



Philosophy of Religion: PHIL5300-ONL**Summer 2022**

Micah E. Chung, Th.M.
Adjunct Professor of Christian Philosophy

Online
micah.chung@gmail.com

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A philosophical examination of fundamental religious beliefs and concepts with primary focus on the claims and warrants of Christian theism. Lectures and readings address classical and contemporary perspectives on the relationship of faith and reason, the nature of religious language, arguments for the existence of God, religious experience, the nature and persistence of evil, miracles, death and immortality, and the relationships of Christianity and other religious traditions. The course constitutes a call to intellectual accountability in relation to issues of ultimate concern to Christian faith.

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the semester, the student will:

1. The student will examine and assess key concepts and issues in philosophy and synthesize their connection with Christian thought.
2. The student will explain and defend intellectually responsible answers to objections to the Christian faith.
3. The student will demonstrate robust critical thinking skills and logical argumentation through research and writing.

COURSE TEXTS

The following textbooks are required:

(PACI)—Dew, James K., Jr., and Paul M. Gould, *Philosophy: A Christian Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019. ISBN: 9780801097997

(PUT)—Allen, Diogenes, and Eric O. Springstead, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*, 2nd Ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007. ISBN:9780664231804

(READER)— Allen, Diogenes, and Eric O. Springstead, Eds. *Primary Readings in Philosophy for Understanding Theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992. ISBN: 9780664252083

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

4. **Quizzes (20% of final grade).** Quizzes are over the lectures and the readings. There are usually 4 quizzes per week. All quizzes are cumulative, so you will need to stay fresh on everything. There are 27 total quizzes and there are no make-ups, even for excused

absences. The lowest 4 quiz grades will be dropped. All quizzes are open-note, but closed book. You may, however, take as many notes from the readings as you like and use those notes in the quizzes, but you may not use the books in the quizzes. Each quiz is only open for 5 minutes so be ready and studied up!

Reading quizzes are for the reading of that week, due by Sunday at 11:55pm of that week.

Lecture quizzes are for previous lecture material, due by Sunday at 11:55pm of that week.

5. **Exams (each exam 20% of final grade, 40% total).** Exams will be given over material from the lectures and assigned reading. Exams consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching, and/or short essay. Like the quizzes, everything is cumulative. Like the quizzes, they are open note, but closed book. Again, feel free to take notes from the readings as you read. You may use whatever notes you take for the exams, but you may not keep the books open.
6. **Attendance and Participation (10% of final grade).** (1) Students must participate in all four threaded discussion posts throughout the semester. To get full credit for threaded discussions, students must make an original response to the original post (provided by the instructor) and at least 2 responses to classmates' original post. There is no word count requirement for discussion posts, but they must be thoughtful and well-constructed. Students will lose points for "this is a good point" or "well said" types of posts. Engage with the content, and provide meaningful feedback.
7. **Position Paper (20% of final grade).** Students will write a 10-12 page position paper dealing with one of the topics covered in the course. The student will write a paper expressing her/his position on that issue. It is imperative that the student (1) clearly states his/her position and (2) clearly makes a case for his/her position in the paper. Higher grades will be given to those papers that incorporate some research and demonstrate clear argumentation. See rubric on Blackboard for more details and for due date.
8. **Book Review (10%).** Students will write a 5-page book review of one of the books listed below. Students should spend no more than 1 page summarizing the book. The remaining 4/5 pages of the review should critically interact with the content of the book. Please see the book listing below, appended to this syllabus, for a list of books available for the book review. Students do **not** need to get approval for any books listed on the book review book list.

GRADING SCALE

- A: 93 – 100
- B: 85 – 92
- C: 77 – 84
- D: 70 – 76
- F: below 70

COURSE SCHEDULE:

All assignments (quizzes, exams, written assignments) are due at 11:55pm of the Sunday of the week in the course schedule. For example, quiz on Lecture 1 will close June 5, 11:55pm CT. Quizzes will NOT be reopened for any reason.

Week	Lecture	Reading	Assignments
1 UNIT 1 May 30– June 5	Lecture 1: Presocratic Philosophy Lecture 2: Classical Philosophy (Plato) Lecture 3: Classical Philosophy (Aristotle) Lecture 4: Postclassical/Early Medieval Philosophy Lecture 5: Late Medieval Philosophy	Reading 1: PUT: Ch. 1-3 (p. 1-64); READER: Plato (p. 1-38), Aristotle (p.39-58) Reading 2: PUT: Ch. 4-6 (p. 65-112); READER: Aquinas (p. 98-110)	Quiz: Lectures 1-3 Quiz: Reading 1 Quiz: Lectures 4-5 Quiz: Reading 2
2 June 6–12	Lecture 6: Renaissance/Reformation Philosophy Lecture 7: Early Modern Philosophy Lecture 8: Later Modern Philosophy Lecture 9: Enlightenment/Postmodern Philosophy	Reading 3: PUT: Ch. 7-9 (p. 113-168); READER: Descartes, Locke, Kant (p. 111-152, 172-209) Reading 4: PUT: Ch. 11-12 (p. 187-230); READER: Heidegger, Gadamer (P. 248-280)	Quiz: Lectures 6-7 Quiz: Reading 3 Quiz: Lectures 8-9 Quiz: Reading 4 Discussion Board #1: Due June 12
3 UNIT 2 June 13–19	Lecture 10: Worldviews Lecture 11: Reason & Critical Thinking Lecture 12: What is Epistemology? Lecture 13: What is Knowledge? Lecture 14: What Makes a Thing True?	Reading 5: PACI, p. 57-71; Reading 6: PACI, p. 11-14, 15-25;	Quiz: Lectures 10-11 Quiz: Reading 5 Quiz: Lectures 12-14 Quiz: Reading 6
4 June 20–26	Lecture 15: What is Revelation and Do We Have It? Lecture 16: Reformed Epistemology Lecture 17: Intellectual Virtues	Reading 7: PACI, p. 57-88;	Quiz: Lectures 15-17 Quiz: Reading 7

		<p>Lecture 18: What is Metaphysics pt. 1</p> <p>Lecture 19: What is Metaphysics pt. 2</p> <p>Lecture 20: Is reality Physical or Nonphysical?</p>	<p>Reading 8: PACI, p. 89-103</p>	<p>Quiz: Lectures 18-20</p> <p>Quiz: Reading 8</p> <p>Book Review Due June 26</p> <p>Discussion Board #2: Due June 26</p>
5	<p>UNIT 3 June 27– July 3</p>	<p>Lecture 21: Universals and Particulars/Accidentals and Essentials</p> <p>Lecture 22: How do Things Change and Persist?</p> <p>Lecture 23: What is Free Will and Do We Have It?</p> <p>Lecture 24: What is Middle Knowledge?</p> <p>Lecture 25: What is Philosophy of Religion?</p>	<p>Reading 9: PACI, p. 104-130; READER: Aristotle (p.59-82)</p> <p>Reading 10: PACI, p. 131-143;</p>	<p>Exam 1 due on Blackboard (July 3)</p> <p>Quiz: Lectures 21-22</p> <p>Quiz: Reading 9</p> <p>Quiz: Lectures 23-25</p> <p>Quiz: Reading 10</p>
6	<p>July 4–10</p>	<p>Lecture 26: Are Humans Bodies or Souls?</p> <p>Lecture 27: Can We Survive Death pt. 1</p> <p>Lecture 28: Can We Survive Death pt. 2</p> <p>Lecture 29: Cosmological/Teleological Arguments</p> <p>Lecture 30: Ontological Arguments</p> <p>Lecture 31: Moral Arguments</p>	<p>Reading 11: PACI, p. 144-162; 206-221; Dew Articles (On BB)</p> <p>Reading 12: PACI, p. 163-177; READER: Anselm/Aquinas (p. 83-97)</p>	<p>Quiz: Lectures 26-28</p> <p>Quiz: Reading 11</p> <p>Quiz: Lectures 29-31</p> <p>Quiz: Reading 12</p> <p>Discussion Board #3: Due July 10</p>
7	<p>UNIT 4 July 11–17</p>	<p>Lecture 32: Miracles pt. 1</p> <p>Lecture 33: Miracles pt. 2</p> <p>Lecture 34: Problem of Evil pt. 1</p>	<p>Reading 13: PACI, p. 190-205; READER: Hume (p.153-171). Reading 14: PACI, p. 178-179;</p>	<p>Quiz: Lectures 32-33</p> <p>Quiz: Reading 13</p> <p>Paper Due July 17</p>

		Lecture 35: Problem of Evil pt. 2 Lecture 36: Problem of Evil pt. 3		Quiz: Lectures 34-36 Quiz: Reading 14
8	July 18–24	Lecture 37: Divine Hiddenness Lecture 38: Metaethics Lecture 39: Normative Ethics	Reading 15: PACI, p. 223-254	Quiz: Lectures 37-39 Quiz: Reading 15 Exam 2 (July 24) Discussion Board #4: Due July 24

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

1. Attendance Policy: NOBTS follows the attendance policy as stated in the NOBTS catalog.
2. Policy for Late Submissions: There are no make up quizzes or exams. Students are given very large windows of time before the close of quizzes and exams. Students may turn papers in up to two weeks late of the due day, with a letter grade and a half per week they are late.
3. Plagiarism Policy: A high standard of personal integrity is expected of all NOBTS students. Copying another person's work, submitting downloaded material without proper references, submitting material without properly citing the source, submitting the same material for credit in more than one course, and committing other such forms of dishonesty are strictly forbidden. *Although anything cited in three sources is considered public domain, we require that all sources be cited.* Any infraction may result in failing the assignment and the course. Any infraction will be reported to the Dean of Graduate Studies for further action.
4. Classroom and Online Decorum: Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of the others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times. Electronic devices should be used only for classroom purposes as indicated by the professor.
5. Special Needs: If you need accommodations for a disability, please set up a meeting with the professor for consideration of any modifications you may need.
6. Emergency Plan: In the event the NOBTS schedule is impacted due to a natural event, go to the seminary's website for pertinent information. Class will continue as scheduled through the Blackboard site. Please note announcements and assignments on the course's Blackboard site.
7. Technical Assistance: For general NOBTS technical help, go to www.NOBTS.edu/itc/

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY (Not for Book Review!)

- Corduani, Winfried. *No Doubt About It: The Case for Christianity*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1997. ISBN 0805416471.
- Reese, William L. *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought*. Expanded ed. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996. ISBN 1573926213.
- Audi, Robert, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Bush, L. Russ, III. *A Handbook for Christian Philosophy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991. ISBN 0310518210.
- Copleston, Frederick. *A History of Philosophy*. Vol.1, *Greece and Rome*. Westminster, MD: Newman, 1959.
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- Gaarder, Jostein. *Sophie's World—A Novel About the History of Philosophy*. Translated by Paulette Møller. New York: Berkley Books, 1991. ISBN 0425152251.
- Honderich, Ted, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Lavine, T. Z. *From Socrates to Sartre: The Philosophic Quest*. New York: Bantam Books, 1984. ISBN 0553251619.
- Roth, John, ed. *World Philosophers and Their Works*. 3 vols. Pasadena: Salem Press, 2000.
- Russell, Bertrand. *A History of Western Philosophy*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972. ISBN 0671201581.
- Sahakian, William S., and Mabel Lewis Sahakian. *Ideas of the Great Philosophers*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1966. ISBN 1566192714.
- Windelband, Wilhelm. *A History of Philosophy*. Vol.1, *Greek, Roman, and Medieval*. New York: Harper & Row, 1958.

Books to Review

- Evans, C Stephen. *Faith Beyond Reason: A Kierkegaardian Account*. Reason and Religion Series. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 1998.
- Feinberg, John S. *The Many Faces of Evil: Theological Systems and the Problems of Evil*. rev. and expanded ed. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2004.
- McCall, Thomas H. *Which Trinity? Whose Monotheism? Philosophical and Systematic Theologians on the Metaphysics of Trinitarian Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010.
- McCann, Hugh J. *Creation and the Sovereignty of God*. Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012.
- Morris, Thomas. *Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991.
- Nagasawa, Yujin. *Maximal God: A New Defence of Perfect Being Theism*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Plantinga, Alvin. *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Ward, Keith. *The Evidence for God: The Case for the Existence of the Spiritual Dimension*. London, England: Daron, Longmann and Todd Ltd., 2014.
- Williams, Clifford. *Existential Reasons for Belief in God: A Defense of Desires and Emotions for Faith*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2011.