Phil 370

Contemporary Philosophy of Religion

Fall 2019

W 9:50 - 11:10, F 2:50-4:10, SC206

Prof. Brian Leftow

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106 Somerset, Rm 305

Office hours: W 2:30-3:30 or by app’t.

Course Description: we will survey metaphysical and moral problems arising from beliefs distinctive of Christianity. Readings will include enough theology to set the contents of the doctrines for discussion. On some topics, this will be simply a Creed, but on others, these will include material from major philosophical theologians: Augustine, Anselm and Aquinas. The remainder of the reading- the bulk of the course- will consist of discussion of these doctrines by recent analytic philosophers.

Credit Hours: 3

Texts for purchase:

Oliver Crisp, ed., A Reader in Contemporary Philosophical Theology.

William Craig, The Atonement.

Any readings not in these texts will available online, either in the general library catalogue or (hopefully) a Sakai site, or else will be e-mailed to you by the instructor.

Course Objectives:

At the completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. understand the content of major Christian doctrines,
2. understand and evaluate philosophical criticisms of these doctrines and philosophical responses to these criticisms, and

2. write a paper on a philosophical issue related to Christian theology.

Reading policy

Students should have read the material for each class by the day of that class. To encourage this, if necessary, there will be pop quizzes on the reading, before the day’s lecture: the number to be determined by the instructor’s sense of students’ preparedness.

Tech policy

Laptops, tablets etc. are weapons of mass distraction. Distracted students learn little. I want you to learn much. Therefore: no tech. No electronic devices are allowed for note-taking, save by special permission. Phones are to be turned off and stowed. Each time I see you looking at a phone, 3 points will be deducted from your next exam.

Civility policy

In discussion, be civil.

Attendance policy

I will take attendance each class. You may miss 2 classes unexcused without penalty. Further unexcused absences cost 5 points each. Excused absences will be at my discretion; I will excuse you only if you are absent for a good reason, and it is a good idea to get your reason approved in advance. Things like medical problems, family emergencies, and religious observances are good reasons.

Grade matters

Midterm 25%

Final (comprehensive): 50%

Paper 25%

These percentages may be adjusted in light of the number and length of pop quizzes, if there are any. Exams will be by essay. Papers will be ten pages long, University of Chicago style manual style, and due Dec. 4. You will need my approval for your topic; please consult me for help in picking these and bibliographic steers. Papers must provide analysis and evaluation, not just exposition. Students with disabilities requiring accommodation must follow University procedures as at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. Final exam will be as listed in <http://finalexams.rutgers.edu>. Midterm date may be adjusted in light of religious holidays.

Grading scale:

90s A-grades. For excellent work only.

80s B-grades. For work better than expected.

70s C-grades. For work just meeting expectations for students at this level.

60s D-grades. For barely passing work.

Sept. 4- course introduction; introduction to the concept of sin

**I. What is sin?**

Sept. 6- Marilyn Adams, “Sin as Uncleanness,” in Crisp.

Sept. 11- Basil Mitchell, “How is the Concept of Sin Related to the Concept of Moral Wrongdoing?,” library online

**II. The Doctrine of the Fall**

Sept. 13- Hud Hudson, The Fall and Hypertime (chapters, Sakai); Martin Lembke, “An Evolutionary Adaptation of the Fall” (Sakai)

**III. The Doctrine of Original Sin**

Sept. 18- Jesse Couenhoven, “Augustine’s Doctrine of Original Sin” (Sakai)

Sept. 20- Anselm, On the Virgin Conception and On Original Sin, chs. 1, 2, 7, 10, 23, 27 (Sakai)

Sept. 25- Aquinas selections (Sakai); Michael Rea, “The Metaphysics of Original Sin” (Sakai)

Sept. 27- Wyma, “Innocent Sinfulness,” in Crisp.

**IV. The Doctrine of Hell**

Oct. 2- Marilyn Adams, “Hell and the God of Justice” (library online)

Oct. 4- Theodore Sider, “Hell and Vagueness,” pp 1-5 (Sakai)

**V. The Doctrine of the Atonement**

Oct. 9- Craig 1-38

Oct. 11- Swinburne, “The Christian Scheme of Salvation,” in Crisp

Oct. 16- Stump, “Aquinas on Atonement,”

Oct. 18- midterm

Oct. 23- Craig 39-95

Oct. 25- NO CLASS

**VI. The Doctrine of the Incarnation**

Oct. 30- Forrest in Crisp

Nov. 1- Merricks, “The Word Made Flesh,” Sakai.

Nov. 6- Stump in Crisp

Nov. 8- Cont’d.

Nov. 13- The Nicene Creed; Plantinga, “Social Trinity and Tritheism,” in Crisp.

Nov. 15- Cont’d.

Nov. 20- van Inwagen, “Three Persons in One Being,” in Crisp.

Nov. 22- Brower and Rea, “Material Constitution and the Trinity,” Sakai.

Nov. 27- cont’d.

Nov. 29- cont’d.

Dec. 4- Leftow, “A Latin Trinity,” in Crisp.

Dec. 6- catchup

Dec. 11- review for final exam

Academic Honesty Policy Summary

In addition to skills and knowledge, Rutgers aims to teach students appropriate Ethical and Professional Standards of Conduct. The Academic Honesty Policy exists to inform students and Faculty of their obligations in upholding the highest standards of professional and ethical integrity. All student work is subject to the Academic Honesty

Policy. Professional and Academic practice provides guidance about how to properly cite, reference, and attribute the intellectual property of others. Any attempt to deceive a faculty member or to help another student to do so will be considered a violation of this standard. It is important to keep in mind that if you use material from an on-line source (or any other source), you must acknowledge this and provide a reference to the source. Changing a few words in the material that you have borrowed does not exempt you from this requirement. For additional information on the Rutgers University policies on academic integrity, go to http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/.

Consequences

An instructor may impose a sanction on the student that varies depending upon the instructor’s evaluation of the nature and gravity of the offense. Possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) Require the student to redo the assignment; (2) Require the student to complete another assignment; (3) Assign a grade of zero to the assignment; (4) Assign a final grade of “F” for the course. Any violations of this policy will result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct for possible additional sanctions.