



PHIL2046

Philosophy of Religion

Session 1, Fully online/virtual 2020

Department of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Nicholas Smith

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

40cp at 1000 level or above

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? Does science support or undermine belief in God? Or have science and religion got nothing to do with each other? 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? 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.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

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

ULO1: explain key concepts and arguments in the philosophy of religion

ULO2: critically evaluate key concepts and arguments in the philosophy of religion

ULO3: apply philosophical concepts and arguments to key contemporary social issues of religion

ULO4: use philosophical concepts and arguments to develop independent thinking about key contemporary social issues of religion

Assessment Tasks

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Assessment details are no longer provided here as a result of changes due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Students should consult [iLearn](#) for revised unit information.

[Find out more about the Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and potential impacts on staff and students](#)

General Assessment Information

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.

Delivery and Resources

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Any references to on-campus delivery below may no longer be relevant due to COVID-19.

Please check here for updated delivery information: https://ask.mq.edu.au/account/pub/display/unit_status

All lectures will be recorded and can be downloaded from the iLearn site. Lectures slides will be uploaded in advance of the lectures.

Weekly readings can be downloaded from the library via the Leganto links. Reading should be done in advance of the lectures and tutorials.

Links for the submission of assignments, including links to the weekly quizzes, will provided on the iLearn site.

Unit Schedule

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

The unit schedule/topics and any references to on-campus delivery below may no longer be relevant due to COVID-19. Please consult [iLearn](#) for latest details, and check here for updated delivery information: https://ask.mq.edu.au/account/pub/display/unit_status

Unit Schedule

Week 1 26/02	Introduction; What is religion? Philosophy of Religion and Philosophical Theology
Week 2 04/03	The idea of the perfect being: Descartes
Week 3 11/03	Providence and the problem of evil: Leibniz
Week 4 18/03	Design and purpose in nature: Hume and Paley
Week 5 25/03	Can the existence of God ever be proved and does it matter? Kant and the limits of reason
Week 6 01/04	Faith and subjectivity: Kierkegaard
Week 7 08/04	'The death of God?' – Nietzsche and his heirs
	Mid-semester break
Week 8 29/04	Secularism, meaning and morality - Richard Rorty's pragmatism
Week 9 09/05	The axial revolution and the significance of religious pluralism – Charles Taylor
Week 10 16/05	Science and religion
Week 11 23/05	Religious toleration
Week 12 30/05	Religion and violence
Week 13	Catch up week

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) 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 or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@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 help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Getting help with your assignment](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

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

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@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.