Course Guide: Philosophy of Religion

Instructor: Dr. Patrick Todd
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Assessment:

Midterm essay, 40%
1500 word limit.
Final essay, 60%
2500 word limit.

Lecture: Mondays 2:10 – 4 PM, 7 George Square F.21

Course description:

In this course, we will cover some of the major developments within the philosophy of religion over the last 50 years. The focus of this course is on (1) the concept of God, (2) divine attributes, (3) arguments for the existence of God, together with small sections on (4) God and morality and (5) religious belief, and (6) aspects of the problem of evil.

Schedule: (readings are all required [except ‘background readings’], but are listed roughly in order of importance)

**Week 1. The Concept of God**


**Week 2. Omnipotence**


**Week 3. Omniscience**


Background reading:

Linda Zagzebski (2017), Section 2.2. of SEP, “Foreknowledge and Free Will”, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/free-will-foreknowledge/

Patrick Todd and John Martin Fischer, “Introduction” to Freedom, Fatalism, and Foreknowledge. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2015). Sections 2 and 3 only, i.e. “Theological Fatalism” and “The Problem of Future Contingents”. However, Section 1 will certainly help, and may be of interest to many of you. Preprint available here: https://philpapers.org/rec/TODI-3

**Week 4. Theistic Arguments I: Ontological Arguments**

Anselm, Chapter 2 of Proslogion (This is just one page; it is widely available via Google search.)


Background reading: SEP, Ontological Arguments:
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ontological-arguments/

**Week 5. Cosmological Arguments and the Principle of Sufficient Reason**


Richard Taylor, “God,” in his Metaphysics (Prentice Hall). (on Learn)

Background reading: SEP, Cosmological Arguments. (Skip Section 5.)
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmological-argument/#TypoCosmArgu

**Week 6. God and Morality**


Background reading: SEP, Moral Arguments for the Existence of God.
https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/moral-arguments-god/

**Week 7. Religious Belief**


**Week 8: The Problem of Evil I**


**Week 9: The Problem of Evil II**


**Week 10: Providence and Divine Standing to Blame**


(online at Learn)

**Week 11: Revision**