



EASTERN
OREGON
UNIVERSITY

**PHILOSOPHY
PROGRAM**



PHIL 320

Philosophy of Religion

Dr. Jeff Johnson

NEW WITHDRAW POLICY

A student may drop from a course for any reason with no record on the student's transcript before the end of the 4th week of the term. Thereafter, a student must withdraw from the course (see withdrawal policy).

Drop fees will be assessed in accordance with the fee policies stated in the Schedule of Classes.

Withdrawal Policy (effective Winter, 2010):

There are two types of withdrawal - withdrawal from a course and withdrawal from the University.

From a course:

A student may withdraw from the 5th week of the term through the 7th week with a grade of "W" indicated on the transcript.

No withdrawals will be issued after the 7th week of the term. Instructors will issue a letter grade (A-F, or I) for all students enrolled after the 7th week. A student making adequate academic progress during the term and needing to withdraw after the 7th week may request an incomplete from the instructor.

Withdrawal forms [for on campus courses] are available in the Registrar's Office.

This quarter in Philosophy of Religion we will examine a number of important philosophical theological controversies. The overarching theme of our course will be an examination of three explanatory "world views":

- Theism
- Religious pluralism
- Secular naturalism

We will use these rival explanatory theories as a way of investigating some of the most interesting and perplexing facts about religion in archeology, anthropology, history, evolutionary biology, comparative religion, as well as philosophical theology. Among the specific topics we will be addressing are:

- Religious diversity
- The ubiquity of religion
- Religious and mystical experiences
- The three "big bangs"
- The problem of evil
- Definitions of religion

Since the issues we will be examining have proved controversial for scholars and lay people, we can hardly expect consensus on any of them within our course. That, I sincerely believe, is a good thing. This course is not about discovering the truth, but providing the background and analytical tools to allow you to better understand the controversies, and to more reflectively formulate your own stands on them

There will be a number of "texts" for this course. We will read a number of on-line articles and chapters from several different academic disciplines. We will also read some of my own professional articles and conference papers.

On-line students will have the *option* of utilizing contemporary cinema as a different sort of text for raising philosophical questions about religion. Students are required to see all of the nine films for the course.

UWR Writing Intensive Outcomes:

1. Students will produce at least 3,000 words (including drafts, in-class writing, informal papers, and polished papers); 1,000 words of this total should be in polished papers which students have revised after receiving feedback and criticism.
2. Students will be introduced to the discourse forms appropriate to the discipline the course represents.
3. Students will write at least one paper integrating information from at least one source, employing the appropriate documentation style for the discipline represented by the course.
4. Students will draft, revise, and edit their formal written work. Students will seek assistance from a Writing Tutor in the Writing Lab when needed and when referred by the instructor.

- A 1800 to 3000 word (7 to 10) analytical paper – 25% of course grade. (outcomes 1 - 13)
- A 2500 to 4500 word (10 to 15) analytical paper – 30% of course grade. (outcomes 1 - 16)
- Final examination – final examination – 10% of course grade (outcomes 17 & 18)
- A 1200 to 2000 word (5 to 7 pages) research paper on the artistic portrayal of religion in art, music, or literature – 15% of course grade. (outcomes 1 - 10)
- **Please note: a grade of C- is required in order for this course to count toward the University Writing Requirement**

ACADEMIC HONESTY

I am including below Eastern's Academic Honesty Code. It is vitally important that you carefully read it, and that you understand that it is my intention to follow this code to the letter. I really can't think of a better way to ruin your experience with this course, than to disregard this code. Obviously, if you have any questions, I can't urge you too strongly to ask me.

ACADEMIC HONESTY CODE

All members of the Eastern Oregon University academic community are responsible for compliance with its Academic Honesty Code. Students are required to report violations to the respective faculty member of a course. Provisions of the Academic Honesty Code are:

Collaboration while taking any quizzes, in-class examinations, or take home examinations without the instructor's written approval is forbidden. The faculty member is responsible for defining limits for other collaborative learning activities for each course.

Plagiarism or representation of the work of others as one's own is forbidden. The faculty member will make clear the format for properly citing sources of information not original by the student.

Explicit approval by all instructors is required if the same work is to be submitted to more than one course, even if is not within the same term.

Violations of the Academic Honesty Code may result in both academic and behavioral penalties including possible suspension or expulsion from the University.

An automatic grade of zero for any work which is a violation of the Academic Honesty Code will be assigned by the instructor. The instructor may also assign a grade of F for the course after discussion with the respective School Dean. Students may appeal the course grade to the respective School Dean, who is the final level of appeal on the matter of course grade penalties for academic dishonesty.

The faculty member is also required to file a disciplinary complaint to the Vice President for Student Affairs about any student believed to have violated the Academic Honesty Code. If deemed appropriate, hearing procedures will be implemented by a University Hearing Officer as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. Possible sanctions considered by the Student Conduct Committee include probation, suspension, and expulsion.

Course Calendar

Lecture Topic

Assigned Reading

Movie

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
WEEK ONE World Views	Class Introduction	Theism Swinburne	Theism	Theism
WEEK TWO World Views	Secular Naturalism Dawkins	Secular Naturalism	Secular Naturalism <i>A Serious Man</i>	"The Mind's Big Bang"
WEEK THREE Religious Pluralism	Religious Pluralism Hick 1 & 2	Religious Pluralism	Religious Pluralism <i>Melancholia</i>	
FIRST ANALYTICAL PAPER DUE THURSDAY WEEK FOUR				
WEEK FOUR Religious Diversity & Inference to the Best Explanation	Religious Diversity	Exclusivism Plantinga	Inference to the Best Explanation <i>Little Buddha</i>	Inference to the Best Explanation Johnson 1
WEEK FIVE Religious Diversity	Exclusivism Plantinga "An Evolutionary Account of Religion" Dennett	Pluralistic Accounts Hick 3	Religious Diversity as Evidence for Religious Pluralism <i>The Invention of Lying</i>	Ubiquity of Religion Wade

<p>WEEK SIX</p> <p>Ubiquity of Religion</p>	<p>Religion as a By-product</p> <p>Atran</p> <p>Bloom</p>	<p>Religion as Adaptive</p> <p>Wilson</p>	<p>Ubiquity of Religion as Evidence for Religious Pluralism</p> <p>Johnson 2</p> <p><i>A Brief History of Time</i></p>	<p>David Sloan Wilson Lecture</p>
<p>WEEK SEVEN</p> <p>Religious Experiences</p>	<p>Mystical Testimony</p> <p>Johnson 3</p>	<p>Hick's Pluralist Account of Mystical Experience</p> <p>Hick 4</p>	<p>Hick's Response to Secular Naturalist Accounts of Mystical Experience</p> <p>Hick 5</p> <p><i>Chocolat</i></p>	<p>The Overall Evidential Case for Religious Pluralism</p>
<p>SECOND ANALYTICAL PAPER DUE THURSDAY WEEK EIGHT</p>				
<p>WEEK EIGHT</p> <p>Modern Cosmology</p>	<p>Cosmological Big Bang</p>	<p>"New" Teleological Argument</p> <p>Johnson 4</p>	<p>"New" Teleological Argument</p> <p><i>The Third Miracle</i></p>	<p>SPRING SYMPOSIUM</p>
<p>WEEK NINE</p> <p>Problem of Evil</p>	<p>MEMORIAL DAY</p>	<p>Evidential Argument from Evil</p> <p>Johnson 5</p>	<p>Hick's Soul Making Theodicy</p> <p>Hick 6</p> <p><i>Whale Rider</i></p>	<p>Hick's Pluralistic Theodicy</p> <p>Hick 7</p>
<p>WEEK TEN</p> <p>Defining Religion</p>	<p>Defining Religion</p> <p>Wade</p> <p>Hick 1</p>	<p>Defining Religion</p>	<p>Johnson and Natural Kinds</p> <p>Johnson 2</p> <p><i>Close Encounters of the Third Kind</i></p>	<p>Johnson and Natural Kinds</p>
<p>THIRD ANALYTICAL PAPER DUE MONDAY FINALS WEEK</p> <p>FINAL EXAMINATION MONDAY FINALS WEEK</p>				