

**The Ohio State University
Freshman Seminar Program
Course Proposal**

Course Information.

- Attached* 1. Attach a sample syllabus that includes the following. (Sample syllabi can be found at <http://freshmanseminars.osu.edu>).
- the course goals
 - a brief description of the content
 - the distribution of meeting times
 - a weekly topical outline
 - a listing of assignments
 - grade assessment information (A-E or S / U)
 - required textbooks and / or reading list
 - the academic misconduct and disability services statements (sample statements can be found at <http://artsandsciences.osu.edu/currofc/resources.cfm>)
- Attached P. 3* 2. Attach a brief biographical paragraph that includes the current research interests, teaching awards and honors, and undergraduate courses taught by the participating instructor(s). The paragraph will be included in materials for first-year students.

Tamar Rudavsky, Dept of Philosophy
Proposer's Name and Academic Unit

Tamar Rudavsky
Proposer's Signature

Rudavsky.1@osu.edu 292-7914
Proposer's e-Mail Address Contact Phone Number

May 2, 2016
Submission Date

JRG DW
Signature Department Chair of Academic Unit

Please indicate the semester you would like to offer the seminar: AU' ^{or possibly} SP'

This form and any attachments should be mailed to Freshman Seminar Program, 100 Denney Hall, 164 Annie & John Glenn Avenue, ATTN: Dawn Nolen or e-mailed to nolen.2@osu.edu. For additional information, please call 614/292-4680.

Freshman Seminar, 2016-7
God, Time and Human Freedom
Prof T.M. Rudavsky, Dept of Philosophy
Email: <Rudavsky.1@osu.edu>/

COURSE GOALS AND DESCRIPTION:

This one-credit hour course is a general introduction to major issues in the intersection of philosophy and theology. More specifically, this course will concentrate upon three seminal issues in the area of philosophy of religion:

- The nature and existence of God;
- The relationship between God and Time;
- The tension and accommodation between an omniscient Deity and human free will.

Talking about God is often thought to be a discipline that belongs to theologians, but in fact philosophers have a lot to say as well. What we find in philosophical literature is an attempt to analyze the very notion of Deity, to render the notion rational. And so in each of these areas we will examine ways in which tenets of rationality can be harmonized with those of faith.

TEXTBOOKS

Readings will be drawn from a variety of sources, including classics in Western and Eastern philosophy, fiction, and contemporary readings. Textbooks will be available at University Bookstores. Additional readings will be placed on CARMEN.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. take-home essay exam, week of finals (50%)
2. An ongoing journal, based on the reading done during the quarter. The journal should contain both descriptive explanation and analysis of the material we are reading, as well as your own reflections on this material. I will collect these journals twice during the course of the quarter (20%).
3. Class participation and regular attendance may affect the grade as much as one-half letter grade (10%).
4. Students will receive a letter grade for the course.

Meeting Times:

Class will meet weekly for one hour; students are expected to do reading in preparation for class. Study prompts will be provided for readings.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>)

FOR YOUR SAFETY, the OSU Student Safety/Escort Service is available after 7 p.m. by dialing 292-3322.

[TENTATIVE] SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS: (AUTUMN QUARTER 2016)

I. Who or What is God? [Weeks 1-4]

Topics include: [wks 1-2] Does God Exist? Can we prove the existence of God? [wk 3] What can we say about the Abrahamic Deity? [wk 4] How do Western conceptions of Deity compare with Eastern views?

Reading packet will include selections from Anselm; Aquinas; Maimonides; Ibn Rushd; Buddhism

II. God and Time: Did God create time, or does time pre-exist creation? [Weeks 5-10]

Topics include:

[wk 5] How do we measure time; is time real, or is it the result of our subjective perception;

[wk 6] how do perceptions of temporality affect the ways we live our lives;

[wk 7-8] is there an ontological difference between past and future – does it make sense to talk about travelling back to the past or forward to the future;

[wk 9-10] What does it mean to say that God is “outside” or “inside” of time? – what is the relation, if any, between God and time?

Reading packet will include selections from contemporary philosophers, along with -- Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, Pt III ch 13-30 (UL)

Augustine, *Confessions*

Hawkins, *The Nature of Time*

III. God, Time and Human Freedom: does God know the future, and if so, are human beings free to refrain from activities that God ‘knows’ they will do? (Weeks 11-15)

It is here that the two strands of the course intersect – namely our conception of God as an omniscient creator who knows past, present and future; and our sense that we, human beings, are free agents. Lots of questions lurk in this last part of the class.

[wk 11] But can we be free if God is truly omniscient?

[wk 12] Perhaps our lives are pre-determined, and in fact we have no ‘free will’; this view is associated with classical fatalism

[wk 13] But what does it mean to say that we will freely? Do we ever will freely?

[wks 14-15] And if it turns out that we are not “free”, is God ultimately responsible for evil in the universe?

Reading packet includes both classical and contemporary readings, along with -- Taylor “Fatalism”

Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will [De Libero Arbitrio]*

Borges, selections from his fiction

BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL PARAGRAPH

T.M. Rudavsky is Professor of Philosophy at The Ohio State University. She received her Ph.D in philosophy from Brandeis University. She specializes in philosophical theology and has edited three volumes. Her volume Time Matters: Time, Creation and Cosmology in Medieval Jewish Philosophy appeared in 2000. Her most recent book (2010) on Maimonides has appeared in the "Great Minds" series with Blackwell-Wiley Press. She is the author as well of numerous articles and encyclopedia entries, with a particular focus on issues connected to time. Her primary (undergraduate) teaching areas include philosophy of religion, history of philosophy, and contemporary existentialist thought.