

LSC Use Only - Proposal No:	UWUCC Use Only, Proposal No: 13-93
LSC Action Date: AP-11/2/13	UWUCC Action Date: App-2/4/14 Senate Action Date: APP-2/25/14

Curriculum Proposal Cover Sheet - University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

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Proposing Department/Unit Religious Studies	Phone 7-1360

Check all appropriate lines and complete all information. Use a separate cover sheet for each course proposal and/or program proposal.

1. Course Proposals (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> New Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Course Prefix Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Course Deletion
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course Revision	<input type="checkbox"/> Course Number and/or Title Change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Catalog Description Change

Current course prefix, number and full title: RLST 329 Philosophy of Religion

Proposed course prefix, number and full title, if changing: _____

2. Liberal Studies Course Designations, as appropriate

This course is also proposed as a Liberal Studies Course (please mark the appropriate categories below)

<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge Area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Global and Multicultural Awareness	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing Across the Curriculum (W Course)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liberal Studies Elective (please mark the designation(s) that applies – must meet at least one)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Global Citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/> Information Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Oral Communication	
<input type="checkbox"/> Quantitative Reasoning	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Technological Literacy	

3. Other Designations, as appropriate

<input type="checkbox"/> Honors College Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: (e.g. Women's Studies, Pan African)
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4. Program Proposals

<input type="checkbox"/> Catalog Description Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Program Revision	<input type="checkbox"/> Program Title Change	<input type="checkbox"/> New Track
<input type="checkbox"/> New Degree Program	<input type="checkbox"/> New Minor Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Liberal Studies Requirement Changes	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Current program name: _____

Proposed program name, if changing: _____

5. Approvals	Signature	Date
Department Curriculum Committee Chair(s)		
Department Chairperson(s)		10/2/2013
College Curriculum Committee Chair		10/2/13
College Dean		10/30/13
Director of Liberal Studies (as needed)		12/18/13
Director of Honors College (as needed)		
Provost (as needed)		
Additional signature (with title) as appropriate		
UWUCC Co-Chairs		2/4/14

Received

DEC 18 2013

Liberal Studies

Received

OCT 31 2013

Liberal Studies

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE CURRICULAR CHANGE

Revised Syllabus of Record

RLST 329 Philosophy of Religion

I. Catalog Description

RLST 329 Philosophy of Religion	3 class hours 0 lab hours
Prerequisite: none	3 credits (3c-01-3cr)

Critically examines temporally and culturally diverse understandings of the human religious impulse. Considers theories regarding the sacred and the existence of divinity, the meaning of being human, the interactions of culture and religious interpretations of human experience, good and evil, authority, knowledge, and ethical responsibility.

II. Course Outcomes (Expected Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes)

Objective 1

Identify representative philosophical approaches to multiple dimensions of religious experience and reflection.

Expected Learning Outcome 1: Informed Learners

Rationale

This objective meets the Informed Learners Outcome as a Liberal Studies elective and specifically as a Global Citizenship Liberal Studies elective because it challenges students to comprehend selected perspectives representative of global diversity regarding the phenomena of religious experience and belief. Students will learn to understand multiple and conflicting philosophical approaches to meaning of life questions which span history and cultures. Students will learn that these philosophical perspectives themselves arise within temporally and culturally situated conditions which must also inform ongoing critical assessment of their influence and usefulness. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of these theories on quizzes, tests, and the final exam.

This objective is attained in such a way that the class meets the required course content and expected learning outcomes for a Global and Multicultural Awareness class: it presents not only Western philosophical thought but also a variety of global cultural traditions, such as Hindu, Confucian, Buddhist, Muslim, Native American, and African perspectives upon the selected themes of the catalog description. Hence, students will be able to show knowledge and understanding of diverse philosophical approaches to reflecting upon the meaning of religion, the notion of the divine, ways of knowing, and ethical responsibility.

Objective 2

Explain patterns and categories of philosophical approaches which provide ways of organizing, comparing, and contrasting the enormous diversity of philosophies of religion.

Expected Learning Outcome 1: Informed Learners

Rationale

This objective meets the Informed Learners Outcome as a Liberal Studies elective and specifically as a Global Citizenship Liberal Studies elective because it draws connections and makes contrasts between widely divergent ways of understanding religious ways of meaning making. The incredible variety of assigned primary source reading requires students to understand that “philosophy” is not monolithic nor only Western. Students will learn that there have always been and continue to be diverse approaches to the task of intellectual reflection and the search for deeper understanding of the human religious impulse.

This objective is attained in such a way that the class meets the required course content and expected learning outcomes for a Global and Multicultural Awareness class since it introduces students to and challenges students to understand a range of philosophical approaches to reflecting upon religious themes. Not only are the specific philosophical theories diverse, but the approaches to the task of thinking about these issues are also very different. For example, how are religious-truth claims to be assessed? How are religious experiences to be defined and assessed? Students will learn to distinguish not only between diverse conclusions but also between diverse philosophical approaches to investigating such questions. As a result, students will not only understand that there is diverse content, but they will understand complex, underlying reasons for global and culturally diverse philosophies of religion.

Objective 3

Analyze and evaluate selected representative theories and their philosophical contexts.

Expected Learning Outcome 2: Empowered Learners

Rationale

This objective meets the Empowered Learners Outcome as a Liberal Studies elective and specifically as a Global Citizenship Liberal Studies elective because students will demonstrate literacy skills by evaluating and interpreting textual, visual, and electronically-mediated sources on selected philosophical and religious questions, such as does a sacred, ultimate reality exist? What are our resources for investigating that question? Students will think critically and reflectively about the philosophies of religion which have emerged in human history across distinct cultural traditions as people have wrestled with these perennial questions of meaning.

This objective is attained in such a way that the class meets the required course content expected and leaning outcomes for a Global and Multicultural Awareness class: it enables students to employ analytical and other critical thinking skills to gain understanding of the

similarities and differences among world philosophies about religion and about how these philosophies have impacted cultural and religious interactions. For example, the problem of evil is assessed quite differently by theists and nontheists. As students learn to understand various philosophical approaches, they will be enabled to *do* philosophy, that is, to engage in sustained reflective thinking about the theories they are required to read from a variety of cultural contexts and time periods.

Objective 4

Evaluate the implications of selected philosophies of religion for global social justice.

Expected Learning Outcome 3: Responsible Learners

This objective meets the Responsible Learners Outcome as a Liberal Studies elective and specifically as a Global Citizenship Liberal Studies elective because students will evaluate textual, visual, and electronically-mediated sources that present philosophical arguments and positions upon selected religious topics. As students evaluate theories, they will consider the implications and outcomes of these philosophical positions in societies. For example, after the wars of religion following the Protestant Reformation, Hume argued that monotheism leads to fanaticism and religiously motivated intolerance while polytheism leads to toleration. Students will consider their own assessment of diverging philosophical claims in relation to religion and social justice expressed in various cultural contexts.

This objective is attained in such a way that the class meets the required course content expected and leaning outcomes for a Global and Multicultural Awareness class because students will appreciate reasons for widely divergent philosophies and ways in which theoretical reflection is conditioned by and impacts particular cultural and social contexts. For example, some Hindu and Buddhist philosophies argue that the Western belief in personal immortality (an afterlife for the individual soul) is profoundly selfish and egotistical. Students will be challenged to understand and appreciate non-Western worldviews and theories, including critique of Western assumptions. In doing so, students will gain respect for the complexity and diversity of global philosophies regarding religious ways.

III. Detailed Course Outline

I. Introduction to Philosophy, Religion, and Philosophy of Religion (4 quizzes) 12 hours

A. Overview of Western philosophical tradition

Defining philosophy and philosophy of religion in Western tradition

B. Overview of theories of religion

Defining religion

Theories of origins of religions: Functional, cultural, and phenomenological approaches

- C. Overview of the problematic nature of exclusionary traditional definitions and approaches
 - Problems in defining religious experience
 - Varieties of religious experience
 - Meaning of religious language

II. Diverse Views of the Divine (3 quizzes) 12 hours

Historically and globally diverse concepts of, language for and experience of the divine

Animism

Nondualism

Emptiness

Western Theisms

(Midterm Exam)

III. Ways of Knowing: Examining Truth Claims, Faith & Reason (3 quizzes) 10 hours

Cosmological and teleological arguments

Authority, Revelation, Reason, Pluralism

Indigenous, Eastern, and Feminist Ways of Knowing

IV. Suffering, Evil, and Moral Responsibility (3 quizzes) 8 hours

Origins of evil

Relationships of religion and morality

Ethical and ecological implications of theories of reality

Culminating activity (2 hours) will consist of a final exam and will take place during final exam period.

IV. Evaluation Methods

30% Quizzes (13 quizzes, only highest ten scores count, 3% each)

20% Midterm Exam

20% Essay (8 pages)

30% Final Exam

V. Grading Scale

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%

D 60-69%

F 0-59%

VI. Attendance Policy The attendance policy will follow the university guidelines as outlined in the undergraduate handbook

VII. Required Textbooks, Supplemental Readings

Required Textbook

Chad Meister and Paul Copan, Eds. *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, 2nd edition, NY: Routledge, 2013.

Supplemental Readings

Collection of readings compiled by professor including selections from texts below.
(Online audio, visual, and textual sources)

VIII. Special Resources Requirements

There are no special resource requirements

IX. Bibliography

Anderson, Pamela. *A Feminist Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

Butler, Habermas, Taylor, West, et al. *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere*. NY: Columbia UP, 2011.

Clack, Beverly and Brian Clack. *Philosophy of Religion: A Critical Introduction*. Malden, MA: Polity, 2008.

Gudorf, Christine. *Comparative Religious Ethics*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013.

Hallett, Garth. *One God of All? Probing Pluralist Identities*. NY: Continuum, 2010.

Jantzen, Grace M. *Becoming Divine: Towards a Feminist Philosophy of Religion*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.

Lalonde, Marc P. *From Critical Theology to a Critical Theory of Religious Insight: Essays in Contemporary Religious Thought*. NY: Peter Lang, 2007.

Manoussakis, John-Panteleimon. *God after Metaphysics: A Theological Aesthetic*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2007.

Neusner, Jacob Chilton, Bruce D. *Golden Rule: The Ethics of Reciprocity in World Religions*. London: Continuum, 2008.

Nussbaum, Martha. *The New Religious Intolerance: Overcoming the Politics of Fear in an Anxious Age*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2012.

O'Hear, Anthony, ed. *Philosophy and Religion*. NY: Cambridge UP, 2011.

Palmer, Michael. *The Question of God: An Introduction and Sourcebook*. NY: Routledge, 2001.

Pals, Daniel L. *Seven Theories of Religion*. NY: Oxford UP, 1996

- Reynolds, Frank and David Tracy, eds. *Myth and Philosophy*. Albany: State University of New York, 1990.
- Riesebrodt, Martin. *The Promise of Salvation: A Theory of Religion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.
- Smart, Ninian. *The Religious Experience of Mankind*. 3rd edition. NY: Charles Scribner's Sons: 1984.
- Smith, Huston. *Why Religion Matters: The Fate of the Human Spirit in an Age of Disbelief*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2001.
- Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. *The Meaning and End of Religion*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Strenski, Ivan. *Thinking About Religion: An Historical Introduction to Theories of Religion*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006
- Taylor, Charles. *After God*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2007.
- Taves, Ann. *Religious Experience Reconsidered: A Building Block Approach to the Study of Religion and Other Special Things*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2009.
- Tweed, Thomas A. *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 2006.
- Wade, Nicholas. *The Faith Instinct: How Religion Evolved and Why it Endures*. NY: Penguin Press, 2009
- Wainwright, William, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Religion*. Oxford UP, 2007.

Sample Assignment for Liberal Studies Course

Assignment: Comparative Essay

Write an essay of eight pages in length in which you compare and contrast the approach of two theorists on one theme. For example, select two distinct approaches to defining religion, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each and assess specific implications of each definition. A full list of suggested comparisons will be provided. The paper must rely on at least two primary and two secondary sources and must support a clear thesis.

Evaluation of the Sample Assignment:

1. Content (60 points)	points					
a. Analysis	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Accuracy of facts	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Comprehensiveness	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Appropriateness and insightfulness	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
b. Comparison	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Accuracy of facts	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Comprehensiveness	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Appropriateness and insightfulness	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
c. Thesis	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent

2. Style (30 points)	points					
a. Vocabulary	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Word choice	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Variety	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
b. Sentence structure	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Grammar	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
Variety	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
c. Organization	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
d. Effective use of quotes	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
e. Opening paragraph	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
f. Closing paragraph	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent

3. Presentation (10 points)	points					
a. Title	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
b. Spelling (including typos)	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
c. Capitalization	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
d. Punctuation	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
e. References	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
f. Format/print quality	unacceptable	poor	fair	good	very good	excellent
g. Timely submission	late (days)				on time

OVERALL GRADE _____

2. Summary of the Proposed Revisions

Revision of course objectives to meet the learning objectives and required content of Liberal Studies electives, in particular those of the Global Citizenship sub-category, and of the Global and Multicultural Awareness category.

3. Rationales for Proposed Revisions

One simply cannot fully understand the world and its diverse peoples without considering the role of religious values and ideals in shaping cultural, social, and political norms. The Department of Religious Studies is therefore providing a significant offering of courses under the Global Citizenship sub-category of Liberal Studies electives and under the Global and Multicultural Awareness category. RLST 329 fits into this scheme in that it examines theory which undergirds and/or produces diversity. Hence, students who have taken this class will be able to understand the complexity of religious worldviews and thought systems which give rise to and are informed by the plurality of religious practices and traditions in the world.

Most academic philosophy of religion in the West has focused upon theism as developed in Jewish and Christian traditions and, as a result, continues to demonstrate a Eurocentric bias. In addition, traditional approaches have been androcentric. The revisions to this course make a very explicit and clear contrast to this heritage. Students will not only understand perspectives which have dominated the field, but will be introduced to the variety of global ways of thinking about religion and religious ways. Students will learn a wide spectrum of approaches, including those which implicitly and explicitly challenge and critique the hegemony of Western ways of framing questions and defining the discipline itself.

Liberal Studies Course Approval General Information

1. Since it is an upper level course for our department, Philosophy of Religion (RLST 329) will not be offered as a multiple-section course.
2. This course is designed to include the perspectives and contributions of ethnic and racial minorities and of women. This concern is central to the revision of the course in general and specifically to having the course designated as meeting the Global and Multicultural Awareness requirements. As noted in the description of the curricular change, the course is revised to present not only Western philosophical perspectives, which have historically been primarily male, but also views of various global traditions which have not typically been represented in philosophy of religion. In addition, contemporary female philosophers of religion will be presented in this course.
3. The required textbook is an anthology of primary source readings in the philosophy of religion. The anthology was selected for its wide variety of authors. In addition, supplemental readings will also be selected by the instructor, including excerpts from sources listed in the bibliography.
4. This is not an entry level, introductory course intended for a general student audience.

Syllabus B Philosophy of Religion C RLST 329 - 001

Dr. James E. Gibson

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Email: jgibson@uiup.edu

Office Hours To Be announced.

The over all goal of this course is to examine critically certain religious ideas and issues. The range of possible topics in the philosophy of religion is nearly infinite. So we will focus on the most basic group of philosophical problems, those dealing with God, Creation, human nature, and death. The fundamental questions in each category include:

1. Does God exist? What sort of Being is God
2. How and why was the universe created? Does creation have a Divine purpose?
3. Do human's have an immortal soul? Are humans basically good, evil, or neither?
4. Can we expect some kind of continued existence after physical death?

Our method will be entirely critical. We will use the tools of logic, both inductive and deductive to evaluate various arguments for and against religious answers to each of these questions.

Requirements and Evaluation

20% Preparation for and active participation in class. You will be asked to review and criticize the readings for the course as part of a group. You will be graded on how thoroughly and accurately you present the readings to the class.

30% A Group Presentation. You will be assigned to a group and your collective task will be to develop and present the best possible argument for or against a position. You may not necessarily agree with the case you present. Your goal is to offer the most cogent and clear case for that position you can construct.

30% An individual written paper that presents an clear and cogent argument or against one of the readings in the course. This should be primarily a position paper rather than a research paper, and should be no longer than 15 pages. However, it will include a bibliography and citations when appropriate.

20% A final and comprehensive written exam.

Grading Scale.

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

Below 60 = F

Received

MS 21 2004

Texts:

From the bookstore:

Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*

Moody, *Life After Life*

Perry, *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*

Others:

We will read and review a series of articles and sections from sacred texts. All can be found on the web.

COURSE OUTLINE

Weekly schedule of topics (Subject to change and revision as the semester progresses)

Week One August 28, 2006 Introduction to the course. Critical thinking basics. Faith and Reason

Week Two Sept 11, 2006 Reasoning About Religion. Reason, Science, Logic and Faith -- Introduction to Critical thinking and Logic.

Reading: Bertrand Russell. Why I am not a Christian: On line
<http://users.drew.edu/~jlenz/whynot.html>

Week Three Sept 18 Proofs of God's existence

Readings: -- Blaise Pascal On Pascal's Wager: On line.
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/pascal/pensees.i.html>

Week Four Sept 25 More Proofs of God's existence

Aquinas: Summa Contra Gentiles I, Chap. 13
<http://www2.nd.edu/Departments/Maritain/text/gc.htm>

Aquinas: from the Summa Theologia, I, 2
<http://www.newadvent.org/summa/100203.htm>

Anselm's argument: On line

<http://www.philosophvofreligion.info/proslogium.html>

Week Five Oct 2 Creation and intelligent Design

There are scads of links on the web relevant to this debate. For initial reading, **Intelligent Design? a special report reprinted from *Natural History* magazine**

<http://www.actionbioscience.org/evolution/nhmag.html>

See also *Evolution vs. Creationism* Homepage

<http://physics.svr.edu/courses/modules/ORIGINS/origins.html>

Week Six Oct 9 Theodicy The book of Job

Week Seven Oct 16 Personal Identity and the Soul -- Perry

Week Eight Oct 30 Personal identity and the Soul (cont')

Week Nine Nov.6 Life after Life. -- Moody

Week Ten Nov.13 Life After Life. (cont')

Week Eleven Nov.20 Arguments from Religious Experience

Week Twelve Nov.27 Freud: The Future of an Illusion

Week Thirteen Dec. 4 James: The Will to Believe. On line

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~omearawm/ph101willtobelieve.html>

Week Fourteen Dec.11 Review

Class Policy

1. You are expected to come to EVERY class and participate. Your grade will be based, in part on your participation and the only way you can learn the critical method and understand the reading is to discuss it with others. I will take attendance nearly every class. Late arrivals and early deserters will be counted as absent. A formal attendance policy will be given you the first Hour of class.
2. Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. In its broadest sense 'plagiarism' is defined as the theft of an idea, concept or text without proper payment to the author. In practical terms this means that any use in a paper of an idea, concept or text not your own without a footnote or reference recognizing the source is improper. Buying a paper and handing it in as your own, copying a another student's paper, or copying sentences, paragraphs or pages from any publication not your own without footnote or reference are examples of plagiarism. University policy concerning plagiarism will be implemented for all violations.
3. While in the classroom, you are in a professional environment. Private conversations, reading newspapers, headphones, falling asleep and other kinds of non-professional behavior count as disruptions of the class and will lead to dismissal from class and possible failure.
4. In the event that a major disaster prevents you from attending class, you will be responsible for all information conveyed in that class, including announcements of exams and changes in assignments.
5. No make up quizzes will be given
6. No incompletes will be given for the course. All assignments must be handed in on time or they will be counted as failures.
7. Do not schedule doctor's appointments, job interviews, sports practice or other engagements during class-time or examinations. None will count as excused absences.
8. At the beginning of most classes, I will call on a number of students to review the previous lecture, explain central concepts or ideas covered in the reading or lectures, or review the reading assignment. These recitations are one component of the class participation grade.
9. Occasionally, I will also give a spot quiz. This is to check that reading assignments have

been completed and keep you up to date.

10. Both recitations and quizzes will occur at the beginning of the class period and will take not more than ten minutes. Lateness will count as an absence if the quiz or recitation is missed. Please be in class on time.
11. **BE SURE TO BRING THE TEXT WE ARE READING TO CLASS!!**
12. **SAGE ADVICE:** Disasters are going to happen during the next 14 Hours. They are inevitable: sickness, parental demands, court cases, etc. Plan for them. You will have to finish the work for this course regardless of what happens. Be prepared. Do your work ahead of time and allow space for coping with what life brings.
13. The class can only function with near total freedom of expression. As long as you are willing to accept criticism, you can express any idea, no matter how outlandish or absurd others may think it. However, limitations exist. You should not personally insult another member of the class, or make derisive comments about race, gender, or sexual orientation.