

Syllabus for PHIL 347, Winter 2021, 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 (theism) and rejection of belief in God (atheism), including:

- i. Different forms of theism, and the distinction between reason-based theism and religion-based theism;
- ii. The main philosophical arguments for theism (especially the cosmological, teleological and ontological arguments)
- iii. The main arguments against theism (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

Mon/Wed/Fri: 1-2 pm

3. Instructor

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

4. Instructor Office Hours

TBA

5. Instructor Email Policy

Instructor will read and reply to emails weekdays.

6. Teaching Assistants

TBA

The TAs 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 a PDF that will be posted on canvas. You need not buy any books.

8. Course Requirements

Assignment	Percentage Worth
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 or transferring the weight to the final 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

Please note that if you miss a lecture you won't be able to recover the content of the lecture by emailing the Instructor or the TA asking for a summary of the lecture via email or going to them during office hours for this purpose. If you anticipate missing lectures, you are strongly encouraged to find a classmate early in the course who is willing to share notes with you.

10. 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 theism
- iii. Some main arguments against theism

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

A+ 90-100%	B+ 76-79%	C+ 64-67%	D 50-54%
A 85-89%	B 72-75%	C 60-63%	F 0-49%
A- 80-84%	B- 68-71%	C- 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. 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. Schedule

Refer to the end of this document.

17. 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.

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
<i>Week 1</i>	September 8 (W)	Introductory Remarks
Arguments for theism		
	September 10 (F)	Cosmological argument
<i>Week 2</i>	September 13 (M)	Cosmological argument
	September 15 (W)	Cosmological argument
	September 17 (F)	Cosmological argument
<i>Week 3</i>	September 20 (M)	Cosmological argument
	September 22 (W)	Cosmological argument
	September 24 (F)	Design arguments
<i>Week 4</i>	September 27 (M)	Design arguments
	September 29 (W)	Design arguments
	October 1 (F)	Design arguments
<i>Week 5</i>	October 4 (M)	Ontological arguments
	October 6 (W)	Ontological arguments
	October 8 (F)	Ontological arguments
<i>Week 6</i>	October 11 (M)	THANKSGIVING DAY- NO CLASS
	October 13 (W)	Arguments against theism The problem of evil
	October 15 (F)	The problem of evil
<i>Week 7</i>	October 18 (M)	The problem of evil
	October 20 (W)	<i>IN-CLASS EXAM #1</i>
	October 22 (F)	The problem of evil
<i>Week 8</i>	October 25 (M)	The problem of evil
	October 27 (W)	The problem of evil
	October 29 (F)	The problem of evil <i>ESSAY PROMPT AVAILABLE (CANVAS)</i>

<i>Week 9</i>	November 1 (M)	The problem of evil
	November 3 (W)	The problem of evil
	November 5 (F)	The problem of evil <i>TAKE-HOME ESSAY DUE MIDNIGHT</i>
<i>Week 10</i>	November 8 (M)	Origin objections to theism
	November 10 (W)	NO CLASS
	November 12 (F)	NO CLASS
<i>Week 11</i>	November 15 (M)	Origin objections to theism
	November 17 (W)	<i>IN-CLASS EXAM #2</i>
	November 19 (F)	Origin objections to theism
<i>Week 12</i>	November 22 (M)	Origin objections to theism
	November 24 (W)	The status of “arguments”
	November 26 (F)	The status of “arguments”
<i>Week 13</i>	November 29 (M)	The status of “arguments”
	December 1 (W)	TBA
	December 3 (F)	TBA
<i>Week 14</i>	December 6 (M)	Concluding Remarks