

FALL 2006

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

(PHIL 260)

Room: Comenius 309

Time: Monday and Wednesday, 2:20-3:30 PM

Category: II.C.2 (Humanities; Religion and Philosophy; Contemporary Issues)

Instructor: Shalahudin Kafrawi

Contents:

The course discusses the nature of religion and beliefs concerned with the existence, nature, and knowledge of God, with alternative positions to theism.

Course Objectives:

At the end of the course, students are expected to achieve the following objectives:

1. to explain the significance of the Transcendent in philosophy, religion, and mysticism;
2. to describe the arguments for God's existence and to analyze their strengths and weaknesses;
3. to recognize the domains of religion, philosophy, and mysticism;
4. to understand the function of reason and revelation in the search for the Unknown;
5. to analyze the problem of evil.

Grading Format:

1. Participation (20%);
2. Reflective paper (4-7 pages; 15%);
3. Mid-term exam (15%);
4. Research paper (8-15 pages; 30%); research proposal and first draft of the paper are required prior to final submission;
5. Final exam (20%);
6. A 5% will be added to the total for those who have a complete attendance;

Academic Honesty:

Students are required to honor academic integrity. The course imposes the application of Moravian College's Academic Honesty Policy. The policy is to be found at Moravian College's *Student Handbook: 2004-2005*, pp. 52-8.

Attendance Policy:

Students are encouraged to attend all scheduled meetings for this course. An extra credit of 5% will be awarded to those who have a complete attendance. Students have the liberty to miss four classes without penalty. Those who miss more than four classes will be downgraded by 5% of the total grade for each missed meeting after the four absences, unless they provide the instructor with a justified reason(s) in writing. The 5% credit may be awarded to students who

miss one of the four classes if the students provide the instructor with a justified reason(s) in writing and write a report on the reading(s) for that specific meeting(s).

Paper Submissions:

All papers—including (1) reflective paper, (2) research proposal, (3) draft of research paper, (4) final research paper, and (5) other reports/assignments where applicable—should be electronically submitted through the Blackboard on the indicated dates. If for some reason there is a problem with electronic submission, the printed copy of the paper should be submitted to the instructor's office on the same day. Late submissions will be downgraded for that specific assignment by one point per day.

Students are encouraged to rewrite all papers except final research papers. The final research papers cannot be rewritten. The rewritten papers are due within a week after the papers are electronically posted. Since the grades of the rewritten papers can be better or worse than the originally submitted papers, the best grades will be counted toward the final.

Participations in Discussions and Lectures:

Students are highly encouraged to engage in any form of discussions and lectures on subjects related to the philosophy of religion. Students may consult the instructor on the possible forums. A five point of extra credit may be awarded to those who participate in such programs. When applicable, the students need to report their participation to the instructor.

Contact Information:

Office: Zinzendorf 201
Phone: (610) 861-1628
E-mail: skafrawi@moravian.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:35 AM-12:35 PM;
Wednesday, 10:35 AM-12:35 PM;
or by appointment.

Required Textbooks Available at Moravian Bookstore:

Burrell, David B. *Knowing the Unknown God: Ibn-Sina, Maimonides, Aquinas*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, Press. 1986.

Knitter, Paul F., ed. *The Myth of Religious Superiority*. New York: Orbis Books, 2005.

Runzo, Joseph. *A Short Introduction to Global Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2001.

Required Readings Available at Library Reserves:

Aristotle. *Metaphysics*. In Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle*. Ed. Jonathan Barnes. Vol. 2. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. Pp. 1694-8.

Inati, Shams C. *The Problem of Evil: Ibn Sina's Theodicy*. Binghamton: Global Publications, 2000. Pp. 1-63.

Plato. *Symposium*. In *The Collected Dialogues of Plato: Including the Letters*. Ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989. Pp. 553-74.

Plotinus. *Enneads*. Trans. Stephen MacKenna. New York: Larson Publications, 1992. Pp. 313-4 and 471-2.

Schedule:

No.	Date	Topic and Reading	Due date
1	08/28	Introduction [Syllabus]	
2	08/30	Philosophy and Religion: An Overview 1 [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 1-12]	
	09/04	Labor Day—no class	
3	09/06	Philosophy and Religion: An Overview 2 [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 13-28]	
4	09/11	Encounter with the Divine (1): The Ladder of Love [Reading: Plato, <i>Symposium</i> , 553-74]	
5	09/13	Encounter with the Divine (2): The Unmoved Mover [Reading: Aristotle, <i>Metaphysics</i> , Book 12, 1694-8]	
6	09/18	Encounter with the Divine (3): The Return of the Soul [Reading: Plotinus, <i>Enneads</i> , IV.3.17 and V.5.9, 313-4]	
7	09/20	The Ultimate in Worldviews (1): Plural Perspectives [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 29-43]	
8	09/25	The Ultimate in Worldviews (2): Religious Metaphysics without God [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 44-59]	Reflective Paper
9	09/27	The Ultimate in Worldviews (3): Religious Metaphysics with God [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 60-69]	Research Proposal
10	10/02	Proofs for God's Existence (1): A Priori Arguments [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 70-78]	Mid-Term Exam
11	10/04	Proofs for God's Existence (2): A Posteriori Arguments [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 79-93]	
	10/09	Fall Recess 10/7-10/10—no class	
12	10/11	Proofs for God's Existence (3): A Prudential Arguments [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 192-203]	
13	10/16	Theodicy (1) [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 94-109]	
14	10/18	Theodicy (2) [Reading: Inati, <i>The Problem of Evil: Ibn Sina's Theodicy</i> , 1-63]	
15	10/23	Faith and Reason (1) [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 159-171]	
16	10/25	Faith and Reason (2) [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 172-191]	
17	10/30	Faith and Reason (3) [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 204-215]	
18	11/01	God-World Relation [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 110-142]	Draft of Research Paper
19	11/06	Morality and Religion [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 172-191]	
20	11/08	Knowing God in Abrahamic Tradition (1) [Reading: Burrel, <i>Knowing the Unknowable God</i> , 1-34]	
21	11/13	Knowing God in Abrahamic Tradition (2) [Reading: Burrel, <i>Knowing the Unknowable God</i> , 35-70]	
22	11/15	Knowing God in Abrahamic Tradition (3) [Reading: Burrel, <i>Knowing the Unknowable God</i> , 71-113]	

23	11/20	On Religious Superiority (1) [Knitter, <i>The Myth of Religious Superiority</i> , 1-42]	
	11/22	Thanksgiving Recess—no class	
24	11/27	On Religious Superiority (2) [Knitter, <i>The Myth of Religious Superiority</i> , 45-101]	
25	11/29	On Religious Superiority (3) [Knitter, <i>The Myth of Religious Superiority</i> , 105-150]	Term Paper
26	12/04	On Religious Superiority (4) [Knitter, <i>The Myth of Religious Superiority</i> , 211-236]	
27	12/06	The Convergence of Philosophy and Religion [Reading: Runzo, <i>Global Philosophy of Religion</i> , 216-231]	
28	12/11	Concluding Remarks	
	12/13	Final Exams 12/13-12/19	