

Graduate Philosophy of Religion Course

course number here

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<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Grade Scale</u>												
Big Paper: 60%	F	D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
Presentation: 20%	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Short Papers: 20%													

Required Texts

Jordan Howard Sobel, *Logic and Theism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
Richard Swinburne, *The Existence of God*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Other texts listed in the reading schedule will be provided through the course website. These texts have been marked with an asterisk (*) in the tentative reading schedule.

Course Description

The structure of this course is based around two recent and influential approaches to current issues in Anglo-American philosophy of religion. Among the many issues to be studied include the coherence of the concept of God, traditional arguments for and against the existence of God, free will and divine foreknowledge, and the role of epistemology for religious beliefs.

Big Paper Requirement

Students will write a 15-20 page paper for the course that focuses on one of the readings or topics for this course. This paper will count for 60% of the student's overall grade. More specific instructions about the paper will be given in class. Students are strongly encouraged to consult the instructor for advice and help in writing their papers.

Presentation & Participation & Short Papers

Each student will give one class presentation that is aimed to raise critical discussion of the assigned reading for that day. Presentations should be prepared to last for a minimum of 15 minutes, and should be primarily critical in nature. Students are also expected to participate in class through discussion and other appropriate means. The presentation and participation constitute 20% of the overall grade. Additionally students will be required to write four short papers that critically respond to one aspect of the reading (for example, one argument from the reading). These papers will be around 2-3 double-spaced pages. More information will be provided in class about the due date and expectations for these papers. Each short paper is worth 5% of the student's overall grade.

Minimal Passing Requirement

In order to pass the course students must meet two basic requirements: (1) they must turn in the big paper; and (2) they must attend at least three-fourths of classes. *Those who do not meet these conditions are subject to fail the course regardless of their overall average.*

Tentative Reading Schedule

Week 1: The Concept of God

Sobel, chapter I
Swinburne, chapter 6

Week 2: Ontological Arguments

Sobel, chapters II-IV
Plantinga, excerpt from *God, Freedom, Evil**
Malcolm, "Anselm's Ontological Arguments"*

Week 3: Cosmological Arguments

Sobel, chapters V-VI
Swinburne, chapter 7

Week 4: Teleological Arguments

Sobel, chapter VII
Swinburne, chapter 8

Week 5: Arguments from Consciousness and Morality

Swinburne, chapter 9
Linville, "The Moral Argument"*

Weeks 6-8: The Problems of Evil

Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence"*
Sobel, chapters XI-XII
Swinburne, chapter 11
Plantinga, excerpt from *God, Freedom, Evil**

Weeks 9-10: Miracles

Hume, "On Miracles"*
Sobel, chapter VIII
Swinburne, chapter 12
McGrew, "Has Plantinga Refuted the Historical Argument?""*

Week 11: Religious Experience

Swinburne, chapter 13
Fales, "Do Mystics See God?""*

Week 12: Attributes of God

Sobel, chapters IX-X
Freddoso, "Introduction" to *On Divine Foreknowledge**

Week 13: Pascal's Wager

Sobel, chapter XIII
Excerpt from Jordan's, *Pascal's Wager**

Weeks 14-15: Divine Hiddenness

Schellenberg and Moser debate from *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion**