

PH.D. IN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION ENTRANCE EXAM GUIDE

The purpose of this exam is for the applicant to demonstrate the ability to do Ph.D.-level academic work in the area of philosophy of religion. Answers should demonstrate an advanced understanding of the questions and issues. No resources are permitted to be used during the exam. The following resources will aid in preparing for the exam:

Allen, Diogenes and Eric O. Springstead. *Philosophy for Understanding Theology*. 2nd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.

Davies, Brian. *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Davies, Brian, ed. *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000.

Questions

Seven of the following ten questions will appear on the exam. Applicants must answer five of those seven.

1. Explain how and in what ways Plato influenced thinkers in the medieval period.
2. Explain the role of Aristotle in Thomas Aquinas' Five Ways and philosophical theology.
3. Explain and evaluate Anselm's ontological argument. Include a discussion of Gaunilo. Explain and evaluate Alvin Plantinga's modal version of the argument.
4. Explain the similarities and differences between the Kalam cosmological argument and the Aquinas' Second Way. Provide an evaluation of each.
5. Describe various design arguments. Include David Hume's objections as well as responses from Richard Swinburne. Provide an overall evaluation.
6. Explain and evaluate Molinism and Open Theism in terms of how they attempt to solve the alleged contradiction of divine sovereignty and human freedom. Make sure to discuss specific scholars in each camp.
7. Describe the problem of evil as put forth by J. L. Mackie as well as Alvin Plantinga's response. Provide an overall evaluation.
8. Explain and evaluate Alvin Plantinga's Reformed Epistemology and the notion that belief in God is properly basic.
9. Provide and evaluate David Hume's critique of miracles.
10. Discuss various views of God-talk. Provide an analysis and argue for your view of God-talk.