

## PHIL 13195: First 5-7 page paper

Jeff Speaks

Due: in class, Thursday, October 18

Below are three topics for your first full length paper. You are welcome to come up with your own topic, though you must get my approval by e-mail first. If you do this, the question that I approve should be on the first page of your essay. The papers should be at most 5-7 pages in length, double-spaced and with reasonable margins and font.

A late penalty of 3 points per day, including weekends, will be assessed for any papers which are handed in late. Papers should be handed in after class on the due date will be counted as one day late. Any late papers must be sent to me as e-mail attachments.

If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted under the honor code, please contact me.

1. G. E. Moore claimed to provide a proof of the existence of an external world. Explain his proof, and say why he thought that it was a proof. In your view, did Moore succeed in proving the existence of an external world? If not, say why not. If so, consider a few objections, and say why you do not find them convincing.
2. In class, we discussed several versions of the cosmological argument. Explain two or three of these, and say which version you think is most plausible, and why. Do you think that this version is sound? If not, say why not. If so, consider a few objections, and say why you do not find them convincing.
3. Explain what is meant by 'the fine-tuning of the universe', and how this phenomenon can be used to argue for the existence of God. Should this argument be convincing to someone who believes that ours is the only universe? Should it be convincing to someone who believes that ours is one of many universes? Should it be convincing to someone who has no view about how many universes there are?
4. Is the kind of evil we find in the world inconsistent with the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent being? Explain why Plantinga thinks that it is not. Is the kind of evil we find in the world good evidence that an omnipotent and omnibenevolent being does not exist? Explain why or why not.