

*Syllabus for PHIL 347, Winter 2020, Term 1*  
**PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**

*Instructor: Dr Anders Kraal*

### ***1. Course Description***

The course is concerned with some main philosophical questions pertaining to belief in God, including:

- i. The distinction and relation between natural theology (generic belief in God) and revealed theology (belief in God rooted in specific religions)
- ii. Some main philosophical arguments for generic belief in God (including the cosmological, teleological and ontological arguments)
- iii. Some main arguments against generic belief in God (including the argument from evil, the argument from divine hiddenness, and the argument from Ockham's Razor)
- iv. If time permits, some main arguments for and against the claims of specific religions with regards to God

Participating in this course involves a preparedness to attend to and evaluate arguments against various forms of theistic belief put forth by critics of religion.

### ***2. Lectures***

Tues/Thurs: 11:00-12:20 on Collaborate Ultra (accessible via Canvas)  
Recorded lectures will be available on Canvas or YouTube

### ***3. Instructor***

Dr. Anders Kraal (anders.kraal@ubc.ca)

### ***4. Instructor Office Hours***

There will be no in person office hours due to Covid-19 social distancing rules.

### ***5. Instructor Email Policy***

Instructor will reply to emails weekdays. *Email correspondence is intended chiefly for clarification of specific course content and presupposes attendance at the lectures that dealt with this content.*

### ***6. Teaching Assistant***

TBA

*The TA will be marking exams and papers, will hold so-called Review Sessions for you to view marked work, and will answer questions about marked work via email.*

### **7. Required Texts**

All readings will be made available in the form of PDF files or links posted on Canvas or sent to you via email. You may also occasionally be asked to view online lectures or talks.

### **8. Course Requirements**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Percentage Worth</b>
In-Class Exam (x2)	20% (x2)
Take-Home Essay	20%
Final Exam	40%

For dates, see the Schedule at the end of this document.

In the in-class exams, you will be asked to provide answers to questions dealing with matters brought up in class prior to the date of the exam. If you miss the in-class exam you will automatically be assigned 0 points unless you provide the TA with an UBC Academic Calendar approved rationale for doing a make-up exam (this is to be provided within 1 week of the day of the exam).

In the take-home paper, you will be asked to write a 3-4 page text in response to one or more questions about material covered in class. The prompt for this paper will be posted on Canvas 1 week before the due date, and is to be submitted on Canvas. A missed assignment will automatically receive 0 points. Late assignments will not be accepted, unless you provide the TA with a UBC Academic Calendar approved rationale for an extended deadline (this is to be provided within 1 week of the day of the fixed deadline).

The final exam will be held during UBC's final examinations period. A missed final exam will be assigned a grade point of 0 unless an explanation is provided that is acceptable by the standards of the UBC Academic Calendar (in which case there will be opportunity for a make-up exam).

### **9. Missed Lecture Policy**

Lectures will be recorded and uploaded onto Canvas or YouTube. Links will be available on Canvas. You need not attend lectures live, but can watch the recordings afterwards.

### **10. Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course the student will be expected to be familiar with:

- i. The main content of generic theistic belief
- ii. Some main arguments that have been put forth in support of generic theistic belief
- iii. Some main arguments that have been put forth against generic theistic belief
- iv. If there is time to cover this in the course, some main arguments that have been put forth in support of specific religious claims about God, and objections to these claims

### **11. Marking Parameters**

Your mark in this course will be a function of three main factors: 1) your performance on the examinable momenta *relative to your peers*, 2) your comprehension of the course material, 3) demonstration of skill in assessing and evaluating philosophical ideas.

## 12. Marking Scale

<b>A+</b> 90-100%	<b>B+</b> 76-79%	<b>C+</b> 64-67%	<b>D</b> 50-54%
<b>A</b> 85-89%	<b>B</b> 72-75%	<b>C</b> 60-63%	<b>F</b> 0-49%
<b>A-</b> 80-84%	<b>B-</b> 68-71%	<b>C-</b> 55-59%	

The degree of difficulty on the examinable momenta will be set so as to *aim* at a class average outcome that by and large conforms to the department average for this course down the years, which is in the range 68%-75%, i.e., in the B/B- range. Upwards scaling may be used to this effect.

## 13. Policy on Review of Marked Work

Marks on exams and papers will be posted on canvas. Marked exams and papers will be retained by the Department. Feedback on expected outcomes of exams and papers will be provided (typically by the Instructor) in so-called Feedback Sessions. Any concerns about the marking of a paper or exam should be submitted to the marker (typically the TA) *via email*, and will be responded to (typically by the TA) *via email*.

## 14. Plagiarism (from the UBC Academic Calendar)

Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments. See also <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>

## 15. UBC Values and Policies (from the UBC Academic Calendar)

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (<https://senate.ubc.ca/policiesresources-support-student-success>)

## 16. The Nature of this Syllabus

This syllabus sets out the policies according to which this course will proceed. Enrollment in the course involves an acceptance of these policies.

## 17. Schedule

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
<i>Week 1</i>	September 10 (Th)	Introductory Remarks on the Philosophy of Religion
<b>Arguments for God</b>		
<i>Week 2</i>	September 15 (T)	Cosmological Arguments
	September 17 (Th)	Cosmological Arguments
<i>Week 3</i>	September 22 (T)	Cosmological Arguments
	September 24 (Th)	Design Arguments
<i>Week 4</i>	September 29 (T)	Design Arguments
	October 1 (Th)	Ontological Arguments
<i>Week 5</i>	October 6 (T)	Ontological Arguments
	October 8 (Th)	Ontological Arguments
<i>Week 6</i>	October 13 (T)	<b><i>IN-CLASS EXAM #1</i></b>
<b>On Arguments</b>		
	October 15 (Th)	William Clifford: Evidentialism
<i>Week 7</i>	October 20 (T)	William James: Pragmatism
	October 22 (Th)	Alvin Plantinga: Reformed Epistemology
<b>Arguments Against God</b>		
<i>Week 8</i>	October 27 (T)	Epicurus: Argument from Evil
	October 29 (Th)	Hume: Argument from Evil (Dialogues 11) <b><i>ESSAY PROMPT AVAILABLE (CANVAS)</i></b>
<i>Week 9</i>	November 3 (T)	Hume: Argument from Evil (Dialogues 10)
	November 5 (Th)	Mackie: Argument from Evil <b><i>TAKE-HOME ESSAY DUE MIDNIGHT</i></b>
<i>Week 10</i>	November 10 (T)	Plantinga: Response to Mackie
	November 12 (Th)	Responses to Plantinga's Response to Mackie
<i>Week 11</i>	November 17 (T)	Rowe: Argument from Evil
	November 19 (Th)	<b><i>IN-CLASS EXAM #2</i></b>

<b>Religion-Specific Claims about God</b>		
<i>Week 12</i>	November 24 (T)	Christian Claims about God: For and Against
	November 26 (Th)	Islamic Claims about God: For and Against
<i>Week 13</i>	December 1 (T)	The Idea of an Abrahamic Concept of God: For and Against
	December 3 (Th)	Concluding Remarks