

Study Questions
Philosophy of Religion
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The final examination, which constitutes half your grade for the course (or two-thirds, if you chose that option), will be given between 8:00 and 9:15 A.M. on Thursday, 14 December. **Don't be late; show respect for your fellow students, who, by 8:00, will be concentrating and writing as you walk in.** On the day of the exam, I will select three questions from the following list of five and ask you to answer two of them. They are equally weighted, so you should spend half your time (37.5 minutes) on each. You will need a bluebook (or two) and a pen (in preference to a pencil). My aim in asking these questions is to ascertain the depth and breadth of your understanding of the material we covered. Your answers should be *complete* (i.e., do not omit anything important), *accurate* (do not misstate anything), and *precise* (keep rhetoric, redundancy, and figurative language to a minimum). In other words, say it all, say it right, and say it well.

1. The Teleological Argument. What, in general, is a teleological argument for the existence of God? How do teleological arguments differ from other arguments for the existence of God, such as the ontological argument and the cosmological argument? State and discuss William Paley's teleological argument. State and discuss the anthropic teleological argument.

2. The Logical Argument from Evil. State and discuss J. L. Mackie's argument from evil. How does Alvin Plantinga criticize Mackie's argument? Be specific. Be sure to demonstrate your understanding of the differences between explicit contradiction, formal contradiction, and implicit contradiction.

3. The Evidential Argument from Evil. State and discuss William L. Rowe's argument from evil. How is it like, and how does it differ from, J. L. Mackie's argument? How

might a theist criticize Rowe's argument? (Hint: You will need to explain the G. E. Moore shift.)

4. Miracles. State and discuss David Hume's definition (analysis) of "miracle." Does Hume think miracles, so conceived, are logically possible? Why or why not? Does he think it is ever reasonable to believe that a miracle occurred? Why or why not? How does Richard Swinburne reply to Hume?

5. Pluralism. Compare and contrast the following approaches to, or doctrines about, religious diversity: exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each doctrine? Which of these doctrines does John Hick defend, and why? How does he criticize the other two doctrines?

Note 1: Please write [legibly](#), [intelligibly](#), and [intelligently](#). **Note 2:** At some point prior to an examination, the teaching must end and the studying begin. This is that point. The only questions I will answer from now on are about what particular words mean. Remember my advice to study with another student. **Note 3:** Do not interject your beliefs, values, or opinions. They are irrelevant. Just answer my questions thoroughly and accurately. **Note 4:** I assume that you know nothing. The burden is on *you* to *demonstrate* your knowledge and skill. It may help to think of it this way: You begin with zero points and must earn every point, up to 100.