



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Introduction to Philosophy of Religion - 15314

Last update 11-09-2024

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Philosophy

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Aaron Segal

Coordinator Email: aaron.segal1@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-13:30 (coordinate in advance)

Teaching Staff:

Prof. Aaron Segal

Course/Module description:

Is there a reality or aspect of reality that is worthy of our ultimate concern? If so, what is it like, how might we come to know about it, and what does it mean for human existence?

Relatedly, is the whole of the physical universe self-contained and self-explanatory (or in no need of further explanation)? Or is there something "beyond" the physical universe, which is needed to explain why there's a universe and why it has the features that it does? If so, what is that "something" like, and how does it relate to the universe at large, and to human beings in particular?

In the course of trying to answer these big questions, we will touch on a range of more specific topics, including some selection of the following: theism and divine attributes, evil, divine hiddenness, miracles, revelation, providence and freedom, the soul and immortality, God and morality, religious diversity, alternative conceptions of the divine.

Our approach will be philosophical--formulating and scrutinizing various approaches and arguments regarding these topics. But these issues are perennial, and have evoked some of the most significant philosophical discussions throughout the history of philosophy, and so we will be paying at least as much attention to historical philosophical work--across religious and anti-religious traditions--as to contemporary philosophical work.

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- 1) identify many of the major questions and positions in the philosophy of religion;
- 2) read historical philosophical texts with a sympathetic and discerning ear

Attendance requirements(%):

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

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- 1) *What is philosophy of religion?*
 - 2) *Transcendent Reality*
 - 3) *Transcendent Reality and the Cosmos*
 - 4) *Transcendent Reality and Humanity*

Required Reading:

For each topic we cover, an historical reading will be paired with a piece of more recent vintage.

Authors to be covered will include some large subset of the following: Robert Adams, William Alston, Al-Ghazali, Aquinas, Boethius, C.D. Broad, Samuel Clarke, William Clifford, P.T. Geach, Gersonides, John Hick, David Hume, William James, Kierkegaard, John Leslie, Maimonides, George Mavrodes, John Henry Newman, Alvin Plantinga, William Rowe, Eleonore Stump, Teresa of Avila, Peter van Inwagen, Dean Zimmerman.

More specific details to follow.

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Home Exam % 75

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 25 %

Additional information: