

Ryerson University, Fall 2019  
**PHL110—Section 1/4—Philosophy of Religion**

Class Time: Thurs. 10:00am-12:00pm; Fri. 10:00-11:00am

Class Location: Thurs. VIC 103; Fri. RCC 201

Instructor: I. Chris Dragos

Instructor Email: idragos@ryerson.ca

Office Location: POD375

Office Hours: Mon. 11:15am-12:00pm; Thurs. 2:00-3:00pm

**Course Description:**

Is the existence of evil logically incompatible with theism? Does evil constitute evidence against theism, making it less likely? What is the philosophical significance of religious diversity, or of religious disagreement? In this course, we will explore influential historical and contemporary answers to these and other questions.

**Course Objectives:**

To continue the development of students' critical thinking skills; to investigate some primary issues and debates in the philosophy of religion; to consider the implications of individual issues within the philosophy of religion for further developing a worldview.

**Required Texts:**

- (1) Peterson, Hasker, *et. al.* (2014). *Philosophy of Religion: Selected Readings* (5th Edition). Oxford University Press.
- (2) Additional readings on course page.

**Evaluation:**

(1) Test #1.....	20%.....	Oct. 3, In Class
(2) Test #2.....	20%.....	Oct. 31, In Class
(3) Test #3.....	20%.....	Nov. 28, In Class
(4) Paper (1000 words).....	35%.....	Due Dec. 5 (10:00pm)
(5) Participation.....	5%	

Tests: Each test will cover the material *only since the previous test*. Each test will contain several different sections (e.g. definitions, short answer questions, essay question).

Paper: A *paper writing primer* will be offered during the term. We will discuss guidelines and strategies for writing undergraduate essays.

Participation: Participation is mainly based on two things. (1) Attendance will be taken each class. (2) During the longer period of each week, there will be short peer workshops during which students will break into small groups and answer a question posed by the instructor. Thoughtful questions and contributions during lectures will also be considered.

**Course Page:** Materials for the course will be available on the course page, and all announcements will be delivered through the course page. *It is your responsibility to check the course page on a regular basis and keep up-to-date with the course.* It is also your responsibility to ensure that you are receiving email that sent out through the course page.

**Email Policy:** All emails should be sent *from your university email account*. Emails will generally be answered within 48 hours. They may not be answered, however, if (1) the relevant information is available on the course webpage or syllabus, or (2) if the question is best addressed during class or office hours (e.g. a detailed philosophical question).

**Extensions and Late Assignment submissions:** Late submissions will be penalized 5% per day, unless (a) prior arrangements have been made by email with the instructor for an extension or (b) there is a medical or family emergency (in which case documentation may be required). Plan ahead: you may request extensions by email up until 48 hours before assignments are due; after that, extensions will be granted only for illness or family emergencies.

**Accessibility:** Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Ryerson's accessibility services as soon as possible (<https://www.ryerson.ca/studentlearningsupport/academic-accommodation-support/>). We will work together to ensure you can achieve your learning goals in this course. Enquiries are confidential.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from Ryerson University is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. Ryerson University's Academic Integrity Office (<https://www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity/students/penalties-and-consequences/>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from the Academic Integrity Office.

## **Schedule of Lectures and Readings:**

### **Introduction & Overview**

Thurs. Sept. 5: Introduction & Overview

*Readings:* None.

## **UNIT 1: Arguments for Theism**

### **The Cosmological Argument**

Thurs. Sept. 12: The Classical Cosmological Argument

*Readings:* Aquinas, 148-150.

Mackie, 170-176.

Fri. Sept. 13: The Kalam Cosmological Argument

*Reading:* Craig, 161-169.

Re-read Mackie, 170-176.

### **The Teleological Argument**

Thurs. Sept. 19: The Analogical Teleological Argument & Hume's Critique

*Readings:* Paley, 177-179.

Hume, 180-186.

Fri. Sept. 20: The Anthropic Teleological Argument

*Reading:* Collins, 187-196.

### **The Ontological Argument**

Thurs. Sept. 26: The Classical Ontological Argument & a Classical Critique

*Readings:* Anselm, 133-134.

Gaunilo, 135-137.

Fri. Sept. 27: A Contemporary Modal Ontological Argument  
*Reading*: Plantinga, 138-147.

**Thurs. Oct. 3—TEST #1**

**Fri. Oct. 4: DROP DEADLINE—GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING—50% REFUND**

**UNIT 2: Arguments for Atheism**

**The Logical Problem of Evil**

Thurs. Oct. 10: The Logical Problem of Evil & the Free Will Defence

*Readings*: Mackie, 329-337.

Plantinga, 338-356.

**The Evidential Problem of Evil**

Fri. Oct. 11: The Evidential Argument from Evil

*Reading*: \*Rowe, “Evil is Evidence Against Theistic Belief.”

**Thurs. Oct. 17: NO CLASS— READING WEEK**

**Fri. Oct. 18: NO CLASS—READING WEEK**

Thurs. Oct. 24: The Evidential Argument from Evil—Response to Premise 1

*Reading*: \*Howard-Snyder, Bergmann, “Evil Does Not Make Atheism More Reasonable Than Theism.”

Fri. Oct. 25: The Evidential Argument from Evil—Response to Premise 2

*Reading*: \*Hasker, “The Necessity of Gratuitous Evil.”

**Thurs. Oct. 31—TEST #2**

**Divine Hiddenness**

Thurs. Nov. 7: The Argument from Divine Hiddenness

*Reading*: \*Schellenberg, “Divine Hiddenness Justifies Atheism.”

Fri. Nov. 8: Two Responses to the Argument from Divine Hiddenness

*Reading*: \*Cullison, “Two Solutions to the Problem of Divine Hiddenness.”

**UNIT 3: Special Topics**

**Religious Disagreement (Guest Lecture by Sawyer Bullock)**

Thurs. Nov. 14: Models of Religious Disagreement I

*Reading*: \*<https://www.iep.utm.edu/rel-disa/#H2> (read the Introduction & pts 1,2,7).

Fri. Nov. 15: Models of Religious Disagreement II

**Fri. Nov. 15: DROP DEADLINE—GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING—NO REFUND**

**Moral Objectivism, Moral Skepticism, & Divine Command Theory**

Thurs. Nov. 21: Moral Skepticism

*Readings*: \*Shafer-Landau, chs.5,6,8.

Fri. Nov. 22: Divine Command Theory

*Reading*: \*Plato, *Euthyphro*.

**Thurs. Nov. 28—TEST #3**

**Fri. Nov. 29—Essay Writing Primer**

**Thurs. Dec. 5—PAPER DUE (10:00pm)**