MPhil in Christian Theology
Module Offerings 2017-18

Students must take six taught modules (10 ECTS each) comprising three core and three elective modules, and write a 15,000 word dissertation (30 ECTS).

The taught modules are made up of three core modules and three optional modules.

Core Modules

Method & Theory in the Study of Theology
Module Co-ordinator: Dr. Michael Kirwan

Module Content
The student will be taught to critically engage with methodologies and hermeneutics that have arisen in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century approaches within European philosophy. Particular focus is placed on the social movement approach, such as that evinced in work of Marxist and post-colonialist theorists (Foucault, Derrida, Spivak, Said, Judith Butler, Giorgio Agamben, Frantz Fanon, Jean-Luc Nancy) and demonstrated in theological interpretation of the arts, music, ritual, liturgy and politics as well as texts.

Mode of Assessment
Students submit a 400-word book review; a 1,500-word essay (on a question set by the lecturer); and a 2,500-word paper of personal research on a topic agreed (6 weeks in advance) with the lecturer. The assignments are worth 10%, 35% and 55% respectively and must be passed independently.

Indicative bibliography

Violence and Grace in the Human Narrative
Module Co-ordinator: Dr. Cornelius J. Casey

Module Content
This module studies Jewish and Christian thought on the themes of deep seated human alienation as evidenced in the persistence of human violence. The module studies ways in which, through history, structures of human creativity and communication seem persistently to veer towards being structures of exploitation and domination. The module will study key texts in Jewish and Christian scriptures wherein the narrative of human violence and alienation is articulated within a context of grace, gift and redemption.
Module Assessment
4,000 word essay (100%)

Concise Recommended Reading List

The First Words: Theology/ies of the Bible
Module Co-ordinator: Dr David Shepherd

Module Content
Students will be introduced to the interpretation of Scripture with particular attention being paid to the hermeneutical challenges and opportunities of reading the texts of the Old/First and New/Second Testaments ‘theologically’. In the process, students will be invited to critically scrutinize notions of thematic unity and diversity within the Christian Scriptures and evaluate claims for a ‘centre’ or thematic core. The module will assess contemporary efforts at constructing ‘biblical theologies’ by analysing a variety of texts drawn from both Testaments.

Module Assessment: 4000 word essay (100%)

Concise Recommended Reading List

Elective Modules

Theology and the Arts
Module Co-ordinator: Professor Fáinne Ryan
Other Teaching Staff: Dr Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Amanda Dillon

Module Content
This module will introduce students to some of the key ways in which theology shapes and is shaped by the arts. Taking into account a wide range of artistic practice -- including music, literature, film, theatre and the visual arts – the module explores how
theological doctrines can transform how we perceive and make art, and vice versa. It concentrates initially on the arts as used in liturgies down the centuries, then focusing on modern 'secular' arts.

Module Assessment
There are two parts to the assessment of this module:
(i) In-class presentation (40%)
(ii) 3000 word essay (60%)

Concise Recommended Reading List

Christianity of the Celtic World (600 - 1,000 AD)
Module Co-ordinator: Dr Fáinche Ryan
Other Module Teaching Staff Dr Cornelius J. Casey

Module Content
In this module the student is introduced to the historical, ecclesial and political context of the theological art in the Church of the Celtic World. The theological art of the *Book of Kells* will be a major component of the module. The students will be introduced to the iconography of the High Crosses in their distinctive schools.

Module Assessment
There are two parts to the assessment of this module:
(i) In-class presentation (40%)
(ii) 3000 word essay (60%)

Concise Recommended Reading List

Ministry and Church in a Challenging Era
Module Co-ordinator: Dr Fáinche Ryan

Module Content
The student will be introduced to the historical developments that lie behind the structuring of contemporary ministry in the main Christian traditions. The module will study contemporary debates that often challenge elements of these structures. There will be particular emphasis on the flourishing of lay ecclesial ministry and debates about authority and ordination in the contemporary Roman Catholic Church.
Mode of Delivery:
Lectures, seminars, class room presentation.

Module Assessment
There are two parts to the assessment of this module:
(i) In-class presentation (40%)
(ii) 3000 word essay (60%)

Concise Recommended Reading List

In addition, Loyola Institute students may choose from the following modules offered by the Irish School of Ecumenics. Please note these modules are taught during the day.

Authority, Tradition and Experience: Ecumenics as Intercultural Theology
Module Co-ordinator: Dr Andrew Pierce

Module Content
Participants attend to the methodological implications of theological ecumenicity, and, in particular; examine the historical emergence of the ecumenical movement and pivotal moments of its developing tradition; reflect on recurrent *topoi* of divergence (e.g., how unity is to be modelled, the ecclesial status of ecumenical instruments such as the World Council of Churches); evaluate the ecumenical potential of contemporary proposals (e.g., the Princeton Statement, or recent Faith and Order documents on hermeneutics and ecclesiology).

Module Assessment: 4000 word essay (100%)

Concise Recommended Reading List
Nature, Grace and the Triune God
Module Co-ordinator: Dr Andrew Pierce

Module Content
This module analyses the contentious relationships in Christian tradition between understanding the mystery of God on the one hand, and the human person on the other. This relationship is pivotal to the experience of ruptured communion amongst Christians; between East and West, between the churches and communities of the Western Reformations, and more recently between North and South. Focusing on the paired theological themes, Nature and Grace, participants interrogate to what extent existing tensions may be addressed in the context of ecumenical convergence, closely focusing on the on-going reception of the paradigmatic Lutheran-Catholic Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (1999).

Module Assessment: 4000 word essay (100%)

Concise Recommended Reading List