

ARIZONA WESTERN COLLEGE
SYLLABUS

REL 233 PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

(same as PHI 233)

Credit Hours: 3 Lec 3

PREREQUISITE: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a critical examination of religious claims and phenomena. Topics include, but are not limited to: the nature and existence of God; the epistemology of religious belief; the possibility of miracles, life after death, and mystical experience; as well as the interrelationship between ethics, values, and religion.

1. COURSE GOALS

- 1.1 Articulate the conventions, methods, and reasoning strategies necessary to conduct a philosophical analysis of religious phenomena and truth-claims, drawing attention to the distinctive features of the philosophical perspective in contrast to other scholarly approaches to religion
- 1.2 Showcase the major issues and themes in the philosophy of religion (God's existence, the coherence of theism, the problem of pluralism etc.), and present the major arguments, perspectives, and objections defended by both classical and contemporary thinkers
- 1.3 Draw attention to well-known instances in which differences in perspective over the major issues has resulted in clashes between individuals and groups in the broader culture.
- 1.4 Fine-tune strategies for reading, analyzing, and evaluating complex ideas and issues contained within the philosophical literature
- 1.5 Provide tools and opportunities for critical reflection, discussion, and development of one's own views on the philosophy of religion

2. OUTCOMES

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 2.1 recognize and explain conventional terminology and vocabulary used within the discipline
- 2.2 interpret relevant primary and secondary source texts as well as extract crucial information (e.g., main thesis, premises, assumptions, etc.) central to the claims being made in those texts
- 2.3 analyze and evaluate an argument using the principles of logic and critical reasoning
- 2.4 uphold in dialogue and debate the intellectual virtues and social conditions required for the project of genuine truth-seeking
- 2.5 describe the nature of philosophy as a discipline and philosophy of religion as a branch of that discipline.
- 2.6 explain a range of classical arguments and counterarguments related to the existence of God (e.g., cosmological, teleological, problem of evil, etc.), as well as the major objections that have been defended by classical and contemporary philosophers of religion.
- 2.7 differentiate between the infinite vs. the personal attributes of God as defended by classical theists, as well as analyze various philosophical difficulties that attend to those attributes
- 2.8 compare and contrast various definitions of faith as well as discuss the epistemology of religious belief over and against other ways of knowing (e.g., scientific, introspective, perceptive, etc.)
- 2.9 assess the rational plausibility of the occurrence of certain commonly alleged phenomena, such as miracles, life after death, mystical experience, etc.
- 2.10 construct and defend a position on the existence of God, the relationship between faith and reason, the problem of evil, or the possibility of miracles, employing the conventions and reasoning strategies characteristic of the discipline

3. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

- 3.1 Class discussions
- 3.2 Lectures
- 3.3 Multimedia
- 3.4 Handouts
- 3.4 Text analysis

4. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 4.1 Note taking
- 4.2 Classroom discussion
- 4.3 Group activities
- 4.4 Written summaries on assigned reading
- 4.5 Classroom presentations

5. EVALUATION

- 5.1 Learning activities
- 5.2 Participation
- 5.3 Written assignments
- 5.4 Quizzes / Exams

6. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Under AWC Policy, students are expected to attend every session of class in which they are enrolled.
- 6.2 If a student is unable to attend the course or must drop the course for any reason, it will be the responsibility of the student to withdraw from the course. Students who are not attending as of the 45th day of the course will be withdrawn by the instructor. If the student does not withdraw from the course and fails to complete the requirements of the course, the student will receive a failing grade.
- 6.3 Americans with Disabilities Act Accommodations: Arizona Western College provides academic accommodations to students with disabilities through AccessABILITY Resource Services (ARS). ARS provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students who have documented disabilities. It is the responsibility of the student to make the ARS Coordinator aware of the need for accommodations in the classroom prior to the beginning of the semester. Students should follow up with their instructors once the semester begins. To make an appointment call the ARS front desk at (928) 344-7674 or ARS Coordinator at (928) 344-7629, in the College Community Center (3C) building, next to Advising.
- 6.4 Academic Integrity: Any student participating in acts of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, copying the work of other students, using unauthorized “crib notes”, plagiarism, stealing tests, or forging an instructor’s signature—will be subject to the procedures and consequences outlined in AWC’s Student Code of Conduct.
- 6.5 Texts and Notebooks: Students are required to obtain the class materials for the course.
- 6.6 Arizona Western College students are expected to attend every class session in which they are enrolled. To comply with Federal Financial Aid regulations (34 CFR 668.21), Arizona Western College (AWC) has established an Attendance Verification process for “No Show” reporting during the first 10 days of each semester. Students who have enrolled but have never attended class may be issued a “No Show” (NS) grade by the professor or instructor and receive a final grade of “NS” on their official academic record. An NS grade may result in a student losing their federal financial aid.
For online classes, *student attendance in an online class is defined as the following* (FSA Handbook, 2012, 5-90):
 - Submitting an academic assignment
 - Taking an exam, an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction
 - Attending a study group that is assigned by the school

- Participating in an online discussion about academic matters
- Initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course