

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies

Short Courses – Autumn 2025



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

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COURSES

These are **daytime 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

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

For specific days and times, please see them in the modules' descriptions below.

Duration

Autumn Term runs from the week starting 15th September to the week starting 1st December 2025.

Please note: Some modules will have a late start in the Term, running from the week starting 27th September to the week starting 1st December 2025. Those will be marked with ** after the module name.

Note: No lectures during reading week starting 27th October 2025.

REGISTRATION AND FEE

Registration

Registration can be made either in person or by post/email srundergrad@tcd.ie – please include a completed copy of the Registration Form, which is available at the end of this document.

Fee

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. Payment can be made in person at the School of RTPS (Old Physiology Building) on the following dates/ times: **Monday to Friday, 10 AM-12 PM**.

Cheques, drafts or postal orders should be made payable to **TRINITY COLLEGE No. 1 ACCOUNT**. Please return cheques, drafts or postal orders to:

Executive Officer

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

AUTUMN 2025 MODULES

Introducing the Old Testament/ Hebrew Bible**

Lecturers: Dr Neil Morrison, Prof. Benjamin Wold

Days/ Times: Mon 10-11 AM and Fri 2-3 PM

The variety of terms used to designate the 'Hebrew Bible' (e.g., Old Testament, Hebrew Scriptures, Tanak) indicate the richness of traditions related to these writings, the various ways that they are viewed, and also their life within different communities at different times. This module will orient students to the literary and theological contours of the Hebrew canon, introducing them to the rich variety of genres within. The lectures will focus on the formation and transmission of the text and how it grew out of the context of the ancient Near East. It will also invite the student to encounter the primary texts of various sections of this great 'library' including the Pentateuch, the historiographical literature, the prophets, the Psalms and the Wisdom literature. Students will also be introduced to the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls and how their discovery contributes to our understanding of the text and 'canon' of the Hebrew Bible in the Second Temple Period.

Introducing Theology: Key Questions**

Lecturers: Dr Fainche Ryan

Days/ Times: Tues 11-1 PM (1x2-hours)

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.

Approaches to the Study of Religion**

Lecturer: Dr Alexandra Grieser

Days/ Times: Mon 9-10 AM and Wed 4-5 PM

Learning aims are to familiarize students with the variety of religious phenomena as they are embedded in their historical and cultural situation; learn how to approach religion (and "non-religion") through different perspectives; understand the interrelation between the history of the Academic Study of Religions with the colonial and intellectual history of Europe; learn to apply approaches to empirical phenomena; become familiar with analytical skills, terminology and critical reading strategies when approaching religious and academic sources; develop a reflective and analytical approach to religion.**

Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses**

Lecturer: Dr Cathriona Russell

Days/ Times: Wed 5-6 PM and Fri 3-4 PM

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.

Jewish Thought and Practice**

Lecturer: Prof. Benjamin Wold

Days/ Times: Tue 2-3 PM and Wed 12-1 PM

This module introduces key social, cultural, and religious aspects of Jewish thought and practice from antiquity to our own time. The focus of this module is on Judaism as a major world religion that has shaped Western Civilization. Rabbinic textual traditions that underpin Jewish religious thought—especially the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrashim—are explored. Calendar, festivals (esp. Day of Atonement, New Year, Festival of Booths, Passover, Hanukkah), and rites of passage (e.g., birth, circumcision, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, marriage, divorce, death) are studied both within the classroom as well as, when appropriate, in visits to local Jewish synagogues and museums. Contemporary Jewish movements and the history of their traditions come into view along with their different beliefs and practices (e.g., kashrut, Sabbath, worship, prayer)

Introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism**

Lecturer: Dr Seema Chauhan

Days/ Times: Mon 1-2 PM and Tue 3-4 PM

Why do some people consider animal sacrifice and ecstatic devotion as “Hinduism”, while others consider vegetarianism, non-violence, and meditation to be “Hinduism”? Why do some people regard Buddhism as a philosophy that rejects sexism and racism, while others see Buddhism as a religion that promotes inequality? This course introduces students to the history of Hinduism and

Buddhism by reflecting on how and why “Hindu” and “Buddhist” identity has been constructed in various ways across time and place.

The course is split into two halves. The first half covers Hinduism and the second half, Buddhism. In both sections, students will read primary sources from narratives, philosophy, and poems in premodern South Asia to maps, biographies, and lawsuits against academics from contemporary East Asia and America. Through an examination of these sources, students will not only be able to articulate the historically embedded debates that have led to the construction of Hindu and Buddhist identity, but they will also demonstrate an awareness of the theoretical questions that arise from studying Asian religions in a Western academic context.

Medieval Theology: Women, Learning, Universities

Lecturer: Dr Fainche Ryan

Days/ Times: Wed 3-4 PM and Thurs 10-11 AM

To introduce the students to the distinctive modes of theological expression found in the Western medieval period. A particular aim is to develop an appreciation in students for the particular contribution of women to theology in this era. The purpose of this module is to survey the political, cultural, and religious context in which Catholic theology developed in the medieval period. An important aim will be to introduce the student to some representative figures in the theology of the period. This period was particularly fruitful in the formation of theology in the Catholic tradition. The course will study:

- The theology of the Monastic and Cathedral schools
- The emergence of the University
- The significance of Aquinas' work

- The role of women in the medieval period
- The early Irish medieval church

Creaturely Ethics: Humans and Other Animals

Lecturer: Dr Jacob Erickson

Days/ Times: Thurs 9-11 AM (1x2-hours)

This module aims to introduce and engage in contemporary scholarly reflection on critical animal studies, posthumanism, and ecotheology. It allows students to engage with theological perspectives on the definitions of “humanity,” “animality,” and “creatureliness.” Students will explore a number of theo-ethical topics in this area from animal conservation to food.

Ethics is written and studied by animals, you and me. Recent questions in ecological ethics swirl around “the question of the human” and “the question of the animal.” Theological and ethical concepts that define human beings as unique, with souls created *imago dei*, in the image of God with dominion over the planet are critiqued as being morally complicit with species decline, animal suffering, and habitat loss. On a planet undergoing the sixth great wave of animal extinction, this critique is no small matter. We’ll ask how we understand the human in relation to other nonhuman creatures that occupy the planet. We’ll think about animal ethics, the blurry lines between wild and domestic, human and nonhuman, living and extinct, veganism and vegetarianism, human and posthuman. We’ll ask how these conversations cause us to rethink theological understandings of “creatureliness” and “creation” and “kinship.” And we’ll ask how definitions of what it means to be “human” are already entangled in our theo-ethical and ecological concerns.

Philosophical and Theological Approaches to God

Lecturer: Dr Andrew Pierce

Days/ Times: Thurs 1-2 PM and Friday 12-1 PM

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?

Religion, Gender and Human Rights

Lecturer: Dr Linda Hogan

Days/ Times: Mon 12-1PM and Wed 11AM-12PM

The relationship between religion and human rights is controversial and contested. On the one hand is the claim that human rights require a religious grounding. This module aims to explore the complex connections between religion and human rights, both in terms of the evolution of the contemporary human rights regime, and in relation to the specific disputed issue of gender. ng, and have their antecedents in religious traditions, while on the other hand is the view that human rights provide a necessary antidote to the prejudices and inequalities that are characteristic of religion. The module will begin with a consideration of contemporary understandings of human rights, of the role of religion in the evolution of the language, values and norms of human rights, and of contemporary debates about orientalism, colonialism and post-colonialism in the articulation and implementation of human rights. The second section considers debates about the nature and politics of gender, the

role that different religions play in the construction and maintenance of gender norms, and the manner in which different religions deal with the issue of women's rights. Key contemporary debates will be considered in depth including debates about conceptualisations of gender equality, embodiment, complementarity, and heteronormativity; about LGBTQ rights and religion; sexuality, reproduction, and the role of family; and gender and religious practices. The module will conclude with a consideration of freedom of religion and the limits of accommodation, with a focus on how states should deal with religiously motivated values and conduct that offend democratic values.

Ethics in Sport and in Media

Lecturer: Dr John Scally

Days/ Times: Thurs 9 – 11 AM (1x2-hour)

Beginning with an overview of traditions of ethics, this module treats two key areas of applied ethics. Sport in contemporary society has been described both as an expression of the highest human and social values, and as a legally secured parallel world of the elite pursuit of victories and medals. On the one hand, as a sphere of physical self-realization, social formation and of moral training in fairness, it is seen as an area with standards of excellence that can be closely aligned to ethics. On the other hand, individual sport stars and the institutions of organized sport have been subject to multiple enquiries and critiques: for example, on doping, corruption, sponsorship, the power of mentors and child protection. The concluding element deals with some of the most pressing ethical issues in the media today, among them 'Fake news'.

From Invasion to Exile: The Ancient Histories of Israel and Judah

Lecturer: Dr Neil Morrison

Days/ Times: Fri 4-6 PM (1x2-hour)

This module offers an opportunity for critical engagement with some of the most famous texts of the Hebrew Bible including those concerned with the Israelite conquest, the stories of the Judges, the rise and fall of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and the careers of royal figures such as David, Solomon, Hezekiah and Josiah. Reflection on the historiographical value of these traditions will be facilitated by situating them within the context of the material culture and historiographical traditions of the Ancient Near East, while particular emphasis will be paid to the interface of power and violence within the traditions.

The Apostle Paul: Life and Letters

Lecturer: Dr Benjamin Wold

Days/ Times: Mon 2 - 3 PM and Fri 11-12 Noon

The Apostle Paul's significance for 2,000 years of Western Civilization is profound. Paul's thirteen letters dominate the pages of the New Testament. His writings shape Christian theology more than any other part of the New Testament. Many have asked whether Paul was a follower of Jesus or the founder of Christianity. His letters, written between 50-68 CE, are the earliest Christian writings we have. From these we learn about the founding of early churches throughout much of the Mediterranean world. In this module, attention is given to the social and cultural location of Paul's activities and his correspondences with the urban Christian communities he founded. Students will learn about Paul as a first-century leader dealing with conflict, controversies, and challenges. Indeed, Paul and his activities were polarizing in his own time. We will explore, from a historical perspective, the issues that were important to him and Christians in the first generation of Christians.

Christianity in the Cultures of Late Antiquity

Lecturer: Dr Daniele Pevarello

Days/ Times: Tues 4-5 PM and Fri 10-11 AM

Using literary sources as well as material evidence (archaeological finds, artwork, inscriptions), this module explores customs, beliefs, institutions and identities of the early Christians within the social, political, religious and cultural context of the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity. The course will help students to think about central questions in the study of early Christianity, such as: who were the early Christians? How did they articulate their identities across different languages and in different areas of the late antique world? How and where did they eat, pray, and live? How did they understand their beliefs and interact with the cultures around them? What did their Roman, Greek, or Syrian neighbours think about them? Students will reflect on different models of cross-fertilisation between emerging early Christian identities and the cultures and religious phenomena which characterised the later stages of the life of the Roman Empire.

Power and Politics: Liberation, Contextual, and Post-Colonial Theologies

Lecturer: Prof. Siobhán Garrigan

Days/ Times: Thurs 11-1 pm (2x1hour)

The Shoa/Holocaust meant that Theology could not carry on as it did before. Theology had to respond to this atrocity, to the “death of God” it brought, and to the demands of post-war churchgoers that it offers a vision capable of preventing Christian collusion in such horrors in the future. This module will look at the ways that Modernity’s very tenets were revised in this theological effort – first via Barth and Rahner, then via Moltmann and Metz. Then, it will examine Theology’s part in the political movements of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere

Lecturer: Dr Alexandra Grieser

Days/ Times: Tues 11-12 Noon and Friday 1-2 PM

Religion is prominent in public debates, in the media, and in the cultural imaginary of people’s daily life, no matter whether they see themselves as believers or not. In turn, religions also ‘make use’ of media and mediation when creating influential symbols and intense and extraordinary experiences. They do so by means of architecture and music, images and narratives, through clothes, body practices, or the TV and the internet.

The module focuses on how the relationship between religion and media can be studied and how this helps to better understand the role of religion in how world views develop and change. This includes theoretical reflection on the “public sphere” as an element of democracy and the question of whether we live in a “post-secular” world.

Hindu Mythology

Lecturer: Dr Seema Chauhan

Days/ Times: Mon 3-4 PM and Tues 1-2 PM

In the world of Hindu Mythology, everything seems upside down. Demons are virtuous. Gods are deceptive. Animals attain liberation. And humans are mediocre. How and why do Hindus narrate our world in this way? This course surveys the history of Hindu Mythology from its inception in the Vedic period (1000 BCE) to its height in epics and Purāṇas (1000 CE). Students will explore how premodern Hindu writers used mythology to navigate key religious questions regarding the problem of evil; the ontology of God; gender and salvation; and the creation of the universe.



Short Courses – Autumn 2025

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: Click or tap here to enter text.
Address: Click or tap here to enter text.

Phone: Click or tap here to enter text. **E-mail:** Click or tap here to enter text.

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

- ☐ Introducing the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible
- ☐ Introducing Theology: Key Questions
- ☐ Approaches to the Study of Religion
- ☐ Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses
- ☐ Jewish Thought and Practice
- ☐ Introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism
- ☐ Medieval Theology: Women, Learning, Universities
- ☐ Creaturely Ethics: Humans and Other Animals
- ☐ Philosophical and Theological Approaches to God
- ☐ Religion, Gender and Human Rights
- ☐ Ethics in Sport and Media
- ☐ From Invasion to Exile: The Ancient Histories of Israel and Judah
- ☐ The Apostle Paul: Life and Letters
- ☐ Christianity in the Cultures of Late Antiquity
- ☐ Power and Politics: Liberation, Contextual, and Post-Colonial Theologies
- ☐ Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere
- ☐ Hindu Mythology

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

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