

CUYAMACA COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

PHILOSOPHY 170 – PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION: A CROSS-CULTURAL INTRODUCTION

3 hours lecture, 3 units

Catalog Description

In this introductory course, students will explore cross-cultural perspectives on topics such as the nature and grounds of religious belief, the relation between religion and ethics, the nature and existence of God/ultimate reality, the problem of evil, the validity of religious experience, and religious pluralism versus religious exclusivism. The examination of issues will take into account the diversity of religious thought evident in the world today.

Prerequisite

None

Course Content

- 1) What is Religion?
- 2) Ultimate Reality
 - a. Diverse views of ultimate reality
 - b. Can we prove the existence of some sort of ultimate reality?
- 3) Religious and Mystical Experience
 - a. What is religious experience?
 - b. Does religious experience prove anything?
- 4) Faith and Reason: Are they compatible?
- 5) The Problem of Evil
 - a. Why do suffering and evil occur?
 - b. Does evil challenge the existence of God/ultimate reality?
- 6) Religion and Morality: How are religion and morality related?
- 7) Miracles, Revelation and the Modern World View
 - a. Modern challenges to and critiques of religion
 - b. Science, religion, and the miraculous
- 8) Life after Death
 - a. Are we immortal?
 - b. Concepts of immortality
- 9) The Nature of Religious Language and Symbols
- 10) Religious Pluralism and Religious Exclusivism

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 1) Explain what religion is, as understood from diverse philosophical and cultural standpoints.
- 2) Identify and summarize the typical philosophical questions that are raised in regard to religion.
- 3) Distinguish, interpret, compare and contrast divergent philosophical positions on questions regarding religion.
- 4) Identify, analyze and discuss cross-cultural perspectives relating to the philosophical issues being considered.
- 5) Recognize and discuss the functions and limitations of religious language.
- 6) Apply appropriate philosophical language and reasoning to discussions about religion.

Method of Evaluation

A grading system will be established by the instructor and implemented uniformly. Grades will be based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter determined by multiple measurements for evaluation, one of which must be essay exams, skills demonstration or, where appropriate, the symbol system.

- 1) Homework assignments that demonstrate students' ability to identify, analyze, summarize and explain philosophical issues regarding religion.
- 2) Quizzes that measure students' ability to:
 - a. Analyze and interpret issue-relevant terminology, language and reasoning.
 - b. Identify and distinguish between divergent positions, concepts, nuances and cross-cultural perspectives.
- 3) Objective and essay exams that measure students' ability to identify, explain, compare and contrast the principal issues and cross-cultural considerations in philosophy of religion, using appropriate language and reasoning.
- 4) Research papers, expository essays and/or reports on field research that demonstrate students' ability to use appropriate philosophical language and reasoning to discuss and interpret key questions and issues in philosophy of religion.

Special Materials Required of Student

None

Minimum Instructional Facilities

Smart classroom

Method of Instruction

- 1) Lecture and discussion
- 2) Field experiences when feasible

Out-of-Class Assignments

- 1) Essays and written assignments that identify and explore the various philosophical perspectives explored in the course.
- 2) Written homework assignments (worksheets, journals, etc.) that summarize and/or reflect upon the assigned reading materials for the course.
- 3) Reports on field experiences that bring the student into first-hand contact with the religio-philosophical perspectives studied in the course.

Texts and References

- 1) Required (representative examples):
 - a. Pojman, Louis P. and Michael Rae. *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*. Wadsworth, 2014.
 - b. Yandell, Keith E. *Philosophy of Religion: A Contemporary Introduction Global Approach*. Routledge, 2016.
- 2) Supplemental: None

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- 1) Identify and explain the typical philosophical questions that are raised in regard to religion.
- 2) Identify, analyze and discuss cross-cultural perspectives relating to the philosophical issues being considered.
- 3) Apply appropriate philosophical language and reasoning to discussions about religion.