

Spring 2021
 Philosophy Capstone
 Philosophy of Religion
 Philosophy 490—01

Professor:

Charles Joshua Horn, Ph.D.

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Individual Office Hours: Tuesday, 10:00am—11:00am, Friday, 9:00am—10:00am; By Appointment

<http://charlesjhorn.webstarts.com/index.html>

Course Information:

Asynchronous and Fully Online, Administered on Canvas

Course Description:

This course will survey some of the most central topics in the philosophy of religion, including the nature and existence of God, the relationship between faith and reason, paradoxes of fate and foreknowledge, religion and morality, and the problem of evil. Readings will primarily focus on western theism and come from both historical and contemporary authors.

Some of the questions to be considered in this course will be:

1. Is it possible to prove the existence of God without appeal to divine revelation?
2. Is faith necessarily opposed to reason?
3. Does God's omniscience and foreknowledge entail that our future actions cannot be free?
4. Can we reconcile the existence of a perfectly benevolent, powerful, and wise God with instances of evil?
5. If God is necessarily perfect, can God choose to do otherwise?
6. Does God's providence limit human freedom?

Text:Rental:

1. [PRSR] *Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings*, Peterson, Hasker, Reichenbach, Basinger
Oxford University Press
ISBN: 978-0-19-930344-1
2. [PRHI] *Philosophy of Religion*, Linda Zagzebski
Blackwell
ISBN: 978-1-4051-1872-9

Purchase:

1. [RWI] *Reason for the Hope Within*, Ed. Michael Murray
Eerdmans
ISBN: 978-0-8028-4437-8
2. [GBGP] *The God of the Bible and the God of the Philosophers*
Marquette University Press
ISBN: 978-0874621891

Expectations:

Students are expected to check into Canvas daily in order to check for class announcements, complete assignments, use the discussion board, etc. Please follow the checklist to best increase the chances for success in the class.

1. All assignments are set on a weekly schedule. Be sure to complete the reading assignment, quizzes, essays, and exams during the week specified on the course schedule.
2. In order to provide maximum flexibility to student schedules, lecture notes have been uploaded to Canvas. Please do not share these with anyone outside of the class. See the “Intellectual Property Notice” in the syllabus.
3. Take advantage of individual office hours. See Canvas “Announcements” tab for full invitation URL and password to join. Please note that a waiting room is enabled so you may have to wait to join in case I am with another student.

Course Goals:

- Demonstrate an ability to read carefully, speak clearly, think critically, or write persuasively about cultures and cultural works/artifacts (including texts, images, performances, and technologies, as well as other expressions of the human condition).
- Identify and analyze how beliefs, values, languages, theories, or laws shape cultures and cultural works/artifacts.
- Engage a variety of ideas and worldviews critically by formulating reflective and informed moral, ethical, or aesthetic evaluations of cultures and cultural works/artifacts.

Academic Integrity:

Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism or helping others to commit these acts will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty will result in severe disciplinary action including, but not limited to, failure of the student assessment item or course, and/or dismissal from the University.

Academic integrity violations include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids, or other devices in any academic exercise. This definition includes unauthorized communication of information during an academic exercise.
- 2) Fabrication and Falsification: Intentional and unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification is a matter of inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
- 3) Multiple Submissions: The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work for credit (including oral reports) more than once without authorization.
- 4) Plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly presenting the work of another as one’s own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The sole exception to the requirement is when the ideas, information, etc., is common knowledge.
- 5) Complicity in Academic Dishonesty: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

Grading Criteria:

Late work will never be accepted unless an extension has been granted by Dr. Horn prior to the due date or a university approved excuse is given. Late work must be complete within one week of returning to the class. Extensions will only be granted in extreme circumstances. Additionally, this course will utilize the Canvas online system to facilitate certain aspects of the class.

Canvas will automatically calculate and update grades as the semester progresses. To calculate your grade in the class, take the score in the “Total” column and divide by 100. Then use the grading scale below. The goal for the class is to try to earn as many points as possible. Any points earned over these 100 points will count as extra credit. Assignments can be completed at any point during the week they are assigned (Sunday—Saturday).

- 1) Ten Quizzes 40 Points Total (4 Points Each)
 - a) There are quizzes associated with most of the readings in the class. Students will have 5 minutes to answer questions on the readings designated on the course schedule (look for Q# on the schedule to see which quiz is associated with each reading). Because there are 13 quizzes on the course schedule, students may earn up to 12 bonus points in extra credit for the semester. This also means that you can skip up to 2 quizzes and still earn the full 40 points for this part of your grade!
- 2) Written Thesis: 30 Points Total (30 Points Each)
 - a) The essay should be between 4,500—5,000 words (roughly 18—20 pages). Additional requirements will be provided on a prompt and rubric closer to the end of the course. The written thesis must be submitted by May 22 at 11:59pm
- 3) Presentation of Thesis 20 Points Total (20 Points Each)
 - a) Students must prepare a 15-minute presentation on their capstone topic. The presentation must be submitted by May 22 at 11:59pm. Students are encouraged to be creative, informative, and persuasive. Feel free to create a PowerPoint lecture, Prezi, Zoom recording, etc. Whichever format you use should incorporate audio of your voice explaining your topic and visual elements providing details of the written thesis.
- 4) Resume 10 Points Total (10 Points Each)
 - a) To facilitate the transition to the beginning of your career, students must submit a complete formal resume. The resume must be submitted the week after Spring Break, April 3 at 11:59pm. It is *highly* recommended that students consult with Academic and Career Services for assistance in writing the document.
- 5) One “Philosophy at UWSP” Quiz 5 Points Total (5 Points Each)
 - a) There will be a short quiz on the advantages of studying philosophy at UWSP!

Final grades will be calculated based upon the following.

“Pass” Range			“Fail” Range	
(70—100 Points)			(<70 Points)	
“A” Range	“B” Range	“C” Range	“D” Range	“F” Range
	B+ (87—89)	C+ (77—79)	D+ (67—69)	F (<60)
A (94—100)	B (84—86)	C (74—76)	D (60—66)	
A- (90—93)	B- (80—83)	C- (70—73)		

Disability Information:

Students with disabilities should register with the ADA coordinator on campus and let me know at the beginning of the semester. I would be happy to accommodate you in any way that I can. Just let me know. More information can be found at:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

Intellectual Property Notice:

Lecture materials and recordings for Philosophy 490 are protected intellectual property at UW-Stevens Point. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or share lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

Course Schedule:**UNIT I: GOD'S EXISTENCE**

Week 1		(January 24—January 30) Syllabus/Course Introduction	
	Q1	Davis Theistic Arguments Zagzebski Classical Arguments for the Existence of God	RHW, 20—46 PRHI, 25—55
Week 2		(January 31—February 6)	
	Q2	Anselm Classical Ontological Argument Gaunilo Critique of Anselm's Argument	PRSR, 133—134 PRSR, 135—137
Week 3		(February 7—February 13)	
	Q3	Aquinas Classical Cosmological Argument Mackie Critique of the Cosmological Argument	PRSR, 148—150 PRSR, 170—176
Week 4		(February 14—February 20)	
	Q4	Collins Scientific Argument for the Existence of God Hume Critique of the Analogical Teleological Argument Pascal The Wager	RHW, 47—75 PRSR, 180—186

UNIT II: DIVINE ATTRIBUTES AND DIVINE ACTION

Week 5	Q5	(February 21—February 27) Hick God's Necessary Existence Maimonides Negative Theology	PRSR, 234—238 PRSR, 239—243
Week 6	Q6	(February 28—March 6) Aquinas God is Omnipotent Mavrodes Some Puzzles Concerning Omnipotence	PRSR, 244—246 PRSR, 247—249
Week 7	Q7	(March 7—March 13) Pike Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action Zagzebski Fate, Freedom, and Foreknowledge	PRSR, 250—255 PRHI, 100—121
Week 8	Q8	(March 14—March 20) Basinger Middle Knowledge and Classical Christian Thought Davison Divine Providence and Human Freedom Adams An Objection to Middle Knowledge	PRSR, 283—289 RHW, 217—237 PRSR, 290—293
Week 9		(March 21—March 27) Spring Break	
Week 10	Q9	(March 28—April 3) Stump Part I Resume Due	GBGP, 11—56
Week 11	Q10	(April 4—April 10) Stump Part II	GBGP, 56—109

UNIT III: THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

Week 12	Q11	(April 11—April 17) Zagzebski The Problem of Evil Howard-Snyder God, Evil, and Suffering	PRHI, 143—167 RHW, 76—115
Week 13	Q12	(April 18—April 24) Hume Evil Makes a Strong Case against God’s Existence Leibniz Best of All Possible Worlds Theodicy Mackie Evil and Omnipotence	PRSR, 317—322 PRSR, 323—328 PRSR, 329—337
Week 14	Q13	(April 25—May 1) Plantinga Free Will Defense Rowe Evidential Argument from Evil	PRSR, 338—356 PRSR, 365—373

UNIT IV: THESIS PREPARATION

Week 15	(May 2—May 8) Presentation Preparation
Week 16	(May 9—May 15) Presentation Preparation
Week 17	(May 16—May 22) Written Thesis Due Presentation of Thesis Due “Philosophy at UWSP” Quiz Course Evaluations