

*Syllabus for PHIL 347, Summer 1, 2021*

**PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**

*Instructor: Dr Anders Kraal*

**1. Course Description**

The course is concerned with some main philosophical questions pertaining to belief in God (theism) and rejection of belief in God (atheism), including:

- i. Different forms of theism (Greco-Roman, Confucian, Indian, Christian, Rabbinical, and Islamic theism respectively), and the distinction between reason-based theism and religion-based theism;
- ii. The main philosophical arguments for reason-based theism (especially the cosmological, teleological and ontological arguments)
- iii. The main arguments against generic belief in God (especially the argument from evil)

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: 10:00-13:00 online (link on Canvas).

**3. Instructor**

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

**4. Instructor Office Hours**

TBD. *Office hours are intended chiefly for clarification of specific course content and presupposes attendance at the lectures that dealt with this content.*

**5. Instructor Email Policy**

Instructor will aim to read and reply to emails weekdays between 15:00-16:00

**6. Teaching Assistant**

TBA. The TA will be marking exams and papers, 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.

### **8. Course Requirements**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Percentage Worth</b>
In-Class Exam (x3)	20% (x3)
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 (this is to be provided *before* the start of the exam), in which case the weight of the missed exam will be transferred to your final exam.

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 it will be your responsibility to arrange a Standing Deferred Exam with UBC (sometimes SD exams take place months after the course has ended).

Please note that all students will be writing the exams at exactly the same time. There will be no exams for alternate time zones. Please make sure, prior to taking the course, that you are able to meet this requirement.

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

If you miss a live lecture you can watch the recording on the course playlist.

### **10. Lecture Recording Policy**

Only the instructor is permitted to record lectures. Students are not allowed to do recordings of other students' participations in class without the expressed consent of these students and the instructor.

### **11. Learning Outcomes**

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

- i. The main content of reason-based theism and some religion-based theisms
- ii. The main arguments in support of reason-based theism
- iii. Some main arguments against reason-based theism

### **12. 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.

### 13. 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 around 75%. Upwards scaling may be used to this effect.

### 14. Policy on Review of Marked Work

Marks on exams will be posted on canvas. 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*.

### 15. 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>

### 16. 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>)

### **17. Schedule**

*The following schedule is tentative, and may change depending on the needs and flow of the course.*

May 11<sup>th</sup>: Greco-Roman, Confucian, and Indian theism

May 13<sup>th</sup>: Christian, Rabbinical, and Islamic theism

May 18<sup>th</sup>: Cosmological arguments for God

May 20<sup>th</sup>: Teleological arguments for God **[Exam1 at 10:00-10:50]**

May 25<sup>th</sup>: Ontological arguments for God

May 27<sup>th</sup>: Arguments from Evil (I): Epicurus, the traditional response, and Hume's counter-response **[Exam2 at 10:00-10:50]**

June 1<sup>st</sup>: Arguments from Evil (II): Hume's argument from evil in Dialogues X

June 3<sup>rd</sup>: Arguments from Evil (III): Mackie and Rowe's arguments

June 8<sup>th</sup>: Arguments from Evil (IV): Free-Will Response

June 10<sup>th</sup>: Arguments from Evil (V): Skeptical Theist Response **[Exam3 at 10:00-10:50]**

June 15<sup>th</sup>: "Origin objections to theism": Hume, Feuerbach, Marx, Freud, and recent responses

*Class content will be examined in the final exam [Date and Location TBD].*

### **18. 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.