



Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology

CTRD05, (Un)intelligent Design? The World's Best Arguments For and Against the Existence of God, 7.5 credits
(O)intelligent design? Världens bästa argument för och emot Guds existens, 7,5 högskolepoäng
First Cycle / Grundnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The pro-dean for First-Cycle Studies at the Faculties of Humanities and Theology on 2019-03-07 and was last revised on 2025-02-06 by The Pro Dean of First and Second Cycle Studies at The Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology (U 2024/929). The revised syllabus comes into effect 2025-02-06 and is valid from the spring semester 2025.

General information

Subject: Religious Studies and Theology

The course is offered as a freestanding course.

Language of instruction: Swedish

Main field of study

Specialisation

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G1N, First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the students shall be able to

Knowledge and understanding

- identify and describe the ideas behind some of the most important arguments for and against the existence of God
- account for the difference between conclusions and premises
- distinguish between logically valid and logically invalid arguments
- explain why logical validity does not imply truth

Competence and skills

- simply but fruitfully reveal the logical structure in a written argument
- apply critical thinking to interrogate the relation between science and religion

Judgement and approach

- judge in a relatively independent and balanced way the reasonableness of some of the most important arguments for and against the existence of God

Course content

Can philosophy and science be used to draw conclusions about the existence of God? Does the Big Bang 13.8 billion years ago suggest the existence of a supernatural creator? Does the violent history of evolution suggest the opposite? And what is the reasonable conclusion: that the extremely favourable values of the cosmic constants of nature are totally random, that they are one of an immense number of outcomes in the multiverse, that they are physically necessary in a way that we are still unaware of, or that they are deliberately honed? These and many other questions will be discussed in the course. By analytically dissecting the world's best arguments so far for and against the existence of God, we improve our skills to discover rhetorical tricks, to appreciate the scope of science, to develop our understanding of the complicated relationship between science and religion, and to reveal critical but often implicit metaphysical and epistemological assumptions.

Course design

The course is offered as a distance learning course and makes use of an online learning platform and/or digital tools. Students are required to participate under these conditions, and to have access to a computer with an Internet connection. The department will provide information about the technical requirements.

The teaching consists of continuous activity on the learning platform and approximately ten recorded lectures that are gradually made available during the course. The lectures use the required reading as a starting point and are thematically focused on specific issues.

Assessment

The assessment is based on a written review assignment and a final take-home exam.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction

For a grade of Pass on the whole course, the student must have been awarded this grade for both components. For a grade of Pass with Distinction on the whole course, the student must also have been awarded this grade for the final take-home exam.

Entry requirements

General requirements for university studies in Sweden

Further information

1. The course is offered at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University.
2. The credits allocated for course content that in whole or in part is commensurate with another course can only be credited once for a degree. For further details see the current registration information and other relevant documentation.