The Loyola Institute

Short Courses – Spring 2024

School of Religion, Theology and Peace Studies

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin
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REGISTRATION

Registration can be made in person or by post / email to Loyola@tcd.ie (please include a completed copy of the Application Form which is available at this link).

FEES

The fee per module is €150. A concession rate of €100 is available to second and third level students, unemployed persons and those in receipt of a social welfare pension.

Registration and payment in cash can be made in person at the Loyola Institute, School of RTPS (Old Physiology Building) at the following dates/ times:

Monday, 8 January: 10 AM – 12 PM OR
Tuesday, 16 January, 2 PM – 4 PM

Cheques, drafts or postal orders should be made payable to Trinity College no. 1 account.

Please return cheques, drafts or postal orders to:

Ms Helen McMahon
Loyola Institute
School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies,
Trinity College Dublin, College Green, Dublin 2, D02C1F6

COURSES

These are day-time and face to face courses. Each course is auditing-based and has either two, one-hour lectures or one two-hours lecture per week.

Time and Place

For exact times of particular modules please see the ‘Current Student Page’ – Undergraduate Programme Timetable at the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies website.

All classes take place on the Trinity College Dublin campus, either in the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies Building (Old Physiology building) or theatres nearby.

Duration

This term runs from week starting 22 January to 8 April 2024.

Note: no lectures during reading week starting 4 March 2024.

Classes taking place on Bank Holiday’s will not take place and may be rescheduled.
SPRING 2024 COURSES - MODULES OFFERED BY LOYOLA INSTITUTE

STAFF: (Hilary Term Timetable (subject to change) available on Page 10)

Philosophical and Theological Approaches to God

**Lecturer:** Prof. Michael Kirwan

**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2 – Mon 12 noon & Thur 9 am

This module critically reviews a range of approaches to the question of God’s existence and nature, drawing both on the history of Christian theological reflection and on philosophy in the Western traditions.

This module explores a number of key philosophical and theological landmarks in the debates about God in Christianity and western philosophy: does God exist? Is natural theology possible? What is meant by the notion of revelation? Is ‘religious language’ different to other language games?

Introducing Theology: Key Questions

**Lecturer:** Prof. Michael Kirwan

**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2 – Mon 9 am & Wed 5 pm

The module will offer an introduction to theology by means of contributions from a number of teaching staff from their own expertise and interests. Key questions will be addressed, such as the doctrine of God and creation, theodicy, theology in a liberative mode, and the problem of religion and violence, as well as the inclusion of theology as a subject into the modern university.

The module examines key questions according to the expertise and interests of the individual lecturers. This will give an introduction to the rich variety of ‘theology’ as a discipline, while addressing the question of the nature of theology as an academic subject within the university.

God and Human Freedom

**Lecturer:** Prof. Fáinche Ryan

**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2 – Tue 4 pm & Fri 1 pm

This module studies what it means to be human from the perspective of theology. The study begins within the horizon of Jewish experience as articulated especially in the early chapters of the book of Genesis. The themes of the human reality as the Imago Dei, of sanctification, of deification, as well as the theme of deep-seated human alienation, are studied. In the Western tradition grace became a key concept in the articulation of the interplay of divine and human in history. The module studies its deployment through the centuries. Running through the module is the question, the debate, as to whether there are resources in theological anthropology for an understanding of human nature which have been lost in modern culture.
BESPOKE MODULE, WHICH INCLUDES A FIELD TRIP TO THE BOOK OF KELLS EXHIBITION:

Book of Kells

Lecturer: Prof. Fáinche Ryan  Term: Hilary – Semester 2 – Mon 2 pm (single two hour lecture)

The Book of Kells, one of the greatest treasures of Trinity College, is perhaps the most renowned illustrated manuscript of the early medieval period. This module, benefiting from several recent scholarly contributions, will enable the students to learn both the theology and the iconography of this wonderful manuscript. The module will also introduce the students to the world in which this manuscript was created, and to some other aspects of insular art.

The module is designed to be accessible to students coming from all disciplines who have an interest in the Ireland of the early medieval world.

OTHER MODULES THAT ARE OFFERED BY THE SCHOOL OF RELIGION, THEOLOGY AND PEACE STUDIES

Introducing the New Testament: Texts and Contexts

Lecturers: Prof. Daniele Pevarello, Prof. Benjamin Wold  Term: Hilary – Semester 2

The writings included in the canon of the New Testament have been composed by different authors over a relatively long period of time. Translated in countless languages, the stories and ideas found in the New Testament have played a major role in shaping socio-political, ethical and religious discourses across the centuries and in different cultures and have been a constant source of inspiration in art, music and literature. In this module, students will learn about the most relevant scholarly approaches to the study of the New Testament and its background in Second Temple Judaism and in the Graeco-Roman world, examine the variety of literary genres and the diversity of sources and traditions, which contributed to the development of early Christianity and to the formation of new religious and cultural realities in the Graeco-Roman world, and be introduced to the history of interpretation of the New Testament in antiquity and in contemporary culture.

Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses

Lecturer: Prof. Cathriona Russell  Term: Hilary – Semester 2

The module will begin with a consideration of the nature of ethics argumentation and investigation, and the importance of bringing an ethics analysis to bear on a range of contemporary issues. Students will be introduced to schools of ethics in philosophy and theology (virtue autonomy, utility), the scope and limits of obligations (cosmopolitan and communitarian), professional ethics, and national and international agreements and conventions, with examples drawn from across the
globe: dam building in India; migration, international food security; sustainable transport; biodiversity conservation and (smart) technologies; artificial intelligence and the future of work; and genetic ‘enhancement’ of future generations and ‘advance directives’ in dying.

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**Introduction to Philosophy**

**Lecturer:** Dr Ciarán McGlynn

**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2

The module offers an overview of Western philosophy and analyses the questions treated in its main branches. Beginning with the Greeks as the founders of the Western philosophical tradition, key texts and ideas relating to Presocratic philosophers, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle will be studied with a particular emphasis on metaphysical questions about the nature of reality and of the soul. The medieval era will be studied primarily through the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, with particular emphasis on his use of an Aristotelian approach to metaphysical notions of substance and soul, as well as his arguments for the existence of God. The study of modern philosophy will focus on Descartes, Hume, Kant, and Wittgenstein. In this part of the course, we will explore the views of these thinkers on questions like: What is knowledge, and is it possible? How is the mind related to the body? What is meant by virtue ethics? What is the relation between language and the world? Students will be taught how to critically engage with the various philosophical positions.

**Introducing Islam**

**Lecturer:** Prof. Zohar Hadromi-Allouche

**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2

Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the world today. This module surveys its emergence, development, beliefs and practices, the 7th century into modernity.

This module aims to

- Provide an overview of Islamic history.
- Present and discuss Islamic scriptures, doctrines and rituals.
- Demonstrate the significance and development within Islam of concepts such as prophethood, revelation, jihad, theology, law and gender.
- Develop an understanding of the contribution of Islamic civilization to human culture.
- Examine various scholarly approaches to the study of Islam.

### Religions in the Ancient Mediterranean

**Lecturer:** Prof. Daniele Pevarello  
**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2

Employing literary sources as well as inscriptions, funerary art and ancient iconography, and other archaeological finds, this module investigates the religious beliefs and practice of the various peoples and civilisations of the ancient Mediterranean from ancient Egypt to Imperial Rome, focusing on the study of ancient rituals (e.g., burial customs, animal and human sacrifice) and on Mediterranean myths and mythologies (e.g., dying-and-rising deities in Egypt, Syria and ancient Greece). Students will reflect about the methodological challenges of studying ancient religions, focusing on the problem of interpreting fragmentary evidence, understanding ancient definitions of religion and magic, and distinguishing between private and public devotion in ancient societies. The course will help students to think about such questions as did people in antiquity believe in their myths? Why did the Egyptians mummify their dead? What is the significance of the ancient myths of Osiris, Gilgamesh and Baal? Did the ancient Phoenicians and Carthaginians practice human sacrifice?

### The Historical Jesus and the Gospels

**Lecturer:** Prof. Benjamin Wold  
**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2

Who was the historical Jesus – the Jewish Galilean whose activities and death resulted in the emergence of Christianity? This module explores questions about Jesus the man, his world, his social and literary environment, his disciples, and their literary activities. The history of research on the historical Jesus (i.e., the so-called “three quests”) orient this module before turning to a sustained study of the earliest witness to his life and those of his followers, namely the synoptic gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. When studying the context of Jesus and the gospels their environments and social milieu are introduced vis-à-vis material culture and archaeology. Key themes, particularly ancient Jewish “Messianism” as it relates to the portrayal of Jesus as “Christ,” are considered in light of Qumran Discoveries (e.g., so-called “4QMessianic Apocalypse”). Students are also inducted to the various historical and literary methods and approaches used when studying the synoptic gospels.

### Cosmology, Religion and Science

**Lecturer:** Prof. Cathriona Russell  
**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2

Cosmology traces developments in the mythological and natural-scientific study of the universe in its complex history. This module presents these developments as they have been interpreted from biblical, theological and philosophical perspectives and how they conflict or converge with cosmologies from the natural sciences particularly since the 16th century.

It explores how specific cosmologies emerged and in turn impacted on theology, science and culture, in astronomy, thermodynamics, emerging universe models, evolutionary theory and the
return to narrative in the natural sciences. It includes implications for anthropology: the human person as created in the image of God (imago Dei); as embodied and free, contingent and subject to frailty and failure (‘sin’); as steward of creation; and inhabitant of the future earthly cosmopolis.

**Digital Innovation to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals**

**Lecturers:** Prof. P.J. Wall, Prof. Timothy Savage  
**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2

This module will introduce students to the key issues and current academic debates of relevance in a variety of fields, and also equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to identify and manage these challenges in an appropriate and effective manner.

The module will pay particular attention to the ethical issues involved with innovation for the SDGs, and critically examine the role played by social, political, cultural and human factors when designing, introducing and using technologies. This module therefore contributes to the broader programme outcomes related to ethics, reasoning, and moral inquiry.

The module links most strongly with the SDGs which can be addressed by new, disruptive and innovative approaches and technologies. This module has a particular focus on the SDGs which can be addressed by smaller, community-level and citizen-led technology-based initiatives. Examples of this include designing innovative ways of leveraging the ubiquity of mobile phones in the Global South for healthcare and education, and the design, evaluation, and implementation of innovative techniques which are designed to be ethically, socially and culturally appropriate for their particular context.

The module content includes relevant, authentic, situated cases from the Global South and Europe that have been developed specifically for the module. These multimedia-enhanced cases focus on projects from Ireland, India, Uganda, and Ethiopia.

**Words to the Wise: Israelite and Jewish Wisdom Literature**

**Lecturer:** Dr Neil Morrison  
**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2

This module represents an opportunity to explore the richness of the Wisdom Literature found in the Hebrew Bible and later Jewish traditions. Following an introduction to the Wisdom tradition, the module will offer a close and critical reading of the books of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes and how wisdom themes have influenced other parts of the Hebrew canon. There will also be a focus on the divergent strands which emerge within this corpus and the historical context in which these works were produced. Seminar discussions will explore key themes such as divine justice, attitudes to wealth and work and the representation of women. The module will also consider the coherence of each individual book, the nature of the relationship between Hebrew wisdom and other sapiential traditions and will examine to what extent the Wisdom tradition diverges from other perspectives within the Hebrew Bible.

**Reformation and Enlightenment**

**Lecturer:** Dr David Nicoll  
**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2

This module will pursue key theological themes in Christian anthropology, doctrine of God, Christology and ecclesiology from late medieval Nominalism through the Reformation to modernity. It will analyse current assessments of the connections of Luther’s theology with, and its
discontinuities from, the preceding eras. The Enlightenment comprising Kant’s critiques of reason, German Idealism and Romanticism as the context for Schleiermacher and Kierkegaard as thinkers of God in relation to human subjectivity and freedom will be treated and their reception in 19th and 20th century theology discussed. The module will conclude with the hermeneutical questions raised by a new consciousness of language and history, traditions and their transformations.

**Life of Muhammad**

**Lecturer:** Prof. Zohar Hadromi-Alouche  
**Term:** Hilary – Semester 2

Muhammad is one of the most influential characters in history. This module discusses his diverse portrayals, from the ones found in the earliest available Islamic sources, to these days. It examines his biography in the early Islamic sources, as well as its diverse interpretations how in later Islamic writings, and modern scholarship.
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SHORT COURSES – SPRING 2024
REGISTRATION FORM

Name
Address:
Phone: E-mail:

Course (Module) – Please select below the module(s) you would like to take:

☐ Introducing the New Testament: Texts and Contexts
☐ Introducing Theology: Key Questions
☐ Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses
☐ Introduction to Philosophy
☐ Introducing Islam
☐ Religions in the Ancient Mediterranean
☐ The Historical Jesus and the Gospels
☐ Philosophical and Theological Approaches to God
☐ Cosmology, Religion and Science
☐ Digital Innovation to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals
☐ Book of Kells
☐ Words to the Wise: Israelite and Jewish Wisdom Literature
☐ Reformation and Enlightenment
☐ God and Human Freedom
☐ Life of Muhammad

FEE: €150 (Reduced fee for students, unemployed persons & pensioners with social welfare card: €100)

Registration and payment in cash can be made in person at the School of RTPS (Old Physiology Building) at the following dates/ times:

Monday, 8 January: 10 AM – 12 PM OR Tuesday, 16 January: 2 PM – 4 PM

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Senior Executive Officer
School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies,
School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies Building (Old Physiology Building)
Trinity College Dublin, College Green, Dublin 2, D02C1F6.

For further queries, please call: 01 896 4790 or email: sradmdbln@tcd.ie.