

**Note:**

**Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.**

## ***COURSE SYLLABUS***

---

### **APOL 620**

#### **EVIL, SUFFERING, AND HELL**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An advanced study of the differing forms of the problem of evil and suffering. The course will explore the problem and investigate various theodicies and responses to the problem. Attention will also be given to the issue of hell and eternal damnation.

#### **RATIONALE**

The problem of evil is a real problem for all sentient beings, and even more for believers in God, for whom more things are evil and morally sub-par than for the typical non-believer. Suffering is here to stay, and strikes often in an unpredictable yet distinctively disruptive and nagging (and sometimes crushing) way. It is imperative for the Christian theist to “have an answer...to anyone who happens to ask...for the reason for the hope within” him or her, and so in this course, the student will attempt to rationally work through the issues and understand why God allows evil (in so far as it is given to know in this life).

#### **I. PREREQUISITE**

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the [Academic Course Catalog](#).

#### **II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE**

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

#### **III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING**

- A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Blackboard [recommended browsers](#)
- D. Microsoft Word
- E. School of Divinity Writing Guide:  
<http://www.liberty.edu/divinity/index.cfm?PID=28160>

**IV. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Describe the various forms of the problem of evil.
- B. Defend the existence and goodness of God in the face of evil, pain, and suffering.
- C. Defend the doctrine of Hell as integral to the Christian worldview and consistent with the goodness of God.
- D. Differentiate various theodicies and defenses offered in response to the problem of evil, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each.
- E. Develop a practical apologetic plan to address the problem of suffering.
- F. Appraise the various arguments against God’s existence based on the existence and nature of evil.

**V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations
- B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

- C. Discussion Board Forums (4)

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student is required to create a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be at least 400 words and demonstrate course-related knowledge. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to the threads of at least 2 classmates. Each reply must be at least 200 words. (MLOs: A, B, D)

- D. Question Sets (2)

The instructor will provide a set of questions about the current readings, video presentations, or Discussion Board Forums. The student will answer each question according to the length of the reply indicated in each question. Answering these questions will allow the students to see connections, reflect on current reading, and prepare for the Personal Theodicy Essays. (MLOs: A, B, F)

- E. Personal Theodicy Essays (2)

The student will write 2 1,200–1,800-word critical reflection papers that focus on answering this question provided within the course. Each essay must be a formal paper, with citations and footnotes, and is not to be a sermon or other homiletic exercise. Each essay must include at least 6 references and be in current Turabian format. (MLOs: A, B, C, D, E, F)

F. Research Paper

The student will write a 3,600–4,200-word research-based paper that focuses on one of the topics drawn from the possible paper topics provided within the course. The paper must be in current Turabian format and include at least 8 references in addition to the course textbooks and the Bible. (MLOs: A, B, C, D, E, F)

G. Quizzes (2)

Each quiz will cover the Reading & Study material for the assigned modules/weeks. Each quiz will be open-book/open-notes, contain 15 multiple-choice and true/false questions, and have a time limit of 1 hour. (MLOs: A, B, D)

**VI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES**

A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist		10
Discussion Board Forums (4 at 75 pts ea)		300
Question Sets (2 at 100 pts ea)		200
Personal Theodicy Essays (2 at 100 pts ea)		200
Research Paper		150
Quiz 1	(Modules 1–2)	75
Quiz 2	(Modules 3–5)	75
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1010</b>

B. Scale

A = 940–1010    A- = 920–939    B+ = 900–919    B = 860–899    B- = 840–859  
 C+ = 820–839    C = 780–819    C- = 760–779    D+ = 740–759    D = 700–739  
 D- = 680–699    F = 0–679

C. Style Guidelines

All assignments for this course are to be formatted in accordance with the [LUSD Writing Guide](#) and the latest edition of the Turabian style manual (*A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*). Discussion assignments and essay examinations may use the parenthetical citation style. All other written assignments should use the footnote citation style. Supplemental writing aids are available via the [Online Writing Center](#).

D. Extra Credit

No additional “for credit” assignments will be permitted beyond those given in the course requirements stated above.

E. Course Changes

Course requirements are subject to change by the administration of the University at any time with appropriate notice.

F. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online's Office of Disability Accommodation Support (ODAS) at [LUOODAS@liberty.edu](mailto:LUOODAS@liberty.edu) to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at [www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport](http://www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport).

If you have a complaint related to disability discrimination or an accommodation that was not provided, you may contact ODAS or the Office of Equity and Compliance by phone at (434) 592-4999 or by email at [equityandcompliance@liberty.edu](mailto:equityandcompliance@liberty.edu). Click to see a full copy of Liberty's [Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) or the [Student Disability Grievance Policy and Procedures](#).

## ***COURSE SCHEDULE***

### **APOL 620**

Textbooks: Adams & Adams, *The Problem of Evil* (1990).  
 Feinberg, *The Many Faces of Evil* (2004).  
 Lewis, *The C. S. Lewis Signature Classics* (2017).  
 Plantinga, *God, Freedom and Evil* (1989).  
 Wright, *Evil and the Justice of God* (2013).

<b>MODULE/ WEEK</b>	<b>READING &amp; STUDY</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<b>1</b>	Adams & Adams: Intro. Feinberg: ch. 1 Lewis ( <i>The Problem of Pain</i> ): chs. 1–2 2 presentations	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions DB Forum 1	10 0 75
<b>2</b>	Adams & Adams: ch. 3 Feinberg: ch. 2 Lewis ( <i>The Problem of Pain</i> ): ch. 3 2 presentations	DB Forum 2 Quiz 1	75 75
<b>3</b>	Adams & Adams: chs. 1–2 Wright: chs. 1–3 2 presentations 1 website	Question Set 1	100
<b>4</b>	Feinberg: ch. 4 Plantinga: ch. 1 2 presentations	Personal Theodicy Essay 1	100
<b>5</b>	Feinberg: ch. 3 2 presentations 1 website	DB Forum 3 Quiz 2	75 75
<b>6</b>	Adams & Adams: ch. 7 Feinberg: ch. 9 Wright: chs. 4–End 2 presentations	Question Set 2	100
<b>7</b>	Adams & Adams: chs. 8–9 2 presentations	Personal Theodicy Essay 2	100
<b>8</b>	Adams & Adams: chs. 10–12 Feinberg: chs. 5–6 Lewis ( <i>A Grief Observed</i> ): Entire Text Lewis ( <i>The Problem of Pain</i> ): chs. 8, 10 2 presentations	DB Forum 4 Research Paper	75 150
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1010</b>

DB = Discussion Board

**NOTE:** Each course module/week begins on Monday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.