Syllabus

Philosophy of Religion                                                              Phil 24a
Professor Eli Hirsch                                                              Fall 2017


Course requirements:

1. You are expected to attend all classes.
2. (20%) Two mini-quizzes (about 15 minutes each), times to be announced.
3. (35%) Take-home midterm exam of about 4 pages on assigned questions (due date to be announced).
4. (45%) Take-home final exam of about 6 pages on assigned questions (due date to be announced).
5. (Extra credit) I will sometimes give a question at the end of class for you to think about. You can present an answer to the class, and defend it.Depending on how well you do, you will get from 0-2 points added to your final average.

Initial Reading Assignments

I. The Cosmological Argument
   Aquinas, 121-23
   Brown, only pp. 136-37
   Clarke, 138
   Rowe, 142-157

II. The Ontological Argument
   St. Anselm, 98-100
   Malcolm, 100-116

III. The Teleological Argument
   Paley, 158-169
   Hume, 169-180

IV Miracles
   Hume, 213-217
   Swinburne, 217-225

V Mysticism and Religious Experience
   James, 226-242
   Alston, 257-265
VI The Argument from Evil
Hume, 266-273
McCloskey, 273-291

Office hours, Rabb 331: Friday 2:00-4:00, or by appointment
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Learning Goals: To read and explore the main arguments for and against God’s existence and the main critiques of those arguments; to understand what it means to appeal to faith; to consider some mysteries of religion, such as how God’s omniscience relates to our free will.
For more information, see the Philosophy Department’s learning goals at:
http://www.brandeis.edu/departments/philosophy/undergrad/learninggoals.html

Academic Dishonesty: Academic Dishonesty will be reported to the Department of Student Development and Conduct. See
http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/srcs/index.html

Disability: If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis and need to have special accommodations for this class, please see me.

Four Credit Course (with three hours of class time per week)
Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).