

Study Questions for Midterm  
Philosophy of Religion  
Fall 2008  
Professor Senor

1. What is the realist's sense of truth and how does it compare with the anti-realist's? Why might it seem that the whole enterprise of the search for religious truth would be undermined by anti-realism?
2. Define the following: a priori argument, a posteriori argument.
3. What is it that all cosmological arguments have in common in virtue of which they are properly called "cosmological arguments"? What is the most basic version of the causal argument and what are the problems with it?
4. William Lane Craig and J.P. Moreland defend an argument that they call the "Kalam Argument." State the argument. Which premise is the 'crucial' one? With which two philosophical arguments do Craig and Moreland support it? Be clear and specific. Now discuss Paul Draper's criticisms and, again, be clear and specific.
5. Discuss the Contingency Argument as explicated by William Rowe. Make sure you define crucial terms. Try to write the essay in such a way that you first consider, say, what can be said for the first premise, and then what objections there are to it, and then how the defender of the argument can respond to those objections. Do the same for the second premise too. Be willing to go back and forth a bit; keep the dialectical nature of the discussion in mind.
6. What is the Principle of Sufficient Reason? In a paragraph, state how the PSR can be used to support an argument for the existence of God. There is, however, an argument to the effect that the PSR would make creation and every event in it necessary. How does this argument go?
7. How does the Teleological Argument differ from versions of the Cosmological Argument? What is the original version of the TA as found in Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*? Discuss two of Hume's objections to the argument. Explain the impact of evolutionary theory on this version of the argument.
8. How does Richard Swinburne's version of the TA differ from more traditional versions? State his argument in as much detail as you can. Where do you think it is weak?
9. What is the Fine-Tuning Argument? What objection does Robin Collins seem to take most seriously? What did Professor Barry Ward make of the argument? What was his primary objection?
10. State Anselm's Ontological Argument for God's existence (you may use the version on the handout). Make sure you explain any special terminology. Now discuss (a) Guanilo's, (b) Kant's and (c) my objections to it. Does Anselm have any responses that are adequate to address these objections? Explain.
11. How does Peter van Inwagen suggest the ontological argument can be altered to get around Kant's primary objection? What is wrong with the argument even with this adjustment?
12. What is the modal ontological argument? State it and make it seem as plausible as you can. Now what is the chief objection to it?