



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
School of Philosophy, Psychology
and Language Sciences

MSc in Philosophy, Science, and Religion

Philosophy of Religion

PHIL11159



Course Guide 2020-21

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the course! The teaching and support staff here at the University of Edinburgh are thrilled to be working with you this year. Do familiarise yourself with the contents of the course guide, and always feel free to contact the course organiser or teaching assistant if we can be of help.

People

Course Organiser:

Name: Dr. Tripp Fuller

Email: tripp.fuller@ed.ac.uk

Office hours: On Request (or feel free to request a Skype meeting)

Teaching Assistant:

Name: Nicole Graham

Email: ng338@kent.ac.uk

Course Secretary:

Name: Becky Verdon

Email: Rebecca.Verdon@ed.ac.uk

Course Librarian:

Name: Ishbel Leggat

Email: Ishbel.Leggat@ed.ac.uk

Office hours:

Please email **Dr Tripp Fuller** or **Nicole Graham** to make an appointment if you need to discuss material covered in the course or essay topics.



Course aims and objectives

This is a level 11 course for students seeking an advanced introduction to contemporary issues in the philosophy of religion. Students will gain an up-to-date, in-depth and detailed instruction in topics such as: the concept of God, arguments for the existence of God, the nature of and relationship between faith and reason, arguments against the existence of religious epistemology, and the nature of religious language. The aim is to cultivate a deep understanding of some of the most fundamental questions in philosophy.

Intended learning objectives

On completion of this course, the student will:

- Be able to demonstrate a good understanding of key areas in the current science/religion interface and to engage with them philosophically.
- Be able to demonstrate strong analytical skills and philosophical acumen in approaching debates between science and theology.
- Be able to engage critically with key textual sources in the field.
- Be able to engage constructively in cross-disciplinary conversations.
- Have demonstrated an openness to personal growth through a commitment to dialogue across intellectual and cultural boundaries.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Syllabus

Schedule of lectures, seminars, tutorials and assessments

Week	Topic	Lecturer	Activity
Week 1 21 September	The Idea of God	Dr Harriet Harris	Engage discussion board
Week 2 28 September	The Ontological Argument	Dr Jamie Collin	Engage discussion board
Week 3 05 October	Continental Philosophy of Religion	Dr Tripp Fuller	Engage discussion board & video post



Week 4 12 October	The Masters of Suspicion	Dr Tripp Fuller	Engage discussion board & video post
Week 5 19 October	Religious Epistemology	Dr Tripp Fuller	Engage discussion board & video post
Week 6 26 October	Scientific Naturalism(s) & the Philosophy of Religion	Dr Tripp Fuller	Engage discussion board & video post
Week 7 02 November	The Problem of Evil	Dr Harriet Harris	Engage discussion board & video post
Week 8 09 November	God and Morality	Dr Harriet Harris	Engage discussion board & video post
Week 9 16 November	Theism and Ultimate Explanation	Dr Jamie Collin	Engage discussion board & video post
Week 10 23 November	Feminist & Eco-Feminist Philosophies of Religion	Dr Tripp Fuller	Engage discussion board & video post
Week 11 30 November	Religion After God: Theism, Non-Theism, & Pluralisms	Dr Tripp Fuller	Engage discussion board & video post

Topics and reading

Week 1 – The Idea of God

Essential Readings

Harris, H. (2009) 'Prayer', in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Philosophical Theology*. Cambridge University Press.

Further Readings

Davies, B. (2009) *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Philosophical Theology*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 31–45.

Sprigge, T.L.S. (2008) *The God of Metaphysics*. Oxford University Press.

Nagasawa, Y. and Buckareff, A. (2016) *Alternative Concepts of God*. Oxford University Press.



Press.Stump, E. (1981) Eternity. *The Journal of philosophy* 78 (8), 429.

Merold Westphal, "The Importance of Overcoming Metaphysics for the Life of Faith" in
Modern Theology 23:2 April 2007

Week 2 – The Ontological Argument

Essential Readings

Collin, J (2017), 'Do logic and religion mix?' in *Philosophy, Science and Religion for Everyone*.

Further Readings

Bernstein, C. (2014) Giving the Ontological Argument Its Due. *Philosophia*. 42 (3), 665–679. Peter Millican (2004) The One Fatal Flaw in Anselm's Argument. *Mind*. 113 (451), 437–476. Oppy, G. (1996) *Ontological Arguments and Belief in God*. Cambridge University Press.

Yujin Nagasawa (2010) The Ontological Argument and the Devil. *The Philosophical Quarterly* (1950-). 60 (238), 72–91.

Jean-Luc Marion, "Is the Ontological Argument Ontological? The Argument According to Anselm and Its Metaphysical Interpretation According to Kant" *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 30:2 April 1992

Week 3 – Introduction to Continental Philosophy of Religion

Essential Readings

Paul Tillich, "Two Types of Philosophy of Religion" in *Paul Tillich: Main Works Vol. 4 Writings in the Philosophy of Religion*, ed by John Clayton, De Gruyter 1987.

Philip Goodchild, "Continental Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction" in *Rethinking Philosophy of Religion: Approaches From Continental Philosophy*, ed by Goodchild Fordham University Press, 2002.

Further Readings

Robbins, Jeffrey W. 2002. "The Problem of Ontotheology: Complicating the Divide Between Philosophy and Theology." *Heythrop Journal* 43 (2)

Williamson, Clark, "Tillich's Two Types of Philosophy of Religion" in *Journal of Religion* Vol. 52 No. 3 Jul, 1972



Week 4 – The Masters of Suspicion'

Essential Readings

Paul Ricoeur, "The Critique of Religion" in *The Union Quarterly* Vol. XXVIII No. 3
Spring, 1973

Heidegger, M., 2004. *The phenomenology of religious life*, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana
University Press - PART TWO

Further Readings

Mary-Jane Rubenstein,. "Unknow Thyself: Apophaticism, Deconstruction, and
Theology after Ontotheology." *Modern Theology* 19, no. 3 (July 2003): 387–417

Mary-Jane Rubenstein "Dionysius, Derrida, and the Critique of 'Ontotheology.'" *Modern Theology* 24, no. 4 (October 2008): 725–41

Week 5 – Epistemic Disagreement, Diversity, and Relativism

Essential Readings

Paul Ricoeur, "The Language of Faith" in *The Union Quarterly* Vol. XXVIII No. 3
Spring, 1973

Paul Tillich, "The Word of God" and "The Meaning and Justification of Religious
Systems" in Paul Tillich: Main Works Vol. 4 *Writings in the Philosophy of
Religion*, ed by John Clayton, De Gruyter 1987

Further Reading

Paul Tillich, "Biblical Religion in Search of Ultimate Reality" in Paul Tillich: Main Works
Vol. 4 *Writings in the Philosophy of Religion*, ed by John Clayton, De Gruyter
1987

Week 6 – Scientific Naturalisms and Philosophy of Religion

Essential Readings

David Ray Griffin, *Reenchantment without Supernaturalism* [intro, 1, 4]

Clayton, P., 2013. Scientific Critiques of Natural Theology. In *The Oxford Handbook of
Natural Theology*. Oxford University Press, pp. The Oxford Handbook of
Natural Theology, Chapter 33.

Further Reading



Fiona Ellis, *God, Value, and Nature*, Oxford University Press 2014, introduction and chapter 1 p 1-20.

Ingolf Dalferth, "Creation - Style of the World" in *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 1:2 July 1999

Henriksen, J.-O., 2015. A new basis for natural religion? Recent explanations of religion and their challenges to contemporary philosophy of religion. *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie*, 57(4), pp.464–482.

Philip Clayton and Elizabeth Singleton, "Agents Matter and Matter Agents" in Keller, C. & Rubenstein, M.-J., 2018. *Entangled worlds : religion, science, and new materialisms* First., New York: Fordham University Press

Week 7 – The Problem of Evil

Essential Readings

'The Problem of Evil', in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*. Oxford: OUP. University Press.

Further Readings

Stump, E. (2010) *Wandering in Darkness*. Oxford University Press.

David Ray Griffin, *Reenchantment without Supernaturalism* 6

Tooley, M. (2015) The Problem of Evil. In the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

'The problem of evil', in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Religion*. 'The problem of evil', in *The Oxford Handbook of Atheism*.

Mintoff, J. (2013) Recasting Analytic Philosophy on the Problem of Evil. *Sophia* 52 (1), 51–54.

Week 8 – God and Morality

Essential Readings

'Morality and Religion', in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Religion*.

Further Readings

Hare, J. (2014) Religion and Morality. In the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

Evans, C.S. (2014) Moral Arguments for the Existence of God. In the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Harris, H.A. (ed.) (2011) *God, Goodness and Philosophy*. Ashgate.

David Ray Griffin, *Reenchantment without Supernaturalism* 8



Kant, I. (1785) *The moral law: groundwork of the metaphysics of morals*. Routledge.

Mann, W.E. (2015) *God, Modality, and Morality*. Oxford University Press.

Broom, D.M. (2003) *The Evolution of Morality and Religion*. [Online]. Cambridge University Press.

Week 9 – Theism and Ultimate Explanation

Essential Readings

Goldschmidt, T. (2014), 'Introduction', in *The Puzzle of Existence: Why Is There Something Rather Than Nothing?* Taylor and Francis. *Communications in Pure and Applied Mathematics*, 13, 1–14.

Further Readings

Fergusson, D. and Snow, K. (2017), 'What provides a better explanation for the origin of the universe – science or religion?', in *Philosophy, Science and Religion for Everyone*.

Feser, E. (2013) *The New Atheists and the Cosmological Argument*. *Midwest Studies In Philosophy* 37 (1), 154–177.

O'Connor, T. (2013) 'Could there be a complete explanation of everything?', in *The Puzzle of Existence: Why Is There Something Rather Than Nothing?*

Oppy, G. (2013) 'Ultimate naturalistic causal explanations', in *The Puzzle of Existence: Why Is There Something Rather Than Nothing?*

Reichenbach, B. (2016) *Cosmological Argument*. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

Brower, J.E. (2011) 'Simplicity and Aseity', in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology*. OUP.

Week 10 – Feminist and Ecofeminist Philosophies of Religion

Essential Reading

Pamela Sue Anderson, "Re-visioning "Life" in Philosophy of Religion Today: Or: A New Concept for a Global Philosophy of Religious Life" in *Reconfigurations of Philosophy of Religion - a possible future*, SUNYP, 2018.

Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Ecofeminism: First and Third World*. *Ecotheology* 2 (1997), 72-83



Further Reading

- Pamela Sue Anderson, "Ineffable Knowledge and Gender" in *Rethinking Philosophy of Religion: Approaches From Continental Philosophy*, ed by Goodchild Fordham University Press, 2002.
- Grace Jantzen, "'Uneasy Intersections': Postcolonialism, Feminism, and the Study of Religions" in *Postcolonial Philosophy of Religion* ed. by Bilimoria & Irvine. Springer., 2009.
- Grace Jantzen, "Birth and the Power of Horror: Julia Kristeva on Gender, Religion, and Death" in *Rethinking Philosophy of Religion: Approaches From Continental Philosophy*, ed by Goodchild Fordham University Press, 2002.
- Alison Ainley, "French feminist philosophy: de Beauvoir, Kristeva, Irgaray, Le Doeuff, Cixous" in *Routledge History of Philosophy Volume VIII* ed Richard Kearney 1994
- Mary-Jane Rubenstein, "The Matter with Panthesim" in Keller, C. & Rubenstein, M.-J., 2018. *Entangled worlds : religion, science, and new materialisms* First., New York: Fordham University Press

Week 11 – Religion After God: Theism, Non-Theism, and Pluralisms

Essential Readings

- Kearney, Richard. 2009. "Returning to God after God: Levinas, Derrida, Ricoeur." *Research in Phenomenology* 39 (2): 167–83
- Purushottama Bilimoria, "What Is the "Subaltern" of the Philosophy of Religion?" in *Postcolonial Philosophy of Religion* ed. by Bilimoria & Irvine. Springer., 2009.

Further Reading

- Richard King, *Philosophy of Religion as Border Control: Globalization and the Decolonization of the "Love of Wisdom" (philosophia)*, *Postcolonial Philosophy of Religion* ed. by Bilimoria & Irvine. Springer., 2009.
- David Ray Griffin, *Reenchantment without Supernaturalism* 7
- Philip Clayton, HOW RADICALLY CAN GOD BE RECONCEIVED BEFORE CEASING TO BE GOD? THE FOUR FACES OF PANENTHEISM. *Zygon*, 52(4), pp.1044–1059.
- John D. Caputo, "Radical Theologians, Knights of Faith, and the Future of the Philosophy of Religion" in *Philosophy of Religion Today: Or: A New Concept for a Global Philosophy of Religious Life* in *Reconfigurations of Philosophy of Religion - a possible future*, SUNYP, 2018



Resources

Reading list materials are available via the course LEARN site. Please ensure you have completed the library induction tutorial. Should you have any problems accessing any of the materials for the course please contact the course librarian, [Ishbel Leggat](#).

Assessment

Coursework (85 %)

This course will primarily be assessed through the submission of an essay of no more than 3000 words on a selected prompt. Possible prompts will be distributed by in Learn. essay will account for 85% of the student's course mark. The essay is due on **Tuesday, 15 December, 2020 at 12 noon UK time.**

Formative Essay

Students have the opportunity to submit a formative essay of 2000-2500 words by **October 22, 12 noon**, for feedback. This essay will **not count** towards the final grade and **must not** be a draft of the final essay. It can be on a related topic, though.

Participation (15%)

The remaining 15% of the final course mark will be determined by the student's video post on a specific assigned reading and successful participation in the on-line course discussion board. The video post will be on a single selected reading from the assigned week. It should introduce the text, highlight its major themes, and solicit class engagement. The grading rubric and 'how to post' info for the video can be found on Learn. We will discuss in detail during our first class meeting.

The requirements and guidance for the video post and discussion board engagement are as follows:

Video Post

- [What to post?](#)

Each student will submit one video post to the course Video Blog section (found under Course Activities).

Each video post should discuss one of the further readings provided in this course guide. The post should be about 10 – 12 minutes long.

- [When to post?](#)

Depending on the reading / topic you choose to post on, you should post your video blog on the Monday that topic is due to begin.



For example if you choose to create a video post on the reading *Evans, C.S. (2014) Moral Arguments for the Existence of God* (Week 8), then your blog post should be posted at the start of Week 8, on or before Monday 08 November.

- When can I choose my topic?

During the first week of the course we will make a schedule available for students to select when they would like to submit their video post.

PLEASE NOTE, ONLY TWO STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO SUBMIT EACH WEEK, SO SPACES WILL BE ALLOCATED ON A FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED BASIS.

Summary:

1. Choose a reading from the further readings provided in this course guide, that you would like to prepare a video post about.
2. Check which topic / week that reading belongs to.
3. When the scheduler is opened, reserve your place on the Monday that topic / week begins.
4. The Course Organiser will confirm the dates that each student should prepare their video post.

Discussions

Discussing ideas with others is an essential part of philosophy, and in weeks where there is no seminar you will have to contribute at least two max 300-word posts on the discussion board. Your first post must be up by midnight on Wednesday of the relevant week: your second post must be up by midnight on Sunday of the same week. The posts are mandatory but not graded. You will, however, lose marks from your overall grade for each week you miss (you may miss one week without penalty). If you miss participation for a good reason, please inform us as soon as possible.

Live Seminars

There will be four live seminars held throughout the semester. Dates and times will be made available on Learn. While these seminars are optional, they are strongly encouraged as an essential part of the overall learning experience.

How to submit assessments

Instructions for online essay submission will be made available on Learn.

Marking and feedback



Each essay is marked by two members of the academic staff, who will also provide feedback on the content and quality of the essay. Essays are marked within 21 working days of their submission.

External examiners

Professor Michael Reiss