policy for your course is dependent on your school and program. Your grading policies can be found in the IWU Catalog. <http://indwes.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2013-2014/Catalog>

Letter Grades - A letter grade is used in evaluating the work for a course. For the purpose of determining scholastic standing and awarding honors, grade points are granted according to the letter grades and semester hours of credit. The grade point average (GPA) is the number of quality points earned at IWU divided by the number of credit hours attempted at IWU.

Repeated Courses - A student may repeat once any course in which a grade below "C" ("C-," "D+," "D," or "F") was previously earned. Some specific graduate level courses are identified as repeatable and can be repeated if a student earns a grade higher than "C" but below the level required for that specific course. The course may be repeated once. Whenever a course is repeated, the last grade and credits earned replace the previous grade in computing the student's grade point average (GPA). All entries, however, remain a part of the student's permanent academic record. Duplicate credit hours are not given for two or more passing efforts. A course taken in a classroom format may not be repeated for a grade through independent learning. Since a course may be repeated once, failure to achieve a satisfactory grade in a course after two attempts will result in academic suspension and ineligibility to complete the major in which the course was repeated.

Incomplete Grades - Students are expected to complete the course requirements by the last class session. There may be instances when crisis circumstances or events prevent the student from completing the course requirements in a timely manner. However, the issuance of an incomplete cannot be given if the student fails to meet the attendance requirements. In these rare situations, a grade of "I" (incomplete) may be issued but only after completing the following process: 1. The student must request an "I" from the instructor 2. The instructor must obtain approval from the appropriate Regional Dean/Program Director/Program Chair/Division Chair. Because "incompletes" are granted only for extenuating circumstances, the student's grade will not be penalized. A student who receives an "incomplete" has 10 weeks from the final meeting date of the course to complete course requirements and turn them in to the instructor. If, at the end of the 10-week extension, the student has failed to complete the course requirements in order to receive a passing grade, the "incomplete" will become an "F." A student with more than one incomplete on record is subject to academic suspension.

Grade Reports - At the end of each course, the instructor submits grades for each student. Grade reports are available online to the student and indicate courses taken, credits received, and grades assigned.

Letter Grade Equivalencies

Grade	Description of Work
A	Clearly stands out as excellent performance. Has unusually sharp insights into material and initiates thoughtful questions. Sees many sides of an issue. Articulates well and writes logically and clearly. Integrates ideas previously learned from this and other disciplines. Anticipates next steps in progression of ideas. Example "A" work should be of such nature that it could be put on reserve for all cohort members to review and emulate. The "A" cohort member is, in fact, an example for others to follow.
B	Demonstrates a solid comprehension of the subject matter and always accomplishes all course requirements. Serves as an active participant and listener. Communicates orally and in writing at an acceptable level for the degree program. Work shows intuition and creativity. Example "B" work indicates good quality of performance and is given in recognition for solid work; a "B" should be considered a good grade and awarded to those who submit assignments of quality less than the exemplary work described above.

C	Quality and quantity of work in and out of class is average. Has marginal comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at least minimally.
D	Quality and quantity of work is below average. Has minimal comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at below acceptable levels.
F	Quality and quantity of work is unacceptable and does not qualify the student to progress to a more advanced level of work.

Course Workshop Summary

Workshop	Discussion	Dropbox	Quiz/Exam	Total Points per Workshop
Workshop One	2/60	2/45	1/15	120
Workshop Two	2/60	1/50	1/15	125
Workshop Three	2/60	1/60	0/0	120
End of Course Survey				0
TOTAL	6/180	4/155	2/30	365

* Number of Activities/Sum Point Totals

Workshop One Outline

Title	Due Dates	Time	Points
1.1 Assignment: Does God Exist	Due by the end of the workshop.	2 hours	15
1.2 Discussion: Uses and Criticisms of Theistic Arguments	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	4 hours	30
1.3 Discussion: The Ontological Argument	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	4 hours	30
1.4 Assignment: The Cosmological Argument	Due by the end of the workshop.	4:30 hours	30
1.5 Quiz: Ontological and Cosmological Arguments	Due by the end of the workshop.	2 hours	15
Totals		16:30 hours*	120

*These timings are based on estimations of average times to complete each assignment. Actual assignment completion times will vary.

Workshop Two Outline

Title	Due Dates	Estimated Time	Points
2.1 Quiz: Fine-Tuning as Evidence of Design	Due by the end of the workshop.	2 hours	15

2.2 Discussion: Flaws of Darwinism	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	4:30 hours	30
2.3 Discussion: Irreducible Complexity	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	4:30 hours	30
2.4 Assignment: Morality and God	Due by the end of the workshop.	5 hours	50
Totals		16 hours*	125

*These timings are based on estimations of average times to complete each assignment. Actual assignment completion times will vary.

Workshop Three Outline

Title	Due Dates	Estimated Time	Points
3.1 Discussion: Evidence from Religious Experience	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	4:30 hours	30
3.2 Discussion: Resurrection of Jesus	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	4:30 hours	30
3.3 Assignment: Final Paper	Due by the end of the workshop.	7 hours	60
End of Course Survey	Due by the end of the workshop for extra credit.	30 minutes	10
Totals		16:30 hours*	120

*These timings are based on estimations of average times to complete each assignment. Actual assignment completion times will vary.

Course Development Resources

Craig, W. (2001). *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock.

Craig, W., and Moreland, J. (Eds.) (2012). *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Craig, W., and Moreland, J. eds. (2003). *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

Davis, S. (1997). *God, reason & theistic proofs*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing.

Geisler, N., (1988). *Christian apologetics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing.

Harrelson, K. (2008). *The ontological argument from Descartes to Hegel*. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books.

Hick, J., and McGill, A., eds. (2009). *The many faced argument: Studies on the ontological argument for the existence of God*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock.

Manson, N., ed. (2003). *God and design: The teleological argument and modern science*. New York, NY: Routledge.

McGrath, A. (2009). *A fine-tuned universe: The quest for God in science and theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

Moreland, J., Meister, C. and Sweis, K. eds. (2013). *Debating Christian theism*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Peterson, M., Hasker, W., Reichenbach, B., and Basinger, D. (2012) *Reason & religious belief: An introduction to the philosophy of religion*. 5th. ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Sennett, J. and Groothuis, D. eds. (2005). *In defense of natural theology: A post-Humean assessment*. Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

Spitzer, R. (2010). *New proofs for the existence of God: Contributions of contemporary physics and philosophy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing.

Swinburne, R. (2004). *The existence of God*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. van Inwagen, P. (2008). *Metaphysics*. 3rd. ed. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Expectations, Policies, and Important Student Information

School/Division	Link
DeVoe School of Business Division of Liberal Arts School of Services and Leadership	View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information
School of Educational Leadership	View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information
Wesley Seminary @ IWU	View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information
Nursing - Undergraduate	View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information
Nursing - Graduate	View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information