

SPRING 2008

WI: SEMINAR ON RELIGION AND COSMOLOGY

(PHIL/REL 370)

Room: Comenius 114

Time: Wednesday, 6:30-9:30 PM

Instructor: Shalahudin Kafrawi

Pre-requisite: major/minor in philosophy/religion or permission from instructor

Contents:

The course explores various issues on the nature of the world from theistic and non-theistic perspectives. Among the issues addressed in this course includes the question of the world's origin (creation, emanation, the world's eternity), the law of nature, freedom and predestination, ethics, religious devotion, and eschatology. While special attention is given to these issues in Islamic intellectual traditions, the course will also address them in a range of religious-philosophical traditions.

Grading Format:

1. Book reviews: 10 points each; totaling 20 points
2. Research paper (50 points). It will be broken down into:
 - a. Proposal (3-4 pages: 5 points);
 - b. Arguments (3-5 pages: 10 points);
 - c. Counter-arguments (2-4 pages: 10 points);
 - d. Analysis (3-5 pages: 10 points);
 - e. Concluding remarks and bibliography (2-4 pages; 5 points);
 - f. Final research paper (12-22 pages: 10 points).
3. Presentation: 10 points
4. Participation: 20 points

Extra Credits

Extra credits may be added to the total grade for having complete attendance (5 points). Another 5-point extra credit may be awarded to those who participate in lectures or other activities related to religion and cosmology and write a response paper of about 5 pages on the subject discussed.

Attendance Policy:

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

who miss classes if the students provide the instructor with a justified reason(s) in writing and write a meaningful discussion of about 5 pages on the reading(s) for those specific meetings.

Participation:

Students' participation is highly valued. Active participation includes any input that enables the achievement of the course objectives. It includes—but not limited to—making comments about the readings, asking questions about the readings or the themes under discussion, answering questions posed by the instructor or the class, and suggesting alternative views on the issues in class discussion. Participation in a lecture(s) related to the course materials, whenever applicable, can be counted toward increasing the participation grade. Complete attendance without any form of participation indicated above will give students no more than 6 participation points.

Paper Submissions:

All assignments will be posted on the Blackboard. All papers—including book reviews, pieces of research paper, other assignments where applicable, and their applicable rewrites—should be electronically submitted through the Blackboard's Assignment page by the indicated dates. If for some reason there is a problem with electronic submission on the Blackboard, the assignment should be sent via e-mail attachment or a 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 the final research paper. The final research paper 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.

Final Grade

Students will accumulate the points—there will be no conversion of points into grades—until the end of the semester. Below is the table of point conversion for the final grade:

Points	Final Grade	4-point conversion
94-100	A	4
90-93	A-	3.7
87-89	B+	3.3
84-86	B	3
80-83	B-	2.7
77-79	C+	2.3
74-76	C	2
70-73	C-	1.7
67-69	D+	1.3
64-66	D	1
60-63	D-	0.7
0-59	F	0

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: 2006-2007*, pp. 26-31.

Contact Information:

Office: Zinzendorf 201
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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 10:30 AM-11:30 AM;
Wednesday, 1:30-3:30 PM;
or by appointment.

Resources:

Kurtz, Paul. Ed. *Science and Religion: Are They Compatible*. Amherst: Prometheus, 2003.*
Murata, Sachico and William Chittcik. *The Vision of Islam*. St. Paul: Paragon House, 1994.
Peters, Ted, Muzaffar Iqbal, and Syed Nomanul Haq. Eds. *God, Life. And the Cosmos: Christian and Islamic Perspectives*. Burlington: Ashgate, 2002.*
Southgate, Christopher. *God, Humanity and the Cosmos*. Second edition. London and New York: T&T Clarke International, 2005. Pp. 242-59.
Stenmark, Mikael. *How to Relate Science and Religion*. Grand Rapids: William B Ferdmans Publishing Company. 2004.*
Video: Stephen Hawking's Universe. *Seeing is Believing: The Big Bang*.
* This book is available at Moravian College Bookstore.

Guest Lectures:

Deborah Appler (Creation in Judeo-Christian and Ancient-Near-Eastern Traditions)
Clarke Chapman (Christian perspective on God-world relation)
William Falla (Modern Cosmology)
Don St. John (Hindu Emanative Scheme)
James West (Baha'i Perspective on Cosmology)

Schedule:

No.	Date	Topic and Reading	Due date
1.	16/01/2008	Overview on the course and the system of nature [Reading: syllabus]	
2.	23/01/2008	Cosmology and God [Reading; Kurtz, <i>Science and Religion</i> , 1-79]	
3.	30/01/2008	Religion and Science in Conflict? [Readings; Kurtz, <i>Science and Religion</i> , 83-187 and Stenmark, <i>How to Relate Science and Religion</i> , 1-15] Lecture 1	Proposal
4.	06/02/2008	Perspectives on Science and Religion 1 [Reading; Stenmark, <i>How to Relate Science and Religion</i> , 16-115]	

5.	13/02/2008	Perspectives on Science and Religion 2 [Reading; Stenmark, <i>How to Relate Science and Religion</i> , 116-70] Lecture 2	Arguments
6.	20/02/2008	Perspectives on Science and Religion 3 [Reading; Stenmark, <i>How to Relate Science and Religion</i> , 171-269]	
7.	27/02/2008	Perspectives on Science and Religion 4 [Reading; Peters, et al. <i>God, Life, and the Cosmos</i> , 1-193 and Southgate, <i>God, Humanity and the Cosmos</i> , 242-59] Lecture 3	Counter-arguments
	05/03/2008	Spring recess	
8.	12/03/2008	Science and Ethics [Reading: Kurtz, <i>Science and Religion</i> , 191-216] Lecture 4	Analysis
9.	19/03/2008	Video Presentation; and Science and Supra-Natural [Reading: Video and Kurtz, <i>Science and Religion</i> , 219-321]	Book review 1
10.	26/03/2008	Cosmological Issues 1 [Reading: Peters, et al. <i>God, Life, and the Cosmos</i> , 195-301] Lecture 5	Concluding remarks
11.	02/04/2008	Presentation 1 Cosmological Issues 2 [Reading: Peters, et al. <i>God, Life, and the Cosmos</i> , 303-89]	
12.	09/04/2008	Presentation 2 Cosmological Issues 3 [Reading: Morewedge, "The Logic of Emanationism and Sufism in the Philosophy of Ibn Sina," 467-76 and 1-18]	Research paper
13.	16/04/2008	Presentation 3 Cosmological Issues 4 [Reading: Chittick and Murata, <i>Vision of Islam</i> , 193-235.	Book review 2
14.	23/04/2008	Presentation 4 Accommodating Science and Religion; Concluding Remarks [Reading: Kurtz, <i>Science and Religion</i> , 325-61]	Reflection