

PHI 3750 The Problem of Evil
Spring 2018
University of Central Florida

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(I will usually respond immediately, but please wait for up to 24 hours for a response)

Required Readings: posted in each week's Module in Webcourses. There is no separate textbook.

Course Description: The problem of evil poses a significant problem to the philosophical and theological traditions of the West. Is it possible to believe the world is rational, redemptive and good even when atrocious actions take place? How do we understand such a world when these acts of evil occur? In our exposition of this issue we will consider the ideas of omnipotence, atheism, determinism, free will, theodicy, pantheism, and radical freedom.

Course Objectives:

1. Gain familiarity with cultural, philosophical, and theological issues associated with the problem of evil.
2. Consider issues related to culture and self-identity in relationship to the above.
3. Develop the skills of close reading and good writing.
4. Learn participation in a dialogue of ideas.
5. Learn theories and approaches used in resolving contemporary issues related to religion and philosophy.

Course Access: The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823- 2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Academic Conduct Policy: Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University.

Grading and Class Guidelines:

1) Discussion Posts (20 points each): You will respond to the discussion topic *assigned in the Course Module section in Webcourses*. Discussion posts should be at least 350 words, interacting with the assigned texts and properly cited using APA format.

The UCF Academic Conduct Policy (stated above) applies to these posts. The work presented must be your own, and ALL sources must be cited appropriately. Please ask me if you have any questions about the definitions or consequences of plagiarism. You must post before reading others' comments and you should think of your initial post like dropping an envelope in the

mailbox: once you post, it cannot be edited or deleted. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in forfeiture of points for the week and/or possible disciplinary action with the Office of Student Conduct. <http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/process/roc>

After you make your initial post (**15 points and due on Thursdays of that week**), you should respond to the posts of at least two of your classmates, raising substantive questions or challenging their assertions (**5 points and due by Sunday of that week of discussion**). Your responses must go beyond “nice post” or “good work.” Ask probing questions of your classmate to help further the discussion. **Initial posts will be deducted by 1 point per day late. NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED AFTER FORUM CLOSES ON SUNDAY EVENINGS.**

2) Essays (50 points each, 100 points total): There will be two essays throughout the semester. I will provide additional information in Modules when they are assigned. On the weeks that we have essays due we will not have separate discussion posts. ***Please turn your work in on time – I will deduct 5 points per day late for up to 3 days. No essays will be accepted more than 3 days past the due date.***

****Extensions will not be granted if you forget a due date, have work, are feeling under the weather, personal conflicts, etc. This is a fast-paced, self-directed course with a window of time to complete your assignments. It is up to the student to plan accordingly. You should leave yourself enough time to account for problems popping up at the last minute.****

The discussion posts and essay assignments can only be made up if there is an EMERGENCY situation (hospitalization, death in immediate family, etc.) that absolutely prevents you from completing the work on time. This situation MUST be documented and you MUST contact me immediately in order to inform me of the situation. Make-up assignments will be given **only at the discretion of the instructor and in very rare circumstances.**

3) Syllabus Quiz (5 points): The Registrar’s office needs to document student activity the first week of class in order for financial aid to be disbursed on time. Please review the syllabus and complete the brief syllabus quiz in order to satisfy this requirement no later than Friday, January 12 at 5:00 pm. If you complete the quiz after this time you will still receive your financial aid but it may be late. Even if you are not receiving financial aid you should complete this quiz in order to receive credit for the 5 points.

Final Grades Breakdown:

Syllabus Quiz	5
Discussion Posts	260
Essays	100
Total points earned / 365 points possible = percentage	