Theological Cosmology and Anthropology  **BCRE19 (HE 2328)**

ECTS: 5  
Contact hours: 22 Lecture hours  
Lecturer(s)  Professor Cathriona Russell (russellc@tcd.ie/ext. 3493)

**Module Description:**

Cosmology traces developments in the mythological and natural-scientific study of the universe in its complex history. This module will investigate these developments as they have been interpreted and received from biblical, theological and philosophical perspectives. Natural-scientific descriptions of the world have implications for how theology conceives of God’s action in creation (pantheism, deism, panentheism). This course will examine the complex history of the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* in the Abrahamic faiths. The second part of the module will focus on theological anthropologies under several themes: the human person as created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), as steward of creation, as embodied and free, contingent and subject to frailty and failure (*sin*). Throughout it explores how specific cosmologies and anthropologies, theological and philosophical, can influence politics and ethics, using case studies from the natural, social and environmental sciences.

**Learning Outcomes:** On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Trace the complex history of the relationship between natural-scientific understandings of the cosmos and theological understandings of creation
- Analyse the conflicts and convergences between science and theology in the modern period
- Outline and debate what these imply for an understanding of God, creation and the human person

**Indicative reading:**

Berry, R.J. *Environmental Stewardship: Critical Perspectives–Past and Present* (Edinburgh; T&T Clark, 2006). Ussher 261.8 P63  
Clayton, P. and Peacocke (eds) *In Whom We Live and Move and Have Our Being* (Michigan; Eerdmans, 2004).  

**Methods of Assessment:** 3000 word essay, deadline Fri, April 7, 2017.