



PHIX246

Philosophy of Religion

S2 OUA 2017

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

OUA Unit Convenor

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By arrangement

Tutor

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Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Religion has been an important feature of human life throughout history and it continues to shape human affairs across the planet today. All religions posit the existence of some divine force, and the major monotheistic religions - Judaism, Christianity and Islam - take this divinity to be a single all-powerful God. But what kind of justification can be given for belief in the existence of God, so conceived? Does science support or undermine belief in God? Or have science and religion got nothing to do with each other? Can religious belief be justified on practical grounds? Might religion provide a basis for morality and spiritual fulfilment that secular or non-religious people lack? Or are there secular sources of meaning available in the modern world that could make religion redundant? Is there a link between religion and violence? Should religion be viewed as an antidote to violent conflict or a cause of it? What place should there be for religion in the political sphere? The unit does not presuppose any religious commitment or particular religious perspective, just a willingness to explore these questions, and others like them, in an open-minded and rigorous way. All enrolment queries should be directed to Open Universities Australia (OUA): see www.open.edu.au

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates/>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Acquire an understanding of basic religious concepts at an intermediate level.

Acquire knowledge of the history of the philosophy of religion at an intermediate level.

Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments about the meaning of religion and religious concepts in written and oral form

Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments

Manage study projects effectively

General Assessment Information

Assessments are to be submitted through Turnitin, and will be marked and returned via Grademark. For information about these tools, see:

http://www.mq.edu.au/iLearn/student_info/assignments.htm

For information about extensions, late penalties and special consideration, see *Policies and Procedures* section below.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
On-line Quizzes	25%	No	Weekly
Major Essay	40%	No	11.59pm, Sunday of Week 13
Participation	20%	No	Weekly
Project management	15%	No	Weekly; +Wk 10, 13

On-line Quizzes

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **25%**

Multiple choice questions to test knowledge of material covered in the unit each week.

The criterion for assessment is understanding of the week's material, as demonstrated by the correct selection of answers in a multiple choice quiz.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Acquire an understanding of basic religious concepts at an intermediate level.
- Acquire knowledge of the history of the philosophy of religion at an intermediate level.

Major Essay

Due: **11.59pm, Sunday of Week 13**

Weighting: **40%**

1 x 2000 word essay with bibliography on a specified topic

The task must be submitted through Turnitin.

This task will be assessed by the following criteria:

Content; Structure; Argument; Expression; Spelling, punctuation and grammar. A detailed rubric for this task will be supplied in through Turnitin.

Late submissions will result in a loss of Project Management marks.

No assignments are accepted more than three weeks after the due date. Resubmission not permitted.

Work submitted in a previous version of the unit may not be resubmitted. If you have done the unit before, you will need to choose a different question.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Acquire an understanding of basic religious concepts at an intermediate level.
- Acquire knowledge of the history of the philosophy of religion at an intermediate level.
- Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments about the meaning of religion and religious concepts in written and oral form
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments

Participation

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **20%**

Contribution to class discussion based on appropriate preparation. Criteria for this task: Engagement in online community; content of posts; regularity of engagement. **Detailed information about participation requirements will be given in the forum in week 1.**

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments about the meaning of religion and religious concepts in written and oral form
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments

Project management

Due: **Weekly; +Wk 10, 13**

Weighting: **15%**

Responsibility taken for unit assignments; familiarity with course requirements as set out in unit guide and ilearn site; on-time completion of quizzes; on-time submission of essay plan by 11.59pm on Sunday of Week 10 and essay by 11.59pm on Sunday of week 13.

Project management will be assessed by the following criteria: Timeliness of submission of all work, adequacy of essay plan. A rubric will be provided in the Assessments and Guides section of iLearn.

The essay plan must be submitted through Turnitin.

No assignments are accepted more than three weeks after the due date. Resubmission not permitted.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Manage study projects effectively

Delivery and Resources

Online units can be accessed at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/>

PC and Internet access are required. Basic computer skills (e.g., internet browsing) and skills in word processing are also a requirement.

Please contact teaching staff for any further, more specific requirements. Consult the OUA website for more detailed information on technology requirements:

<http://www.open.edu.au/public/future-students/getting-started/computer-requirements>

All essential readings will be available electronically through the Macquarie University website, with links from iLearn.

Unit Schedule

Important schedule information: Please note that OUA units offered by Macquarie University now follow Macquarie Sessions rather than OUA Study Periods. This will include a mid-session break of two weeks. You will find the Session dates here:

<https://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates-2017/>

WEEKLY LECTURE SCHEDULE

Week 1	Introduction; What is religion? Philosophy of Religion and Philosophical Theology
	Part 1: Classical Problems in Philosophy of Religion
Week 2	The idea of the perfect being: Descartes.
Week 3	Providence and the problem of evil: Leibniz

Week 4	Religion within the limits of reason: Kant
Week 5	Faith and subjectivity: Kierkegaard
Week 6	Part 2: Understanding and Explaining a secular world Understanding secularism – Nietzsche and his heirs
Week 7	Secularism, religion and morality - Richard Rorty's pragmatism
	Mid-semester break
Week 8	The significance of religious pluralism – Charles Taylor
Week 9	Part 3: Contemporary Social Issues of Religion Science and religion
Week 10	Religious toleration and its limits <i>(Essay plan due)</i>
Week 11	Religion and violence
Week 12	Review, essay writing
Week 13	Review, essay writing <i>(Essay due)</i>

Policies and Procedures

Late Submission - applies unless otherwise stated

elsewhere in the unit guide

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Extension Request

Special Consideration Policy and Procedure
(<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>)

The University recognises that students may experience events or conditions that adversely affect their academic performance. If you experience serious and unavoidable difficulties at exam time or when assessment tasks are due, you can consider applying for Special Consideration.

You need to show that the circumstances:

1. were serious, unexpected and unavoidable
2. were beyond your control
3. caused substantial disruption to your academic work
4. substantially interfered with your otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements
5. lasted at least three consecutive days or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date.

If you feel that your studies have been impacted submit an application as follows:

1. Visit [Ask MQ](#) and use your OneID to log in
2. Fill in your relevant details
3. Attach supporting documents by clicking 'Add a reply', click 'Browse' and navigating to the files you want to attach, then click 'Submit Form' to send your notification and supporting documents
4. Please keep copies of your original documents, as they may be requested in the future as part of the assessment process

Outcome

Once your submission is assessed, an appropriate outcome will be organised.

OUA Specific Policies and Procedures

Withdrawal from a unit after the census date

You can withdraw from your subjects prior to [the census date](#) (last day to withdraw). If you successfully withdraw before the census date, you won't need to apply for Special Circumstances. If you find yourself unable to withdraw from your subjects before the census date - you might be able to [apply for Special Circumstances](#). If you're eligible, we can refund your fees and overturn your fail grade.

If you're studying Single Subjects using FEE-HELP or paying up front, you can [apply online](#).

If you're studying a degree using HECS-HELP, you'll need to [apply directly to Macquarie University](#).

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments about the meaning of religion and religious concepts in written and oral form
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments

Assessment tasks

- Major Essay

- Participation

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments about the meaning of religion and religious concepts in written and oral form
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments
- Manage study projects effectively

Assessment tasks

- Major Essay
- Participation
- Project management

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Acquire an understanding of basic religious concepts at an intermediate level.
- Acquire knowledge of the history of the philosophy of religion at an intermediate level.

Assessment tasks

- On-line Quizzes
- Major Essay

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate

and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments about the meaning of religion and religious concepts in written and oral form
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments

Assessment tasks

- Major Essay
- Participation

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments about the meaning of religion and religious concepts in written and oral form
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments
- Manage study projects effectively

Assessment tasks

- Major Essay
- Participation
- Project management

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Acquire knowledge of the history of the philosophy of religion at an intermediate level.
- Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments about the meaning of religion and religious concepts in written and oral form
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments
- Manage study projects effectively

Assessment tasks

- On-line Quizzes
- Major Essay
- Participation
- Project management

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Acquire knowledge of the history of the philosophy of religion at an intermediate level.
- Articulate clearly and coherently philosophical arguments about the meaning of religion and religious concepts in written and oral form
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments

Assessment tasks

- On-line Quizzes
- Major Essay
- Participation