



Instructor

Dr. Nils Ch. Rauhut
EHFA 275
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Meeting Times:

T, TH 11:30 AM – 12:20 AM in EHFA 169

Office Hours:

M, T, W, F 10:00 AM – 11:25 AM or by appointment in EHFA 275.

Course Materials:

Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion. Ed. Michael Peterson and J. Vanarragon. Oxford: Blackwell. 2004.

(The book is available at the University Bookstore).

Course Objective:

Many of us automatically accept or reject the religious beliefs with which we were raised. In order to deepen our understanding of religious convictions, both our own and others', we will engage in a systematic and critical evaluation of religious beliefs, experiences, and practices. In addition to a number of standard topics in the philosophy of religion (proofs of God's existence, God's attributes, the problem of evil, miracles, religious experiences), we will investigate in more depth issues concerning theological and philosophical method, the nature of religious authority, morality and religion, science and religion, and attacks on traditional conceptions of religion. These questions will be examined from a number of different religious perspectives

The main course objectives are:

- to reflect upon our own religious convictions,
- to become familiar with the writing of contemporary philosophers of religion;
- to gain an understanding of, and respect for, other religious convictions and practices;
- to realize that there exist several viable alternatives to your own convictions and beliefs;
- to provide you with the analytic tools for analyzing difficult philosophical problems;
- to provide you with the ability to read and understand difficult texts; and
- to provide you with the ability to write clear, well-argued papers.

GRADING:

The final grade in this class will be determined as follows:

Oral Presentation	05 pts
Reading Quizzes	15 pts
Reflection Papers:	10 pts
Term Paper	20 pts
Mid-Term	25 pts
Final	25 pts

One reading presentation is worth ten points, the final is worth twenty points etc . The final course grade will be calculated as follows:

91-100 points = **A** 81-90 points = **B**
71 –80 points = **C** 61-70 points = **D** Below 61 = **F**

Reflection Papers:

You have to write two short (two to three page) reflection papers. These reflection papers are about central questions in philosophy of religion and they will prepare you to write your final term paper. The reflection papers have to be typed and double spaced, and they have to be handed in on the specified date at the beginning of class. **No late papers will be accepted!**

Term Paper:

Part of the course requirements is to write a somewhat longer (2000-3000 words) academic term paper. I am aware that most students have probably not written a longer paper in philosophy but I will provide special instructions and feedback so that everybody has a chance to write an excellent term paper.

Reading Quizzes

Throughout the semester I will hand out reading quizzes. These quizzes will mostly happen on Tuesdays and they are designed to test whether you have actually done the assigned readings. I am not quite sure how many of these quizzes will be given but the total amount of points of the quizzes will not amount to more than 15 % of your total grade.

Reading Schedule for Philosophy 325: Philosophy of Religion

Tuesday 21	Thursday 23
	Introduction to Class: What is Philosophy of Religion?
Tuesday 28	Thursday 30
Major World Religions (Part One) Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism	Major World Religions: (Part Two) Christianity (Early Christianity, Orthodox Christianity, Catholicism, Protestantism) and Islam
Tuesday 04	Thursday 06
Is Evil Evidence against Belief in God? Read: Rowe and Bergmann & Snyder pp. 3-24	Read: Replies pp.25-29 Writing Assignment #1
Tuesday 11	Thursday 13
Does Divine Hiddenness Justify Atheism? Read: Schellenberg and Moser pp.30-54	Read: Replies pp.54-58
Tuesday 18	Thursday 20
Does Science Discredit Religion? Read: Worall and Ratzsch pp.59-86	Read: Replies pp.87-94 Writing Assignment #2
Tuesday 25	Thursday 27
Is God the best Explanation of the Universe? Read: Reichenbach and Gale pp. 97-129	Read: Replies pp.130-134
Tuesday 02	Thursday 04
Does Religious Experience justify Religious Belief? Read: Alston and Fales pp.135-157	Read: Replies pp.158-163
Tuesday 09	Thursday 11
Is it rational to believe in the Resurrection? Read: Davis and Martin pp.184-188	Read: Replies pp.184-188
Tuesday 16	Thursday 18
Preparation for the Midterm	MIDTERM
Tuesday 23	Thursday 25
Can only one Religion be true? Read: Yandell and Bryne pp. 191-210	Read: Replies pp.211-217 Choose Paper Topics
Tuesday 30	Thursday 01
Does God take risks? Read: Hasker and Helm pp.218-237	Read: Replies pp.238-241
Tuesday 06	Thursday 08
Does God respond to petitionary prayer? Read: Murray and Basinger pp.242- 263	Read: Replies pp.264-267
Tuesday 13	Thursday 15
Is Eternal Damnation Compatible with God? Read: Walls and Talbott pp. 268-286	Read: Replies pp.287-298 Hand in Term Paper
Tuesday 20	Thursday 22
Thanksgiving	Thanksgiving
Tuesday 27	Tuesday 29
Is morality based on God's Commands? Read: Idziak and Boyd pp. 290-309	Read: Replies pp 310-314
Tuesday 04	Tuesday 06
Should Christians be dualists? Read: Zimmerman and Baker 315-337	Preparation for Final The Final is on Thursday December 13