

ARIZONA WESTERN COLLEGE
SYLLABUS

REL 233 PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

(same as PHI 233)

Credit Hours: 3 Lec 3

General Education Course: WI (Critical Inquiry, Writing Intensive)

H (Historical Awareness), C (Cultural Awareness), G (Global Awareness)

PREREQUISITE: ENG 101 or 107

THIS COURSE IS DESIGNATED AS WRITING INTENSIVE: Arizona Western College believes writing provides students a unique opportunity to learn disciplinary content while mastering writing skills. Writing-intensive (WI) courses at Arizona Western College integrate writing assignments in ways that help students learn both the subject matter of the courses and discipline-specific ways of thinking and writing. Writing Intensive courses help develop students' identities as good writers by linking their writing proficiency with their desire to know more about the field of study, to engage in questions in the discipline, and to become a participant in academic discourse.

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
- 2.11 generate appropriate writing discourse according to the AWC Writing Intensive Courses: General Education guidelines.

WI OUTCOMES

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

- 2.10 Demonstrate critical inquiry through the gathering, interpretation, and evaluation of evidence in writing.
- 2.11 Develop flexible strategies for generating ideas, revising, editing, and proofreading, using instructor and peer feedback on written discourse to guide improvement through revision.
- 2.12 Effectively compose discipline-specific writing, which includes overall organization, analysis, grammar, mechanics, punctuation, and style.
- 2.13 Develop strategies for composing both in class and out of class compositions.
- 2.14 Demonstrate through written discourse a sequence of increasing complexity/skill in knowledge of content as well as discipline specific discourse form.

3. AWC GENERAL EDUCATION (GE) OUTCOMES

3.1 DIGITAL LITERACY

- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Create content in a digital environment

3.2 COMMUNICATION

- Write effectively and intelligently for a range of purposes and audiences in the English Language (e.g., informing, persuading, advancing an argument, expressing, creating, etc.)
- Read a wide range of texts across the curriculum, demonstrating comprehension through written and oral summary and analysis
- Utilize proper citations, evaluate critically, and use effectively relevant information for problem-solving and presentation of ideas, issues, and arguments
- Demonstrate skill in using electronic media generally appropriate to contemporary academic and professional workplaces
- Produce scholarly or creative works that effectively employ the communication conventions and means of the major field
- Provide writing that presents a clear, specific thesis and awareness of audience
- Fully develops examples to support thesis in logical, coherent manner demonstrates

original thinking, depth of analysis, and comprehension of material used and that shows high proficiency in standard English grammar, spelling, and punctuation

3.3 CIVIC DISCOURSE

- Describe historical, cultural, and political issues relevant in contemporary local, national, and global communities
- Analyze how such issues affect various local, national, and global regions, communities, and individuals

4. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

- 4.1 Class discussions
- 4.2 Lectures
- 4.3 Multimedia
- 4.4 Handouts
- 4.4 Text analysis

5. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 5.1 Note taking
- 5.2 Classroom discussion
- 5.3 Group activities
- 5.4 Written summaries on assigned reading
- 5.5 Classroom presentations
- 5.6 Writing assignments totaling a minimum of 3000 words that include in-class essays, out of class assignments, and revisions based on instructor feedback

6. EVALUATION

- 6.1 Learning activities
- 6.2 Participation
- 6.3 Written assignments
- 6.4 Quizzes / Exams
- 6.5 At least 33% of the student's grade in the course will be based on written discourse consisting of a minimum of 3000 words or about 12 pages of revised writing

7. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 Under AWC Policy, students are expected to attend every session of class in which they are enrolled.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 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.

- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 Texts and Notebooks: Students are required to obtain the class materials for the course.