

CUNY COMMON CORE Course Submission Form

Instructions: All courses submitted for the Common Core must be liberal arts courses. Courses may be submitted for only one area of the Common Core. All courses must be 3 credits/3 contact hours unless the college is seeking a waiver for another type of Math or Science course that meets major requirements. Colleges may submit courses to the Course Review Committee at any time. Courses must also receive local campus governance approval for inclusion in the Common Core.

"Submit" or "Resubmit" must be clicked at the bottom of this form in order to complete the course submission process.

College	LaGCC
Please check one of the following	<input type="radio"/> Initial Submission <input type="radio"/> Revised Submission
Course Prefix and Number (e.g., ANTH 101, if number not assigned enter XXX)	HUP 105
Course Title	Philosophy of Religion
Department(s)	Humanities
Discipline	Philosophy
Credits	3
Contact Hours	3
Pre-requisites (if none, enter N/A)	Basic Skills
Co-requisites (if none, enter N/A)	N/A
Catalogue Description	An examination of humanity's basic perceptions of itself as they are reflected in religion. Both Western theism and Eastern non-theism will be explored and evaluated. Special attention will be given to the phenomenon of religious experience as it occurs in the different traditions.
Special features (e.g., linked courses)	
Sample Syllabus (5 pages max recommended)	Path HUP105 Philosophy of Religion (syllabus).doc 40 KB
Indicate the status of this course being nominated.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> current course <input type="radio"/> revision of current course <input type="radio"/> a new course being proposed
CUNY COMMON CORE Location Please check the area of the Common Core for which the course is being submitted.	<p>Required</p> <p><input type="radio"/> English Composition</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Life and Physical Sciences</p> <p>Flexible</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> World Cultures and Global Issues <input type="radio"/> Individual and Society</p> <p><input type="radio"/> US Experience in its Diversity <input type="radio"/> Scientific World</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Creative Expression</p>

Learning Outcomes

In the left column explain the course assignments and activities that will address the learning outcomes in the right column.

Flexible Common Core (18 credits)

Six three-credit liberal arts and sciences courses, with at least one course from each of the following five areas and no more than two courses in any discipline or interdisciplinary field.

World Cultures and Global Issues

A Flexible Core course must meet the three learning outcomes in the right column.

1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.

The course requires students to read, analyze, and assess information from philosophical texts from the five major world religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Core issues are examined and compared from each religion including issues like the nature of religion; ethics and morality in a religious context; arguments about God's existence; religious experiences; the problem of evil; religion and science; divine foreknowledge and human free will; religion and morality; faith and reason; and life after death.

All the papers, critical writing projects, and class presentations require students to evaluate evidence and arguments critically and analytically. For example, topics for critical writing projects (e.g. an evaluation of the claims of verificationists and falsificationist against religious beliefs) require students to demonstrate their grasp of the assigned reading material, a clear and consistent logical architecture in the arguments they deploy, and a critical evaluation of the evidence they use in corroborating their arguments. For example, one assignment requires students to read various primary text excerpts and assess whether Hinduism is a monotheistic, dualistic, or polytheistic religion.

The various course assignments require students to produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments and adduce evidence to support them. Group reports as well as papers assessing arguments discussed in class or in the readings (e.g. an evaluation of Anselm's or Alvin Plantinga's ontological argument) require students to present arguments, reasons for thinking a particular claim is true or false using evidence, and written from the perspective of someone who would endorse those reasons or conclusions.

A course in this area must meet at least three of the additional learning outcomes in the right column. A student will:

The course enables students to identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of philosophical inquiry in exploring the relationship between religious beliefs and practices on world cultures and global issues. By practicing critical reading skills on primary texts, students are able to apply these skills to any text and field of inquiry. In particular, students will turn in reflection papers that require students to compare and contrast cultures, issues, and other topics in light of each religion.

This class also examines the concept of the Diaspora and the changing nature of religion as immigrants move around the world. Students compare and contrast the practice of a religion in a "home" country with the practice in an "adopted" country. Special attention is given to a paradigm shift among various cultures as globalization makes each country more diverse.

This course requires students to examine and analyze the development of each world religion in relation to society. For example, the development of Buddhism is traced through time as it influenced societies in India, China, Japan, and South East Asia. In this paper, students must reflect on the changes introduced to Buddhism and the changes introduced to each society as Buddhism emerged as a dominant religion. The philosophical exploration of world religions includes an analysis of their developments in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and Asia. Students will read and analyze the similarities and differences of these developments and their impact on various societies including their own.

2. Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.

3. Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

4. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring world cultures or global issues, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communication, cultural studies, economics, ethnics studies, foreign languages (building upon previous language acquisition), geography, history, political science, sociology, and world literature.

5. Analyze culture, globalization, or global cultural diversity, and describe an event or process from more than one point of view.

6. Analyze the historical development of one or more non-U.S. societies.

7. Analyze the significance of one or more major movements that have shaped the world's societies.

Students are required to choose one world religion and write a research paper on the influence of a religion on a society. For instance, a student may choose to analyze the Hare Krishna movement, its acceptance as Hindu denomination inside and outside of India, and the influence this movement has had on various societies. The philosophical investigation of world religions will include an analysis of the significance of the filioque debate and its significance for Eastern Catholics and Roman Catholics within Catholicism, the Protestant Reformation, the Counter Reformation, and the phenomenon of Independent Churches that have shaped societies and identities in the world. Students analyze the philosophical principles (e.g. Platonic-Augustinian vs. Aristotelian-Thomistic) undergirding these movements and assess whether the demands of philosophical inquiry and commitment to certain theological doctrines are compatible or incompatible.

- 8. Analyze and discuss the role that race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, belief, or other forms of social differentiation play in world cultures or societies.
- 9. Speak, read, and write a language other than English, and use that language to respond to cultures other than one's own.

Note: A draft of this form cannot be saved. Clicking "close" will result in exiting this form and losing any information that has been entered. "Submit" or Resubmit" must be clicked in order to complete the course submission process.

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HUP 105: Philosophy of Religion

Class meeting times
La Guardia CC, Spring 2012
Office Hours:

Instructor:
Email:
Office: Phone:

Course Description

This course introduces students to a critical examination of the fundamental questions of religion and the religious experience and the ways in which they have been treated by philosophers and other thinkers. Special attention will be given to the meaning, coherence, and prospects for a rational justification of religious beliefs. Each of these issues will be examined in the context of each of the major world religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Course Objectives

- Students will develop the ability to analyze and evaluate key passages from the primary texts of the major world religions.
- Students will learn to identify and discuss key tenets of each of the world's religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity).
- Students will develop the ability to think about and discuss religious and philosophical issues as they pertain to their lives.
- Students will gain knowledge about death and dying in each of the world's major religions.
- Students will develop the ability to analyze supernatural phenomena from philosophical, religious, and logical perspectives.

Course Requirements

Required Texts

1. *Scriptures of the World's Religions*, 4th ed.; eds. James Fieser and John Powers; McGraw Hill Publishing; 2011.
2. Louis P. Pojman & Michael Rea, eds., *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*, Boston, MA: Wadsworth Publishing, 2011, 6th edition.
3. Course packet—purchase from Neko copy shop in basement of the B-building.

Class schedule and Assignments

Week 1:

- (1) Topic: ~ Introduction to course
HW: *Anthony Flew, Evidence and religious beliefs; W.K. Clifford, The ethics of belief; Norman Kretzmann, Evidence and religious belief; Alvin Plantinga, Religious beliefs as 'properly basic'; Plantinga & Westphal, Reformed epistemology.
* Write an evaluation of the claims of verificationists and falsificationist against religious beliefs.
- (2) Topic: ~ Philosophy and Religious Belief: What is philosophy? What is religious belief? Does religious belief need evidence? Why or why not?
HW: * Read Ayn Rand "The Virtue of Selfishness" Introduction (pgs. 5-9) (in Course pack):
Do you agree or disagree with Rand's argument that we need to return to the exact

and pure sense of the meaning of "selfishness" (a concern for one's own interest)? Explain why you agree or disagree.

* *Scriptures* Text "Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna's Refusal to fight" (p. 44)

* "Good Minus God-The Moral Atheist" by Louis M. Anthony (in Course pack)

Week 2:

(1) Topic: ~ Atheism and morality

~ Selfishness (Rand) v. selflessness (Bhagavad Gita)

HW: * Read Ayn Rand "The Objectivist Ethics" (pgs. 10-31) (in Course pack)

* Read *Scriptures* Text "The Lotus Sutra: Parable of the Burning House" (p. 114)

(2) Topic: ~ Selfishness and Morality

~ Is lying moral?

HW: * Augustine, How believers find God-Talk puzzling; Thomas Aquinas, Metaphor, negation, analogy; A.J. Ayer, God-Talk is evidently nonsense; Richard Swinburne, God-Talk is not evidently nonsense; Anthony Flew, 'Death by a thousand qualifications'

Week 3:

(1) Topic: ~ The Problem of Talking about God: Do all who use the word 'God' mean the same thing by it? Can we assume that there is just one concept of God? Should we think of there being many notions of God?

HW: * Aquinas, The Five Ways; William L. Craig & J.P. Morehead, Kalām Cosmological argument; William Paley, The Watch Analogy; David Hume, Critique of the design argument; Immanuel Kant, The limits of design arguments; Richard Swinburne, God, Regularity and David Hume; Robin Collins, A scientific argument for the existence of God.

(2) Topic: ~ Arguments for God's Existence

HW: * Anselm's argument & Gaunilo's objection; Descartes's argument & objections from Gassendi & Caterus; Immanuel Kant's repudiation of ontological arguments; Nolman Malcolm's ontological argument, Alvin Plantinga, a contemporary defense of ontological arguments

Week 4:

(1) Topic: ~ Arguments for God's Existence: Group Presentations

~ In class reading and writing on "God is Dead" by Friedrich Nietzsche

HW: * Aquinas on reason and faith; William James, The Will to Believe; Hegelian triad and Christianity as the absolute religion; Ludwig Feuerbach on the concept of alienation; Marx's critique of religion as ideology and opium of the people; Nietzsche's Death of God; Immanuel Kant, God as a 'postulate' of sound moral thinking

(2) Topic: ~ Faith and Reason: What, if any, is the relationship between reason and faith?

HW: * Read *Scriptures* Text Introduction to Hinduism (p. 1-11); Problema 1 in Kierkegaard's *Fear And Trembling*.

* Write an evaluation of Kierkegaard or Aquinas on the relationship between reason and faith.

Week 5:

- (1) Topic: ~ Introduction to Hinduism
HW: * Read *Scriptures* text: Vedas: Prayer to Agni, the God of Fire (p. 15)
• Upanisads: Vedanta— Self-Effort and Liberation (p. 27); Māyā (p. 28); That is You (Vedānta Non-Dualism)(p. 29); Treatises on Dharma— Actions and their Results (p. 50); Manu's instructions on Finding the Right Mate (p. 57)
* Read primary text excerpts on Hinduism in the Course Reader and assess whether Hinduism is a monotheistic, dualistic, or polytheistic religion
- (2) Topic: ~ Hinduism and its influence on societies; the Diaspora
HW: * Read *Scriptures* Text Introduction to Buddhism (p. 77-88)
* Compare and contrast the practice of Hinduism in India with the practice in an “adopted” country.

Week 6:

- (1) Topic: ~ Introduction to Buddhism
~ In class reading and discussion: Tarthang Tulku, “The Ground of Being”
~ Watch *Mandala* clips from “Wheel of Time” by Werner Herzog
HW: * Read *Scriptures* text: The Life of the Buddha (p. 88)
• Pali Canon: The First Sermon (p. 91); Nirvana (p. 94); Dependent Arising (p. 95); Questions that Should be Avoided (p. 96); The Questions of King Milinda (p. 104)
• Mahayana Scriptures: Nagarjuna on Emptiness (p. 117); The Stage of Completion (p. 119)
* Reading on *Mandalas* (in Course pack)
- (2) Topic: ~ The spread of Buddhism and its evolution over time within various societies.
HW: * Read “Self-Immolations as a Political Act” by Angus Fraser (1967) (in Course pack)
* Read BBC News “Dalai Lama questions wisdom of self-immolations” (in Course pack)
* Explore the paradigm shift in China as it assimilated Buddhism into Confucianism and Taoism.

Week 7:

- (1) Topic: ~ The Ten Oxherding pictures (Buddhism and society, a modern day vision)
- (2) Topic: ~ Midterm exam
HW: * Read *Scriptures* text Introduction to Judaism (p. 269-280)

Week 8:

- (1) Topic: ~ Judaism: the beginning and its influence on society
HW: * Read *Scriptures* text: Book of Moses— Creation (p. 280); Covenant with Noah (p. 282); Covenant with Abraham (p. 283); Mosaic Covenant (p. 286); Holiness Code (p. 288)
* Post-Exilic Writings: Qumran *Community Rule* (p. 318);
* Medieval Judaism: Thirteen Principles of Faith: Maimonides (p. 327); Orthodox Judaism: Service prayer for the day of Atonement (p. 332)
- (2) Topic: ~ Modern Judaism and the Diaspora
HW: * *Scriptures* Text Introduction to Christianity(p. 339-348)

- * Compare and contrast the practice of Judaism in Israel with the practice in an “adopted” country.
- * Aquinas on God’s Omniscience; Harry G. Frankfurt & George Mavrodes on Omnipotence - logic and puzzles; Hugh J. McCann & Stephen T. Davis on the Eternity of God; Boethius and Descartes on Divine Simplicity and Benevolence

Week 9:

- (1) Topic: ~ Christianity
 ~ In class writing and discussion on Plaskow’s “God as the Dominating Other”
- HW: * Read *Scriptures* text: Sermon on the Mount (p. 353); Apostles’ Creed (p. 390); Nicene Creed (p. 390); Chalcedon Creed (p. 391); Tertullian on Heretics (p. 393); Aquinas on Faith and Reason (p. 340); Augustine’s *Confessions* (p. 396); Teresa of Avila on the Prayer of Union (p. 403)
- * Analyze the significance of the *filioque* debate and its significance for Eastern Catholics and Roman Catholics within Catholicism.
- (2) Topic: ~ Christianity (Divine Attributes): What are the classical attributes of God? What philosophical problems do these attributes generate? How can we solve these problems?
- HW: * Read *Scriptures* Text Introduction to Islam (p. 421-433)
 * Explore the paradigm shift in England as it shifted from Catholicism to Protestantism.

Week 10:

- (1) Topic: ~ Introduction to Islam
 ~ The relationship between society, politics, and Sharia Law
- HW: * Read *Scriptures* text: Opening (p. 435); Evils of Idolatry (p. 435);
- *Qur’an*: Muhammad in Medina: Laws (p. 441); Treatment of Women (p. 445); Five Pillars of Islam (p. 449)
 - Jihad (p. 451) (*Qu’ran*); Jihad (p. 459) (*Hadith*)
 - Final Revelation (p. 455); Sufi Writings: Sufi Path: Al-Ghazali (p. 479)
- (2) Topic: ~Islam, globalisation, and the problem of evil
- HW: * Boethius, omniscience and human freedom; Alvin Plantinga, compatibilism; Nelson Pike, Problems for the notion of divine omniscience; William Rowe, Can God be Free?

Week 11:

- (1) Topic: ~ Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will: Is God’s foreknowledge compatible or incompatible with human freedom?
 ~ Comparison between world religions on Free Will
- HW: * Richard Dawkins, Is Science A religion?; Stephen J. Gould, Nonoverlapping Magisteria; Pope John Paul II, Faith And Science: Lessons from the Galileo Case & message on Evolution
- (2) Topic: ~ Science, Religion, and Evolution: How should we understand the relation between science and religion?

Week 12:

(1) Topic: ~ Discussion on the relation between religion and society

(2) Topic: ~ Presentations of papers

Finals Week: EXAM #2, Final paper due

