

Math 311

Project 2 Handout

Due: Thursday, November 5th by 4:00pm

Instructions: This project is designed to give you an opportunity to explore some of the concepts from class in a little more depth. You may work with at most one other student on this assignment. If you decide to work with another student, you may turn in a combined paper with both your names listed. The total points you earn on this project will be combined with your other project scores throughout the course, which together contribute up to 50 points toward your final course grade.

1. (5 points) Write a 2-column proof the following argument.

If God were able and willing to prevent evil, he would do so.

If God were unable to prevent evil, he would be impotent.

If God were unwilling to prevent evil, he would be malevolent.

God does not prevent evil.

If God exists, he is neither impotent nor malevolent.

Therefore, God does not exist.

2. (3 points) In order for a logical argument to be valid, all that is needed is for the conclusion to follow from the premises. The proof above is a fairly famous example of a proof of the non-existence of God using the so-called “problem of evil” as its framework and fundamental premise. It is possible to disagree with this proof while still recognizing its logical validity. To do so requires one to take issue with the truth or adequacy of the underlying premises. Comment on the underlying premises in the argument given above. Are there any of the premises that you would take issue with? Do they seem to be a reasonable logical framework for addressing this question, or do they rely on unfounded assumptions or faulty reasoning?