

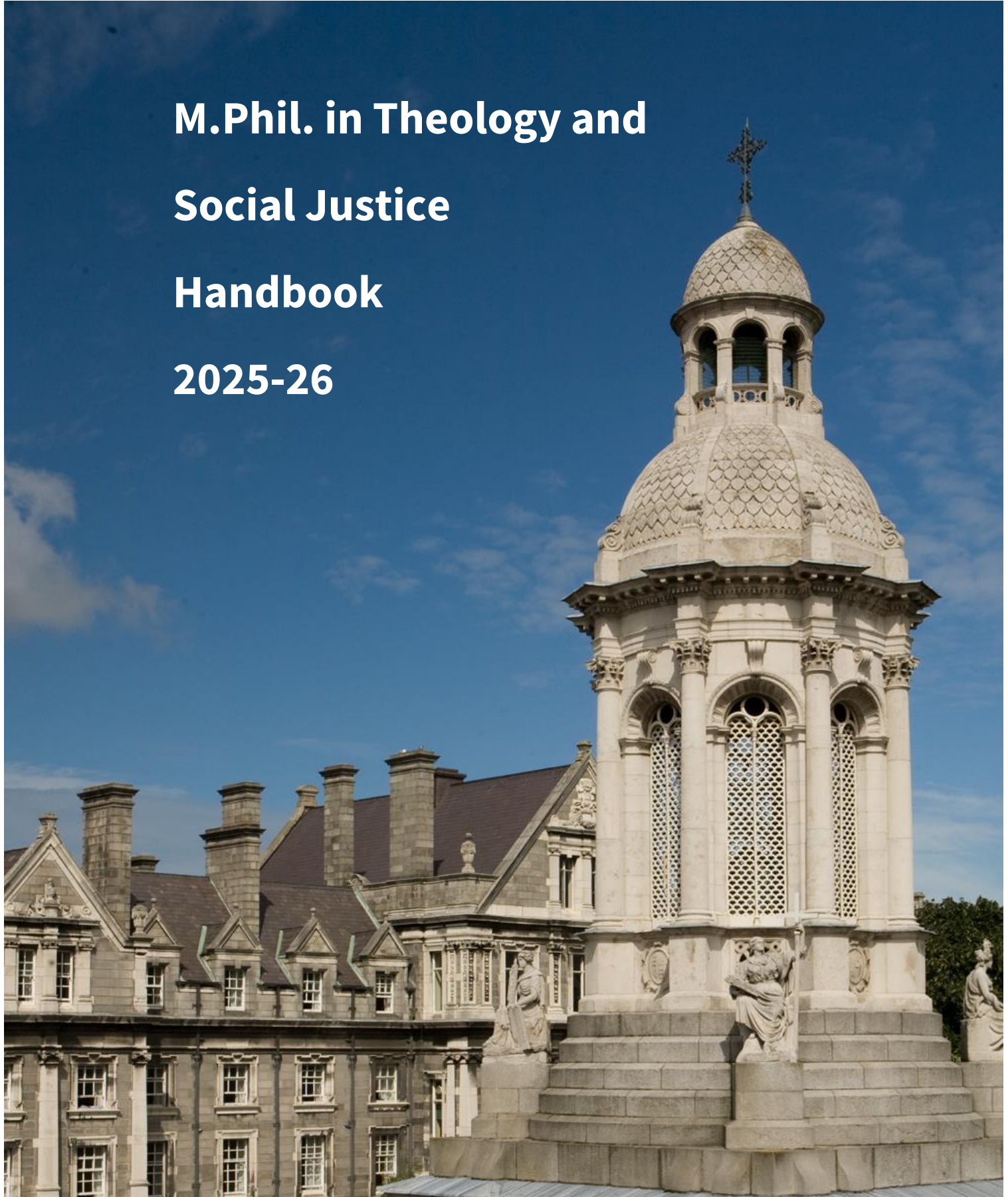


Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

M.Phil. in Theology and Social Justice Handbook 2025-26



M.PHIL. IN THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
SCHOOL OF RELIGION, THEOLOGY, AND PEACE STUDIES
TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Theology and Social Justice in the [School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies](#) where we continue a tradition of scholarship that goes back to the very foundation of Trinity College Dublin.

The School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies is one of the twelve Schools that comprise Trinity College's Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. It brings together biblical studies, theology, ethics, theory of religion, and international conflict and peace studies as independent but related disciplinary fields.

The School's undergraduate and postgraduate courses explore encounters between religions and cultures from their roots in antiquity to the present day. They investigate the intellectual and institutional resources developed in historical and current conflicts and apply them to the challenges and opportunities societies face in building peace.

The School has a strong commitment to community engagement, has campuses in Belfast and Dublin and is home to the [Irish School of Ecumenics](#), the [Loyola Institute](#), and the [Trinity Centre for Biblical Studies](#).

The Handbook

This Handbook summarizes and supplements the regulations that are contained in the University Calendar and will be required for reference throughout the programme. However, in the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the [General Regulations](#), PART III, published in the University Calendar and information contained in programme or local handbooks, the provisions of the General Regulations in the Calendar will prevail.

Academic and administrative staff will be available at Orientation to explain most of these requirements, and to answer any queries that you may have about procedures and regulations.

An electronic copy of this Handbook will be available on the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies website - on the [Current Student](#) page.

The following link will also be helpful re the [College Virtual Learning Environment](#) (VLE)) with guides and support for [Blackboard Ultra](#) and related learning technologies.

A hard copy of this handbook in large print is also available in the School's Postgraduate Administration office. Alternative formats of the Handbook can be provided on request.

There may be some modifications during the year to the procedures and regulations outlined below; these will be brought to your attention as they arise.

Please note:

- Familiarize yourself with College's regulations for postgraduate students. These are available in the [Calendar, Part III](#).
- Your @tcd.ie email account is the **only** e-mail address used for official College business. Consult this email account regularly.
- Your personal data is kept in accordance with the [Student Data Policy](#).

College regulations require that you remain resident in the Republic of Ireland, or in Northern Ireland, during your studies. Absence for a substantial period in either of the teaching terms is not permitted. Research abroad is permitted only with the approval of your Course Coordinator.

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1. School Of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies (SRTPS) Contacts

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School Manager – Mr. Martin Humphreys

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Postgraduate Officer – Ms. Amanda Antunes

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TSJ Course Coordinator - Prof. Siobhán Garrigan

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For the full list of all academic and administrative staff please visit the [School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies website](#).

1.1 Dublin Campus SRTPS Opening Hours

SRTPS building: Access is by swiping your ID card only and restricted to normal office hours, currently a standard 9.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. working day, Monday - Friday. The building is also accessible on Monday through Thursday evenings for those attending the

School's evening Postgraduate programmes. Any changes to the opening hours will be notified by e-mail.

Please note students are not permitted to remain in the building outside normal office hours unless you are attending a lecture, seminar or event which has been scheduled by a staff member.

1.2 Key Locations

The School of RTPS is on the main Trinity Campus. Further facilities information will be provided at orientation.

[View our location and get driving/walking directions](#)

[Interactive College Map](#)

[School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies](#)

[Trinity Central](#)

[School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies, Belfast](#)

1.3 Key Dates

Key dates for each M.Phil. course are available in the Orientation Pack on the [Current Student](#) page of the **SRTPS** website. Submission deadlines for coursework are listed on the Key Dates and in module syllabi.

1.4 Timetable

Your timetable will be accessible via your [student portal](#).

1.5 Racism and Home/lessness Module – Volunteer Placement

Participants in the core module “Theological Ideas of Home/lessness and Race” (EM7703) must undertake an immersion experience in a service agency for people experiencing homelessness. It is the responsibility of each student to find a suitable placement where they can volunteer for two hours a week, for six weeks, and to gain the Garda vetting

approval required to do so. The placements, like the module, occur in Semester 2, but must be sought and secured early in Semester 1; the same is true for the Garda vetting. There will be a meeting early in Semester 1 to talk about how to go about this.

1.6 Scholarships and Prizes

For Scholarships, please see information available online at: [Postgraduate Scholarships](#).

1.7 Research Ethics

Trinity College Dublin and the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies' research community take great care to ensure that our research activities follow best ethical practice in their design, content, and conduct. Staff and students are required to follow College policies, maintain appropriate ethical standards in their research, and adhere to current data protection policies such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If you are conducting research that involves human participants, it is highly likely that you will need to apply for research ethics approval from either the School's Research Ethics Committee or the AHSS [Faculty Research Ethics Committee](#). Visit [Research Ethics](#) on the School website for details of procedures, approval checklists, forms, and deadlines. To review the College's full "Policy on Good Research Practice", follow this [link](#).

Reference/Source:

[Policy on Good Research](#)

[Practice](#)

[REAMS](#)

[Ethics Policy](#)

1.8 Trinity Inclusive Curriculum

The School of RTPS is committed to providing an inclusive environment where diversity is valued, and all persons are treated with respect and equality.

We aim to build and support the foundations of an inclusive and enabling learning environment and a fair and supportive workplace where all individuals can thrive. The Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee has a particular responsibility to support this activity; however, the whole School community is engaged in this work of building this culture of respect and inclusion. The EDI Committee's work can be seen here: <https://www.tcd.ie/religion/about/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/> and we welcome student involvement in our work.

The School of RTPS is committed to embedding inclusivity in all our curricula and in our resources for teaching and learning. Supported by the College's EDI Unit, we are currently focused on two important and interconnected aspects of an inclusive curriculum: Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Decolonising the Curriculum. See details here. <https://www.tcd.ie/religion/about/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/inclusive-curriculum/>

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) focuses on ensuring that inclusion is a core principle of module design, delivery and teaching practices. Our aim with UDL is to ensure that our programmes are designed to meet the diverse learning needs of students. More details on UDL are available [here](#).

Decolonising the Curriculum

Academics in the School are also engaged in a process of Decolonising the Curriculum. This is focused on recognising, challenging and dismantling the Eurocentric, Western, colonial and patriarchal power structures that shape academic disciplines. It involves:

- (i) examining the multiple ways that systemic inequalities, Eurocentric worldviews and colonial legacies shape knowledge creation and dissemination in our disciplines;
- (ii) challenging the dominance of these systems by interrogating their power and impact;

- (iii) creating space for indigenous, non-western, and marginalised knowledge systems in our conceptualisation of the parameters of our disciplines, our curricula, bibliographies and assessments.
- (iv) reconstructing knowledge through partnership and inclusive practices. This is an ongoing, iterative process that involves all programmes and modules.

For more details on our School project, visit the [Equality website](#).

Further information on College approaches to the inclusive curriculum are available at this [link](#).

1.9 Athena SWAN Gender Charter

The School of Religion, Theology and Peace Studies holds an Athena SWAN Bronze award. Athena Swan Ireland supports higher education institutions in impactful and sustainable gender equality work. Bronze award holders are recognised for their in-depth self-assessment focused on gender equality, commitment to their resultant action plan and capacity to follow through with these plans to bring about change.

Statement of Inclusivity



Trinity College, the University of Dublin aims to provide an inclusive environment which promotes equality, and values diversity. The College is committed to maintaining an environment of dignity and respect where all staff and

students can develop to their full potential. The concept of equality is central to the College's ethos of academic and service excellence. The School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies strives to be an inclusive learning community, respecting those of differing backgrounds and beliefs. As a community, we aim to be respectful to all in this class, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, or sexual orientation.

Pronouns, Gender Identity and Gender Expression

Our School affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is on a class roster, please let the teaching staff know. Feel free to correct us on your gender pronoun if you feel comfortable doing so. College is

formally committed to recognise and support an individual's gender identity and gender expression so that all members of the College community may experience a positive and inclusive environment, where every member is treated with dignity and respect. You can find that formal commitment in [Trinity's Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy 2019](#).

1.10 Careers

As a Trinity student you have access to information, support, and guidance from the professional team of Careers Consultants throughout your time at Trinity and for a year after you graduate. The support offered includes individual career guidance appointments, CV and LinkedIn profile clinics, practice interviews and mentoring. Visit [Trinity Careers Service](#) for career, further study and job search advice. Sign into MyCareer to book appointments, find information about vacancies and bursaries, and book your place on upcoming employer events.

Follow the service on Instagram for career news and advice [@trinity.careers.service](#).

Students may also wish to avail of the following online resources:

[Overview of careers resources for postgraduate taught students](#)

[Plan Your Career](#)

[Trinity LinkedIn Alumni Tool](#)

[IT Services](#)

[Library](#)

TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. Coursework Overview 2025-26

The M.Phil. in Theology and Social Justice, Trinity College Dublin, studies how religious ideas shape and are shaped by the society in which we live. We teach Theology and Social Justice with the goal of resourcing efforts to combat poverty, the climate crisis, racism, homelessness, misogyny, homophobia, sexism, ableism, ageism, and religious discrimination. You will develop fluency in the deep wisdom of theological tradition by placing it in dialogue with the concrete social realities of modern Ireland and wider Europe. With an innovative approach to both theology and social justice, this programme offers students a unique insight into how creative and rigorous intellectual work is central to the struggle for the common good. It is a space to learn new skills, to stretch your mind, to nourish your soul, and to prepare for a life dedicated to the cause of justice.

At Trinity, course elements are weighted with credits according to the European Credit Transfer Scheme – ECTS. The required ECTS for the MPhil is 90. All Masters students must complete the Research Skills module (10 ECTS), plus a further 60 ECTS worth of taught modules (6 modules) and a dissertation (20 ECTS). Module registration takes place in advance of the beginning of the programme and students must complete and return a module registration form.

It should be noted that students may also take for credit **one** module from two Dublin MPhil programmes, International Peace Studies, and Contextual Theologies and Interfaith Relations, and they may audit **one** additional module from any RTPS MPhil course if they wish.

Information provided below is done so in good faith and is correct as of June 2025. Modules may be amended depending on staff availability. In addition, module availability depends on numbers of interested students.

Modules:

EM7701: Theologies for the Climate Crisis - **core**

EM7702: Power and Empowerment - **core**

- EM7703:** Theologies of Home/lessness and Race - **core**
- EM7704:** Economic Justice and Theological Reflection - elective
- EM7705:** Gender and Sexuality Justice - elective
- EM7706:** Mysticism, Politics, and Justice - elective
- EM7707:** Critical Social Analysis for Theology - elective
- EM7700:** Research Methods (Joint module with EM7479) - **core**

2. Coursework Requirements

Students must take **seven** taught modules (10 ECTS each), comprising the four core modules (as identified above) plus three elective modules, and write a dissertation (20 ECTS). Students may also audit one module from the other MPhil courses in the School of RTPS. Students can consult the module coordinator for guidance in essay writing. In the second semester, each student will be given a dissertation supervisor. Key dates and the deadlines for essay and dissertation submissions can be found on the key dates document.

3. Coursework Assessment

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies courses rely on a continuous assessment system, based on a mixture of written assignments and lecture/seminar attendance.

Students are required to adhere to the word count prescribed for each assignment; if the submission is under or over 10% on the word count, the student will be penalised in the mark given. Submissions after the deadline will also be subject to a penalty for lateness.

NB North American Students: The grading system in Ireland and the United Kingdom is different from in North America; 60-69 is considered a very good grade, as can be seen in the table below.

3.1 Marking Criteria

Your essay feedback will be returned to you through Blackboard, and you will be provided with indications of where your essay was most successful and where you need to concentrate your future work. You will receive feedback based on the following rubrics:

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies, Essay Marking Rubric

<i>Criteria</i>	80 and above, Outstanding	70-79, Excellent	60-69, Good	50-59, Passable/adequate	49 and under, Fail
<i>Relevance to question</i>	The essay has directly and comprehensively answered the question, showing an element of originality and creativity in how it is addressed. Outstanding understanding of the topic and related areas is shown.	The essay has directly and comprehensively answered the question. Excellent understanding of the topic is shown.	The essay has answered the question but contains some irrelevant material and/or has omitted some key aspects. Treatment of the topic is generally good but may be simplistic in areas.	The essay has some relevant material but has failed to understand the question and/or has not covered many central aspects. Treatment of the topic is superficial.	The essay has failed to understand the question and/or has not covered many key aspects. Poor knowledge of the topic is shown.
<i>Structure and argument.</i>	The essay is structured logically, with subheadings where appropriate, and clear introduction and conclusion. A robust and original line of reasoning is maintained	The essay is structured logically, with subheadings where appropriate, and clear introduction and conclusion. A consistent line of reasoning is maintained which culminates	The essay is mostly well organised although the structure and line of reasoning may be difficult to follow in places. A concluding argument is made but is somewhat underdeveloped.	Some attempt at structuring material has been made but the essay is disorganised overall. The analysis lacks rigour and the conclusion are unclear and/or unsupported by the main body of the essay.	The reasoning behind the essay's structure is difficult to discern. There is no logical line of argument, sections do not flow, and it is unclear

	which culminates in a strong concluding argument regarding the essay topic.	in a clear concluding argument regarding the essay topic.			what the essay has achieved in terms of argument and conclusion.
<i>Conceptual analysis</i>	The essay has sourced and employed relevant theories in a sophisticated and illuminating manner, debating, and assessing competing perspectives. The work shows strong evidence of deep critical thinking throughout.	The essay has sourced and employed relevant theories in an appropriate manner, debating and assessing competing perspectives. The work shows evidence of deep critical thinking.	The essay has sourced and employed some theories but has not analysed and assessed them in sufficient depth. The work shows some evidence of critical thinking.	The essay has failed to sufficiently use theory to illuminate the topic and is largely descriptive of the subject matter. There is a lack of critical engagement with the literature.	The essay does not show awareness of relevant theories and is largely descriptive. Evidence of critical thinking skills is limited.
<i>Writing and presentation</i>	The writing is lucid, sophisticated, and flowing. Grammar and syntax are excellent throughout and there are minimal typographical errors. Formatting is neat and consistent.	The writing is clear and flowing. Grammar and syntax are correct throughout and there are minimal typographical errors. Formatting is neat and consistent.	The writing is generally easy to read with some unclarity in places. Grammar, syntax, and spelling show some errors which could have been avoided during further editing. Formatting is mostly neat and consistent.	Some passages are well expressed but overall, the writing lacks clarity, precision, and readability. There are many grammar, syntax, and spelling errors which could have been avoided during further editing. Formatting is untidy.	The writing lacks clarity, precision, and readability. There are many grammar, syntax, and spelling errors and there is insufficient evidence of editing.

					Formatting is untidy.
<i>Sources and referencing</i>	There is evidence of research and reading far beyond the set texts. The essay relies overwhelmingly on high quality sources (i.e. peer-reviewed, recent, and relevant). The appropriate referencing system is used correctly and consistently.	The essay relies overwhelmingly on high quality sources. The appropriate referencing system is used correctly and consistently.	The essay relies on sources of varying quality. The appropriate referencing system is used mostly correctly with some errors.	The essay relies on a limited number of perhaps rudimentary texts. The referencing contains many errors and inconsistencies.	A limited number of low-quality sources is used. Referencing is poor.
<i>Successes and ways to improve.</i>	There are likely no identifiable weaknesses in the student's work that can be improved.	There is little that can be improved in future work, though there may be scope for a greater degree of critical depth.	The feedback highlights issues that can be addressed in future work, leading to higher marks.	The essay shows that there are significant weaknesses in the student's academic skills which should be addressed through greater effort, closer editing, and potentially professional support.	The work is not at the required standard. If issues are not addressed, completion of the degree may be in jeopardy.

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies, Presentation Marking

Rubric

<i>Aspect</i>	80 and above, Outstanding	70-79, Excellent	60-69, Good	50-59, Passable/adequate	49 and under, Fail
<i>Relevance to question</i>	The presentation has directly and comprehensively answered the question, showing an element of originality and creativity in how it is addressed. Outstanding understanding of the topic is shown.	The presentation has directly and comprehensively answered the question. Excellent understanding of the topic is shown.	The presentation has answered the question but contains some irrelevant material and/or has omitted some key aspects. Treatment of the topic is generally good but may be simplistic in areas.	The presentation has some relevant material but has failed to understand the question and/or has not covered many central aspects. Treatment of the topic is superficial.	The presentation has failed to understand the question and/or has not covered many key aspects. Poor knowledge of the topic is shown.
<i>Structure and argument.</i>	The presentation is structured logically, with clear introduction and conclusion. A robust and original line of reasoning is maintained which culminates in a strong concluding argument regarding the presentation topic.	The presentation is structured logically, with clear introduction and conclusion. A consistent line of reasoning is maintained which culminates in a clear concluding argument regarding the presentation topic.	The presentation is mostly well organised although the structure and line of reasoning may be difficult to follow in places. A concluding argument is made but is somewhat underdeveloped.	Some attempt at structuring material has been made but the presentation is disorganised overall. The analysis lacks rigour and the conclusion are unclear and/or unsupported by the main part of the presentation.	The reasoning behind the presentation's structure is difficult to discern. There is no logical line of argument, sections do not flow, and it is unclear what the presentation has achieved in terms of argument and conclusion.
<i>Conceptual analysis</i>	The presentation has sourced and	The presentation has sourced and	The presentation has sourced and	The presentation has failed to sufficiently	The presentation

	employed relevant theories in a sophisticated and illuminating manner, debating, and assessing competing perspectives. The presentation shows strong evidence of deep critical thinking throughout.	employed relevant theories in an appropriate manner, debating and assessing competing perspectives. The work shows evidence of deep critical thinking.	employed some theories but has not analysed and assessed them in sufficient depth. The work shows some evidence of critical thinking.	use theory to illuminate the topic and is largely descriptive of the subject matter. There is a lack of critical engagement with the literature.	does not show awareness of relevant theories and is largely descriptive. Evidence of critical thinking skills is limited.
<i>Presenting skills</i>	The presentation is delivered in a confident, clear, eloquent, and unhurried manner. Efforts to engage the audience through eye contact and voice projection are made. Slides are uncluttered and quotes and images are appropriate.	The presentation is delivered confidently and clearly. Efforts to engage the audience through eye contact and voice projection are made. Slides are uncluttered and quotes and images are appropriate.	The presentation is delivered mostly clearly but with some comments lacking precision. Slides support the argument but may be cluttered or untidy in places.	The presentation has some relevant material but is delivered without confidence and clarity. Slides are disorganised.	The oral delivery and slides are insufficiently clear to convey the required content.
<i>Sources and referencing</i>	There is evidence of research and reading far beyond the set texts. The presentation	The presentation relies overwhelmingly on high quality sources. The appropriate	The presentation relies on sources of varying quality. The appropriate referencing system is used	The presentation relies on a limited number of perhaps rudimentary texts. The referencing	A limited number of low-quality sources is used. Referencing is poor.

	relies on high quality sources (i.e. peer-reviewed, recent, and relevant). The appropriate referencing system is used correctly and consistently.	referencing system is used correctly and consistently.	mostly correctly with some errors.	contains many errors and inconsistencies.	
<i>Successes and ways to improve.</i>	There are likely no identifiable weaknesses in the student's work that can be improved.	There is little that can be improved in future work, though there may be scope for a greater degree of critical depth.	The feedback highlights issues that can be addressed in future work, leading to higher marks.	The presentation shows that there are significant weaknesses in the student's academic skills which should be addressed through greater effort, closer editing, and potentially professional support.	The work is not at the required standard. If issues are not addressed, completion of the degree may be in jeopardy.

Please note that these criteria are applied specifically to the assessment of your coursework to indicate strengths and weaknesses in a particular piece of work. The submission grade proposed by your internal examiner(s) will seek to balance the various aspects of your achievement.

3.2 Grade Bands

0-29: Wholly unsatisfactory - Fail

30-39: Very weak - Fail

40-49: Weak - Fail

50-59: Satisfactory

60-69: Very Good

70-79: Excellent

80+: Truly outstanding

An essay marked below 50 is deemed unsuccessful. A pass mark is from 50 to 69 inclusive.

An essay marked 70 or above is in the Distinction class.

Marks are determined by judgements across the criteria and do not necessarily represent the same band of achievement on all criteria. Positive achievements on some criteria compensate for weaknesses on other criteria and *vice versa*. The final mark reflects the weighting of the different variables in this judgment, as agreed by the examiners, and subject to confirmation by the Court of Examiners.

Therefore:

0-29 indicates a wholly unsatisfactory level of achievement across the criteria.

30-39 highlights a very weak level of achievement across criteria OR so highly unsatisfactory on at least one criterion that achievements on other criteria do not compensate.

40-49 indicates a weak level of achievement across the criteria OR a very weak level of achievement on many criteria.

50-59 A satisfactory level of achievement across the criteria OR a good level of achievement on some criteria compensating for weaknesses in others.

60-69 A very good level of achievement across the criteria OR an excellent level on some criteria and at least satisfactory on all criteria.

70-79 An excellent level of achievement on all the criteria OR a truly outstanding achievement on some of the criteria and at least satisfactory on all criteria.

80+ A truly outstanding achievement on all criteria.

3.3 Assessment standard

Most modules require coursework totaling 4,000 words to be submitted according to the internal deadlines distributed at the beginning of each academic year. The 20 ECTS dissertation must be 12,000 words long. For 2025-2026 the dissertation submission date is noon on Friday 14th August 2026.

In the calculation of the overall mark for the course, modules are weighted according to their ECTS credit value. The best 6 module marks out of 7 are used to calculate the final overall average mark. The pass mark for all elements is 50%. Part-time students must pass all modules taken in the first year in order to proceed to the second year of the course. Students must achieve a mark of at least 50% in each module in order to proceed to dissertation, and must receive a mark of at least 50% in the dissertation to be eligible for the degree of M.Phil. Students who fail an assessment to a maximum of 10 ECTS may resubmit their work, provided that the original submission had been received by its deadline. Compensation is allowed to a maximum of 10 credits at a minimum mark of 40%.

Students can be awarded the M.Phil. with Distinction if they achieve a mark of Distinction (70% or above) on their dissertation and in the final overall average mark. A Distinction cannot be awarded if the candidate has failed any module during the course. A student who does not wish to submit a dissertation for the M.Phil., or who fails the dissertation, may instead opt to be considered for a Postgraduate Diploma provided that they have passed modules amounting to 60 credits. The Postgraduate Diploma may be awarded with Distinction to candidates who, in addition, have achieved an overall average mark of 70% or above. If you do not wish to proceed to the dissertation stage, you should notify your Course Coordinator in writing before 1 April. Such students are required to submit module assessments by 1 May.

3.4 Resubmission of Dissertation

Students on a master's course who do not achieve a pass mark in the dissertation but achieve a mark within the range of 40-49% may make one application to the relevant school to repeat this section of their programme. Marks for a new submission will be capped at 50%. Re-submitted dissertations must be submitted by January 30 and relevant students will be notified, following the Court of Examiner in late November. Alternatively, such students may be awarded an associated Postgraduate Diploma. A thesis Revision Fee will apply for repeated dissertations or research elements. As of May 2023, the fees applicable for EU and Non-EU students in the AHSS Faculty are: €1,853.

3.5 Description of ECTS

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is an academic credit system based on the estimated student workload required to achieve the objectives of a module or programme of study. It is designed to enable academic recognition for periods of study, to facilitate student mobility and credit accumulation and transfer. The ECTS is the recommended credit system for higher education in Ireland and across the European Higher Education Area.

The ECTS weighting for a module is a measure of the student input or workload required for that module, based on factors such as the number of contact hours, the number and length of written or verbally presented assessment exercises, class preparation and private study time, laboratory classes, examinations, clinical attendance, professional training placements, and so on as appropriate. There is no intrinsic relationship between the credit volume of a module and its level of difficulty.

The European norm for full-time study over one academic year is 60 credits. 1 credit represents 20-25 hours estimated student input, so a 10-credit module will be designed to require 200-250 hours of student input including class contact time, assessments, and examinations.

ECTS credits are awarded to a student only upon successful completion of the programme year. Progression from one year to the next is determined by the programme regulations. Students who fail a year of their programme will not obtain credit for that year even if they have passed certain components. Exceptions to this rule are one-year and part-year visiting students, who are awarded credit for individual modules successfully completed.

3.6 QQI-NFQ Level

Under the [QQI-NFQ](#), the Irish National Framework of Qualifications, the Postgraduate Diploma and MPhil are both Level 9 qualifications.

4. Academic Writing/Presenting and Submitting Your Work

4.1 Essays

Module Coordinators will provide a range of titles for your essays. Most written assessments amount to a module total of about 4,000 words in length, excluding footnotes and bibliography. Please note that most modules are assessed by shorter essays and another form of assessment e.g., a group project. Essays should not exceed the stated length, and those in excess of the word length will be penalised. **The word count for your essays must be given at the end or beginning of each essay.** Please note that you are welcome to submit an outline of any essay plan (one page, A4, **maximum**) to your module Coordinator, or lecturer for your topic, before you write your essays and dissertation: this is a helpful way to ensure that, at an early stage in the process, your research and writing are on target.

The School essay submission cover sheet, which is available on the [Current Student](#) page of the School website, should be used in submitting essays.

The essay should include detailed references (either in-text, or endnotes, or footnotes) and a bibliography laid out in alphabetical order. Your pages should be A4 size, numbered, and your typing double-spaced. Correct and consistent spelling, grammar and clear presentation are essential.

Retain a copy of each essay that you submit. Your assessments will be submitted *via* Turnitin on Blackboard. Details on how to do this will be provided by your module Coordinators. Submit each of your essays no later than 5 PM (17.00) on the day on which the essay is due, unless otherwise specified.

4.2 Dissertation

Researching and writing your dissertation is the culmination of your studies in the School. All courses within the School include compulsory modules on research methods and skills, where you will receive guidance for your research proposal and for choosing your dissertation topic.

Your dissertation topic must be relevant to your course's modules and themes. Your dissertation title must be registered before you engage in study on a particular subject; this is to ensure both that the topic is acceptable for assessment and adequate supervision is available. Please note that permission to study a specific topic depends on adequate expertise existing in the School. The topic should not normally coincide with any of your other assessment essays, but you **may** be granted permission to extend the topic of one of your essays into a dissertation, or choose a related topic, subject to your supervisor's agreement.

You will be asked to notify us of the area in which you wish to write your dissertation, and a supervisor will normally be allocated to you by semester two.

Once you are allocated a supervisor, please arrange to meet her or him as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to arrange an appropriate working relationship with your supervisor, and to submit work in a timely fashion so that there is adequate time for them

to provide you with feedback. In general, students should meet with their supervisors at least twice to discuss their dissertation. Your dissertation, like your essays, is marked in the School before being read by the External Examiners and considered at the Court of Examiners.

In terms of feedback during the writing process, please note that your supervisor will read and provide comments on your **proposal and two other chapters**. You may also submit short chapter outlines to your supervisor for feedback.

4.3 Submitting Your Dissertation

You are required to submit an electronic copy via Blackboard by the submission deadline. The dissertation must be typed A4 size, using double spacing. Pages must be numbered, starting after the Table of Contents.

The current regulations set a word count of 12,000 words, excluding footnotes and bibliography. Your word count must be within 5% of this amount. Dissertations over 12,600 words will be sharply penalised.

The word count for your dissertation must be given at its conclusion.

Submissions up to one week after the deadline will also be subject to the penalty for lateness; submissions more than one week after the deadline will not be accepted.

The structure of the dissertation should be (in this order):

1. Title page, including title and author (this is the name under which you are officially registered in College).
2. Declaration. Use the following wording:

DECLARATION

I certify that this dissertation, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of M.Phil. has not been submitted for a degree at any other University, and that it is entirely my own work. I agree that the Library may lend or copy the dissertation upon request.

Signed:

Date:

3. Acknowledgements (if any)
4. Abstract. You must provide a one-page Abstract at the start of your dissertation. The Abstract of the dissertation (in single spacing) outlines its content and mode of investigation. It should be headed by title and author and entitled "Abstract".
5. Table of Contents
6. Introduction
7. Chapters
8. References (if you are not using the Harvard system whereby references are in brackets in the text)
9. Bibliography

You must also include:

- (i) a list of **abbreviations** used in the dissertation (if such abbreviations are extensive), placed either before the Introduction or immediately before the Bibliography. This should be noted in the Contents.

You may also include:

- (ii) **appendices**, containing any important extra material you **need** to include. Any appendices are placed after the conclusion but before the bibliography.

Your name must appear on the front page of the dissertation exactly as registered. If in doubt, please check with the Postgraduate Administrator at srpostgrad@tcd.ie
First name initials are not allowed.

4.4 Referencing

Clear and accurate referencing is an important part of the scholarly task. Your reader should be able to see when you are quoting directly from a source, when you are summarizing a source, and when you are advancing your own judgement on the sources to which you have referred. The reference that you provide should enable your reader to check the sources that you have used. And, as section 5 on Plagiarism, below, makes clear, accurate referencing is essential to the scholarly enterprise.

Quotations (and references generally) must be made with care for accuracy. Quote the exact words; if you have to add extra words to clarify the sense, put them in square brackets; if you omit any, indicate that you have done so with three dots; so, for example:

It is instructive to note the comment of Henry Kissinger: “[In such cases] ... it is essential to bear in mind the role of personal humility in the exercise of diplomacy.”

If a quotation is going to take up four or more lines in your script, or if you wish to give it a special emphasis, make a distinct paragraph of it: indent the whole paragraph five places in from the left-hand margin, with single spacing and without quotation marks. Always when you quote or refer, supply a precise reference to the work and page or pages to which you have referred.

It is a standard and essential academic requirement to cite the source of ideas taken from other authors and to place direct quotes in quotation marks. Where the idea or quotation

is second-hand, i.e., drawn from a citation in another source, that fact should be noted in your list of references, e.g.: Sen, 1999, p. 75, as cited in Todaro, 2009, p. 16.

Web-based resources should be referenced with the following information: author of the document, title of the document, website address, and the date at which you accessed the site.

The work of compiling an accurate bibliography and footnotes is immeasurably lightened if proper care is taken from the beginning of your research to keep such details. When you note down a quotation or other reference, take care to record with it the full and precise details of publication.

A useful book concerning references and the use of sources and related issues in particular is Charles Lipson (2004) *Doing Honest Work in College*, Chicago University Press, Chicago.

4.5 Reference Styles

For the TSJ programme, we require you to use footnotes (not endnotes) and to adopt the Chicago (Manual of Style) method for referencing. Short-form and in-text citations (as in the Harvard method) should not be used.

Footnotes serve two purposes: (i) to give a reference or several references; or (ii) to discuss a point which is incidental to your main argument, but which you wish nevertheless to acknowledge, or which serves to supplement or clarify your text. Most of your footnotes or endnotes will be of the first type.

Footnote references should be in single spacing and placed at the bottom of the relevant page.

All essays, and your dissertation, must include a bibliography at their end. In the bibliography, books, journal articles, online resources or book chapters should be listed

alphabetically by the author's surname. The bibliography should include all works that you quote or mention. Full publication details of the books and articles should be given, and you should follow the Chicago manual of style for doing this.

(<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>) The titles of books and journals should be italicised (or underlined), but not the titles of articles in journals, which should be put in inverted commas or quotation marks.

The following methods of citing a work are recommended for TSJ students:

THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE CITATION STYLE GUIDE from *THE CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE* 17

Citation Quick Guide. If you need to cite another category of work than those listed below, please consult this link :

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html

BOOK

Footnotes

1. Willie James Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* (Yale University Press, 2010), 104.
2. Laurel C. Schneider and Thelathia Nikki Young, *Queer Soul and Queer Theology: Ethics and Redemption in Real Life* (Routledge Press, 2021), 50.
3. Catherine Keller, *On the Mystery: Discerning Divinity in Process* (Fortress Press, 2008), 5.

Shortened notes

4. Jennings, *Christian Imagination*, 104.
5. Schneider and Young, *Queer Soul and Queer Theology*, 50.
6. Keller, *On the Mystery*, 5.

Bibliography Entries (in alphabetical order)

Keller, Catherine. *On the Mystery: Discerning Divinity in Process*. Fortress Press, 2008.
Jennings, Willie James. *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*. Yale

University Press, 2010.
Schneider, Laurel C., and Thelathia Nikki Young. *Queer Soul and Queer Theology: Ethics and Redemption in Real Life*. Routledge Press, 2021.

For more details and examples, see CMOS 13.21–26 and 14.2–62.

CHAPTER OR OTHER PART OF AN EDITED BOOK

Footnote

1. Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Ecofeminism: Symbolic and Social Connections of the Oppression of Women and the Domination of Nature," in *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*, ed. Carol J. Adams (The Continuum Publishing Company, 1995), 21.
2. Devin Singh, "Sacred Obligations: On the Theopolitics of Debt and Sovereignty," in *Assembling Futures: Economy, Ecology, Democracy, and Religion*, eds. Jennifer Quigley and Catherine Keller (Fordham University Press, 2024), 99.

Shortened Note

3. Ruether, "Ecofeminism," 21.
4. Singh, "Sacred Obligations," 99.

Bibliography Entry

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. "Ecofeminism: Symbolic and Social Connections of the Oppression of Women and the Domination of Nature." In *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*, edited by Carol J. Adams. The Continuum Publishing Company, 1995.

Singh, Devin. "Sacred Obligations: On the Theopolitics of Debt and Sovereignty." In *Assembling Futures: Economy, Ecology, Democracy, and Religion*, edited by Jennifer Quigley and Catherine Keller. Fordham University Press, 2024.

In some cases, you may want to cite the collection as a whole instead.

Footnote

1. Carol J. Adams, ed., *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*. (The Continuum Publishing Company, 1995).
2. Jennifer Quigley and Catherine Keller, eds., *Assembling Futures: Economy, Ecology, Democracy, and Religion* (Fordham University Press, 2024).

Shortened Note

1. Adams, *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*.
2. Quigley and Keller, *Assembling Futures*.

Bibliography entry

Adams, Carol, ed. *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*. The Continuum Publishing Company, 1995.
 Quigley, Jennifer, and Catherine Keller, eds. *Assembling Futures: Economy, Ecology, Democracy, and Religion*. Fordham University Press, 2024.

For more details and examples, see [CMOS 14.8–14](#).

BOOK CONSULTED IN AN ELECTRONIC FORMAT

To cite a book consulted online, include either a URL or the name of the database. For downloadable ebook formats, name the format; if no fixed page numbers are available, cite a section title or a chapter or other number in the note (or simply omit). For citing a place rather than a publisher for books published before 1900 (as in the Moby-Dick example below), see CMOS 14.31.

Footnotes

1. Sharon V. Betcher, *Spirit and the Politics of Disablement* (Fortress Press, 2007), chap. 7, Kindle.
2. Philip B. Kurland and Ralph Lerner, eds., *The Founders' Constitution* (University of Chicago Press, 1987), chap. 10, doc. 19, <https://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>.
3. Brooke Borel, *The Chicago Guide to Fact-Checking*, 2nd ed. (University of Chicago Press, 2023), 92, EBSCOhost.
4. Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale* (New York, 1851), 627, <https://melville.electroniclibrary.org/moby-dick-side-by-side>.

Shortened notes

5. Betcher, *Spirit and the Politics of Disablement*, chap. 7.
6. Kurland and Lerner, *Founders' Constitution*, chap. 4, doc. 29.
7. Borel, *Fact-Checking*, 104–5.
8. Melville, *Moby-Dick*, 722–23.

Bibliography entries (in alphabetical order)

Betcher, Sharon V. *Spirit and the Politics of Disablement*. Fortress Press, 2007. Kindle.
 Borel, Brooke. *The Chicago Guide to Fact-Checking*. 2nd ed. University of Chicago Press, 2023. EBSCOhost.
 Kurland, Philip B., and Ralph Lerner, eds. *The Founders' Constitution*. University of Chicago Press, 1987. <https://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/>.

Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale*. New York, 1851.
<https://melville.electroniclibrary.org/moby-dick-side-by-side>.

For more details and examples, see [CMOS 14.58–62](#).

JOURNAL ARTICLE

Journal articles are usually cited by volume and issue number. In a note, cite specific page numbers. In the bibliography, include the page range for the whole article. For articles consulted online, include a URL (preferably one based on a DOI; see *CMOS* 13.7); alternatively, list the name of the database.

Footnotes

1. Mikkel Gabriel Christoffersen, "Climate Shame: What Is It, Does It Matter, and How Do We Handle It," *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 64, no. 1 (2025): 16, <https://doi.org/10.1111/dial.12875>.
2. B. T. Hebert, "The Island of Bolsö: A Study of Norwegian Life," *Sociological Review* 17, no. 4 (1925): 310, EBSCOhost.
3. Biko Mandela Gray, "The Trouble with Gender," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 92, no. 3 (2024): 440-41, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfaf008>.

Shortened notes

4. Christoffersen, "Climate Shame," 16.
5. Hebert, "Island of Bolsö," 311.
6. Gray, "Trouble with Gender," 440-41.

Bibliography entries (in alphabetical order)

- Christoffersen, Mikkel Gabriel. "Climate Shame: What Is It, Does It Matter, and How Do We Handle It." *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* 64, no. 1 (2025): 15-20.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/720277>.
- Hebert, B. T. "The Island of Bolsö: A Study of Norwegian Life." *Sociological Review* 17, no. 4 (1925): 307–13. EBSCOhost.
- Gray, Biko Mandela. "The Trouble with Gender." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 92, no. 3 (2024): 439-446. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfaf008>.

Journal articles often list many authors, especially in the sciences. For works by two authors, list both in the bibliography and in a note (as in the Dittmar and Schemske example above). For three or more authors, list up to six in the bibliography; for more than six authors, list the first three, followed by "et al." ("and others"). In a note, list only the first, followed by "et al." Note that the bibliography entry for the Dror example below (which credits eighteen authors) includes an article ID in place of a page range; in a note, specific page numbers may be cited as shown

(see [CMOS 14.71](#) for details).

Footnote

7. Amiel A. Dror et al., “Pre-Infection 25-Hydroxyvitamin D3 Levels and Association with Severity of COVID-19 Illness,” *PLOS ONE* 17, no. 2 (2022): 4–5, e0263069, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0263069>.

Shortened note

8. Dror et al., “Pre-Infection,” 7.

Bibliography entry

Dror, Amiel A., Nicole Morozov, Amani Daoud, et al. “Pre-Infection 25-Hydroxyvitamin D3 Levels and Association with Severity of COVID-19 Illness.” *PLOS ONE* 17, no. 2 (2022): e0263069. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0263069>.

For more details and examples, see [CMOS 14.67–86](#).

5. The Use and Referencing of Generative AI

Aligned with the [College Statement on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment & Research](#) (2025), the use of GenAI is permitted unless otherwise stated. Where the output of GenAI is used to inform a student’s document or work output, this usage should be acknowledged and appropriately cited, as per [Library guidelines on acknowledging and reference GenAI](#). From an academic integrity perspective, if a student generates content from a GenAI tool and submits it as his/her/their own work, it is considered plagiarism, which is defined as academic misconduct in accordance with College Academic Integrity Policy.

Beyond limited legitimate uses of generative AI, **presenting the output of generative AI tools as your own work, without acknowledgement, violates the principles of academic integrity and is academic misconduct**. In other words, you cannot use AI tools to generate all or part of the content for an exam or assignment and submit it as if it was your own work.

This implies that **undisclosed and/or inappropriate use of generative AI tools may violate the principles of academic integrity**. Accordingly, the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies requires a declaration of generative AI use to be completed and submitted with all work

(exams, assignments). This declaration is made in addition to the standard declaration of academic integrity as part of a revised assessment cover page (see below). Any assignment submitted without the declaration will not be marked. Such assignments will be returned to the student and must be resubmitted with the cover page, potentially resulting in a delayed mark.

This policy recognises that generative AI tools may have some legitimate uses to support your learning and to help you to research for or to polish an assignment. For example, you might use generative AI to summarise your notes in preparation for an exam or assignment, to perform some initial research into a topic (bearing in mind the limitations noted above), or to polish your own writing in terms of grammar or spelling or to make it more concise. All such uses must be declared. No credit/marks will be awarded for use of generative AI, nor are students expected to use generative AI for any purpose. You should also reflect on whether relying on such tools to do this work for you will reduce opportunities for you to develop and hone your own academic skills.

Where generative AI tools have been used to generate content, they must be clearly cited and full details of how the content was generated must be declared in an appendix. There is a helpful and detailed description of how to cite ChatGPT (which can be applied to other generative AI tools) from the Chicago Manual of Style [here](#).

You should assume this policy applies to all assessments/exams in the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies but please note that individual module coordinators may supplement this policy with further restrictions or permissions regarding generative AI use. Please check the module assessment information on Blackboard for that module, and if in doubt, please email the module coordinator.

As part of the declaration, students are asked to select either (A) or (B), below.

(A) Nothing to declare. I did not use generative AI software as part of the work for this assessment.

(B) I used generative AI as part of the work for this assessment.

Where (B) is selected, students are required to include an appendix containing a <350-word explanation of how generative AI was used (which tool (name, version, publisher, url); how the

output was generated; how this output was used in the assignment) and how that use conforms with the principles of academic integrity. Questions and/or prompts and the generative AI output should be included as part of the appendix. These are not included in the word count for the assignment. Where these are not included, **they may be requested as part of the marking process.**

Further Information

Generative AI tools are a family of tools that incorporate natural language processing and deep learning techniques to generate answers (text, code, images etc.) to questions and prompts. The purpose of this policy is to outline how students' use of generative AI fits into our expectations regarding academic integrity.

It is first important to be aware that there are a number of serious concerns about generative AI tools and there are significant limitations to the outputs they produce. These include (please see links for further information):

- *Accuracy of the information produced.* Generative AI tools work by predicting the next most likely word in a sequence. [This means that the tools are susceptible to so-called "hallucination"](#) – producing text that is grammatically correct and which may have face validity but is not factually correct.
- *Plagiarism and lack of source attribution.* [The sources of information relied upon to construct the text produced may not be appropriately acknowledged](#) and, where sources are provided, the references may be fabricated.
- *Ethical issues related to data sourcing.* Many generative AI models were trained on materials obtained from the internet and include [text](#), [images](#), [code](#) etc., that were proprietary, copyright-protected, or protected by non-commercial commons licenses. Using generative AI output risks these forms of plagiarism and copyright infringement.
- *Breach of TCD copyright.* If university module materials (e.g., slides, syllabus) are used to prompt or to guide the response of AI tools, this is a breach of TCD copyright and is illegal (see <https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/assets/pdf/Intellectual-Property-Policy-2022.pdf>).
- *Bias.* As part of training, the models that underlie generative AI were exposed to data obtained from the internet, which may be biased in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and other protected characteristics. Although guardrails may have been put in place, [text produced by generative AI models can reproduce these biases.](#)

- *Ethical issues related to training.* To guard against toxic material (e.g., violent, illegal, distressing) being included in training data, outsourced content-labelers were used to review training data and remove unwanted text. Such outsourcing often involves exploitative practices – for example, [employees who are resident in the Global South and are paid very little for distressing work](#). Similar content moderation practices are commonly used by social media platforms.
- *Climate & environmental impact.* Training generative AI models requires vast amounts of [energy](#), [hardware](#), and [water](#) to keep that hardware cool. Such impacts, [which will only continue to grow](#), are rarely considered in the rush to adopt the technology.

Beyond these concerns, the use of these tools has significant implications for our expectations about assessment in the university. The goal of assessment is to support learning and to ascertain the attainment of learning objectives. A key assumption is that the work submitted for assessment is **original work completed by the learner, and that the learner is the sole author**. To earn your degree, you must be able to demonstrate full ownership of, and accountability for, the work submitted and must appropriately acknowledge all sources used in the preparation of the work.

These assumptions are encoded in the principles of **academic integrity**, defined by the National Academic Integrity Network as, “**the commitment to, and demonstration of, honest and moral behaviour in an academic setting**.” The principles of academic integrity entail that, "It is the responsibility of the enrolled learner to ensure that all submitted work for assessment purposes in an academic setting, which includes but is not limited to, text, graphics, tables, formulae, or any representation of ideas in print, electronic or any other media, in addition to artefacts, computer software and algorithms, correctly **acknowledges the source of any data which is not original to the learner**."

References/Sources:

[College Statement on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research](#)
[Library guidelines on acknowledging and reference GenAI.](#)

6. The Role of External Examiners

Your essays and other assessment elements and your dissertation are assessed first in the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies and then made available to the University's External Examiners for their consideration. Essays pass or fail on the final judgement of the External Examiners, not on the opinion of the teaching staff, although this counts in the final decision. External Examiners usually meet in late November to monitor assessment procedures and outcomes in all modules and for the dissertation. Final marks for essays and dissertations are decided at this Court of Examiners. Final responsibility for the standard of an essay rests with the student.

Student assessed work (exam scripts, coursework, and research theses) is regarded as 'personal data' under the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that came into effect on 25th May 2018. The external examiner, to allow for appropriate preparation, will receive all documents required for the effective conduct of their role in advance of their attendance (physical or remote), at the Court of Examiners. Students will be informed if their assessed work is being sent outside of the EU for the purposes of external examination.

6.1 The Theology and Social Justice External Examiner

Revd Dr Peniel Jesudason Rufus Rajkumar, Global Theologian with USPG, Associate Tutor Ripon College Cuddesdon, Oxford.

The internal examiner of your essay (typically the module Coordinator, or lecturer for the essay topic) will provide you with a report on your work, together with the grade that will be proposed to the Court of Examiners. All fails, distinctions and borderline grades will be marked by a second internal examiner.

7. Course Deadlines

Deadlines for your assessments are distributed at the beginning of each academic year / made available on Blackboard (Key Dates). **Accomplishing the assignment within the**

set time limit is a key element of the assessment. If you do not succeed in submitting your essay on time, a 10% penalty is imposed on the grade that you receive. If you are aware in advance that you are unable to meet the set deadline solely due to circumstances beyond your control (e.g., bereavement or illness), you should contact your Course Coordinator and request an extension of the deadline; you will be asked to provide appropriate evidence, for instance, a medical certificate. Should you fail to meet the deadlines for one or more essays during the course of your studies, you will be asked to discuss the matter with your Course Coordinator. Please see the [Calendar, Part III](#) for College attendance / extension regulations.

8. Absence Policy

Postgraduate students who consider that illness may prevent them from meeting deadlines should consult their medical advisor and request a medical certificate for an appropriate period. If a certificate is granted, it must be presented to the student's Course Coordinator **within three days** of the beginning of the period of absence. Such medical certificates must state that the student is unfit. Medical certificates will not be accepted in explanation for poor performance. Further details of procedures subsequent to the submission of medical certificates are available from Course Coordinators. Postgraduate students who consider that other grave cause beyond their control may prevent them from attending College (or any part of their course) must consult and inform their Course Coordinator. The Course Coordinator will then make representations to the Dean of Graduate Studies requesting that permission be granted for absence. The acceptance of medical disability is entirely at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies, who may ask for a report from the medical officers in charge of the Student Health Service. The report will be strictly confidential to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Course participants who fail to meet deadlines and who have not been granted an extension, will be notified that no further work will be accepted from them and that their assessment will be based on work already submitted.

If you have not completed your module requirements before the deadline for your dissertation outline in your final year, then you will not be permitted to submit a dissertation for the M.Phil. degree, nor to receive the postgraduate Diploma. Please see the [Calendar, Part III](#) for College attendance /extension regulations.

9. Plagiarism and Academic Integrity and Referencing Guide

It is clearly understood that all members of the academic community use and build on the work and ideas of others. It is commonly accepted also, however, that we build on the work and ideas of others in an open and explicit manner, and with due acknowledgement. Plagiarism is the act of presenting the work or ideas of others as one's own, without due acknowledgement. Plagiarism can arise from deliberate actions and also through careless thinking and/or methodology. The offence lies not in the attitude or intention of the perpetrator, but in the action and in its consequences. It is the responsibility of the author of any work to ensure that he/she does not commit plagiarism. Plagiarism is considered academically fraudulent, and an offence against academic integrity that is subject to the disciplinary procedures of the University. To ensure that you have a clear understanding of what plagiarism is, how Trinity deals with cases of plagiarism, and how to avoid it, you will find a repository of information on the Library website re [Plagiarism](#).

Please:

- i. Visit the [online resources](#) to inform yourself about how Trinity deals with plagiarism and how you can avoid it. You should also familiarize yourself with the 2024-2025 [Calendar, Part III](#) entry on [plagiarism](#) located on this website and the sanctions which are applied.
- ii. Familiarise yourself with the declaration that you will be asked to sign when submitting course work and which is included on the essay cover sheet, available on the [Current Student](#) page (Student Form) of the School website.

Contact your Course-Coordinator or your Lecturer if you are unsure about any aspect of plagiarism.

References / Sources:

[Calendar, Part III, General Regulations & Information, Section I 'Plagiarism'](#)

[Plagiarism Policy](#)

[Library Guides - Avoiding Plagiarism](#)

[Plagiarism Declaration](#)

As Ireland's leading university, we recognise that academic integrity must underpin all aspects of our educational ecosystem, including all activities relating to research, learning, assessment, and scholarship. Indeed, academic integrity is a core feature of Trinity's academic culture and is the cornerstone of university life.

Accordingly, in 2022, the University's Council renewed Trinity's commitment to 'acting responsibly and ethically, embracing integrity in all our actions and interactions as members of the College community'. As part of its [Statement of Principles on Integrity](#), the College insists that staff and students 'give credit where credit is due, recognizing and acknowledging the contributions and achievements of others in scholarship, teaching, research and service.'

Academic integrity can be described as a commitment to, and compliance with: *ethical and professional principles, standards, practices and consistent system of values, that serve as guidance for making decisions and taking actions in education, research and scholarship* ([NAIN Lexicon](#), p.3)

Recognising our responsibility to our students and to wider society to nurture and safeguard academic integrity, Trinity is working collaboratively with peer institutions in Ireland, with the active support of national and international networks, to assure and enhance academic integrity at every level of the University ([Calendar Part III, Section 1, page 30](#)) For further information see:

- [National Academic Integrity Network](#)
- [European Network for Academic Integrity](#)

- [International Center for Academic Integrity](#)

References/Sources:

[Calendar Part III, Section 1: General Regulations & Information, 'Academic Integrity'](#)

[Statement of Principles on Integrity](#)

[RTPS Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[Library Guides – Academic Integrity Coversheet Declaration](#)

10. Postgraduate Appeals Process

The Postgraduate Appeals Process is outlined in the Trinity College [Calendar Part III](#). All appeals should be heard first at School level. The grounds for appeal against the decision of Taught Course Committees are outlined in the *Calendar* under General Academic Regulations for Graduate Studies and Higher Degrees – Section 1.

A student who wishes to appeal should first write to their Course Coordinator, within two weeks of the publication of results, stating clearly the grounds for appeal and, where necessary, enclosing documentary evidence.

The Course Coordinator will then discuss the case with the relevant parties and attempt to find a solution.

If the Course Coordinator cannot resolve the matter, the student may appeal to the School Appeals Committee (Taught Postgraduate). The Director of Teaching and Learning Postgraduate (DTLPG) will convene and chair this committee which will be composed of one Course Coordinator (of a programme **not** taken by the student) and another member of academic staff. At the School Appeals Committee, the student concerned should have representation appropriate to the formality of the process, for example, a supervisor, Course Coordinator, or other appropriate staff member.

No one will be appointed to an Appeals Committee where a conflict of interest might arise. Should the DTLP experience a conflict of interest, she or he will be substituted by the Head of School.

Appeals against the decision of a School Appeals Committee (Taught Postgraduate) may be made in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies, who has the discretion to grant or deny the appeal. Appeals against the decision of the Dean of Graduate Studies may be brought to the Academic Appeals Committee for Graduate Students (Taught). This committee will consider appeals concerning events occurring more than 4 months prior only in the most exceptional circumstances. For further details of appeals at College level, please consult the [Calendar Part III](#).

11. Feedback

Much of this Handbook is taken up with rules and procedural requirements. This is unavoidable if we are to ensure that the School's courses are well-structured and that the degree you obtain is of real value. But the experience of postgraduate study should be richer than the mere passing of assessment requirements and the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies encourages you to participate in our continuing efforts to improve our procedures as the year advances and to make an evaluation of your experience at the end.

Your suggestions on every aspect of the programme will be invited throughout the year. At the end of each semester, you will be asked to complete an assessment of each of the modules that you have undertaken. The information that you supply is invaluable to staff in the further development of the School. You may also be asked to take part in an online survey conducted by the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Please note that in any official survey you will remain anonymous, and your assessment of your experience in the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies – whether positive, negative or both – is fed into a structured assessment of teaching and learning. Of course, you do not have to wait for these formal assessments to take place: staff are available at regular office hours (communicated at the start of the year), and they welcome your

concerns and suggestions. Your class will also elect a class representative, who will be able to articulate your concerns through the appropriate channels.

12. Links to University Policies / Reference/ Sources

Students may also wish to avail of the following online resources and/or refer to the Postgraduate Student Support Handbook available on the School's Current Student Page on the website:

[My TCD](#)

[Blackboard](#)

[Academic Registry](#)

[Trinity LinkedIn Alumni Tool](#)

[IT Services](#)

[Library](#)

[Data Protection](#)

[PG Student Learning Development](#)

[Student complaints](#)

[Dignity and Respect Policy](#)

[Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy](#)

[Equality Policy](#)

[Learning Technology Guides for Students \(Blackboard\)](#)

[Trinity Careers Service, Trinity Teaching and Learning - Trinity College Dublin \(tcd.ie\)](#)

[Overview of careers resources for postgraduate taught students](#)

Appendix A - Module Descriptors

A full list of modules with ECTS weighting, learning outcomes and recommended reading along with the full syllabi for individual modules are available on Blackboard. All registered staff and students automatically have accounts on Blackboard.

If you are not enrolled in your modules check with your School Office to ensure you are timetabled for the modules. All data on Blackboard is based on the College timetabling systems and information taken from your student record on my.tcd.ie. Blackboard requires an active [TCD computer account](#) for access. For more information on access and enrolment issues visit the [IT Services VLE page](#).

The School reserves the right to amend the list of available modules and to withdraw and add modules. Timetabling may restrict the availability of modules to individual students.

Theologies for the Climate Crisis – EM7701

Co-ordinator: Dr. Jacob Erickson (Email: ericksoj@tcd.ie)

Time: Semester 1

Format: Weekly lectures

Assessment:

Assessment Component 1: What would you do? Action Plan - Formative and Summative
Group and Individual 30%

Assessment Component 2: 3000-word Essay on Significant Theme of the module -
Individual 70%

Overview

The module aims to introduce students to sociological-theological informed strategies for the sake of climate justice. This module engages contemporary ecotheologies as they rise to meet the challenges caused by anthropogenic climate change. We'll ask how

theological concepts and practices have historically contributed to, ignored, or creatively responded to the eco-social demands of global warming. We'll explore the scientific consensus and politics alongside theological cosmologies. And we'll engage theologies of stewardship, climate justice, and ecospirituality as they serve as resources to think through intersecting themes: gender, sexuality, settler colonialism, extractivism, petrocultures, biodiversity loss, extinction, climate migration, forced displacement, ocean acidification, water shortages, climate grief, indigenous rights, and more.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Articulate and analyze the contemporary science and origins of climate change and injustice.
- Articulate the development of the field of ecotheology as it relates to climate justice, particularly with regards to themes of Creation, the Imago Dei, Animism, and Apocalypse.
- Deploy the major contemporary ecotheological types proposed by Laurel Kearns of stewardship, climate justice, and ecospirituality.
- Engage the interdisciplinary ecocritical conversation on the intersectional lenses of gender, sexuality, class, race, and decoloniality in climate justice.
- Explore the emerging scholarship on democracy, activism, settler colonialism, extractivism, and petrocultures.
- Learn new theological tools for navigating the politics of climate affect and communication as publics are challenged by climate grief, overwhelm, exhaustion, anger, and other complex losses.
- Articulate your own theological perspective for climate justice.

Select Reading

- *T&T Clark Handbook of Christian Theology and Climate Change*. Ed. Ernst M. Conradie and Hilda Koster. T&T Clark, 2020.
- Catherine Keller, *Facing Apocalypse: Climate, Democracy and Other Last Chances*. Fortress Press, 2022

- S. Lily Mendoza and George Zachariah, Eds. *Decolonizing Ecotheology: Indigenous and Subaltern Challenges*. Wipf and Stock, 2022.
- Sarah McFarland Taylor, *Ecopiety: Green Media and the Dilemma of Environmental Virtue*. New York University Press, 2019.
- Joerg Rieger. *Theology in the Capitalocene: Ecology, Identity, Class, and Solidarity*. Fortress Press, 2022.

Power and Empowerment EM7702

Co-ordinator: Dr Kevin Hargaden (Email: hargadek@tcd.ie)

Time: Semester 1

Format: Weekly lectures

Assessment:

Assessment Component 1: Weekly QUICK response reflections - Formative and 5 Summative Individual 30%

Assessment Component 2: 2000-word essay chosen from a selection of four questions set by the instructor - Summative Individual 50%

Assessment Component 3: 15-minute viva voce - Summative Individual 20%

Overview

The module introduces the student to the theological discourses around power and politics on the one hand and social activism and civic engagement on the other. The student will be enabled to understand and critically analyse three interlocking domains in which the Irish State expresses political power in fashions particularly amenable to theological reflection: incarceration, militarisation, and the welcome of those seeking International Protection. These realities will be counterpoised with grassroots initiatives that seek to intervene for the sake of justice, drawing particular attention to faith-based responses. The student will be equipped to critically interrogate, drawing on Scriptural and theological resources, the use of power by the State and to grasp the agency of the citizenry in contemporary Europe.

This module explores how power is understood within the theological tradition with a view to interpreting its deployment by the nation State and the response from civil society. A survey of the relevant Scriptural texts and a chronological introduction to the theologies of power that have been prominent within the academic discipline serves as a basis for the consideration of the particular expressions of State power found in the Irish prison system, the Irish army, and the Irish international protection system (all also situated in their European context). But power is not just a centralized phenomenon, as theology is well-placed to assess and so the course will also consider grassroots activism in these fields from civic society organisations, especially faith-based expressions. The module thus will provide students with a deep understanding of how power is conceptualized within the theological tradition and its practical implications in contemporary society.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Navigate the major theological and Scriptural engagements with the concept of power.
- Engage in theological reflection on activism, grassroots organizing, and social engagement in the public square.
- Analyse and evaluate contemporary public policy positions by drawing on theological arguments.
- Apply theological thinking to assess and interrogate the strategies and effectiveness of social justice movements, especially those centered on the fields discussed in the module.

Select Reading

- Louise Brangan, *The Politics of Punishment: A Comparative Study of Imprisonment and Political Culture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2023).
- Róisín Doherty, *Ireland, Neutrality, and European Social Integration* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018).

- Bryan Fanning, *Migration and the Making of Modern Ireland* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2021).
- Jennifer Baldwin (ed.), *Taking it to the Streets: Public Theologies of Activism and Resistance* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2019)
- Jesús Sanz, *How to Think About Change Today* (Barcelona: Cristianisme i Justícia, 2017).

Theologies of Home/lessness and Race EM7703

Co-ordinator: Prof. Siobhán Garrigan (Email: garrigs@tcd.ie)

Time: Semester 2

Format: Weekly seminars and volunteer placements.

Assessment:

Assessment Component 1: 10 weekly journal entries - Formative Individual 0%

Assessment Component 2: Class Presentation based on journal entries - Summative 25%

Assessment Component 3: 2000-word Essay on one of a choice of three questions set by the professor – Summative, Individual 50%.

Assessment Component 4: 15-minute viva voce to talk about the essay – Summative, Individual 25%

Overview

This module aims to explore a range of theological approaches to homelessness, with particular attention to people experiencing homelessness in Ireland, in order to equip students with both intellectual understanding and practical skills to engage meaningfully and effectively with the complex issues involved. The module pays particular attention to

‘race’, taking as its basis theological resources that discover the roots of contemporary homelessness in the racialised landscapes created by colonial modernity. The module aims to give students a comprehensive understanding of how racism, and also sexism, economic inequality, and other systemic injustices contribute to homelessness, and of how theology operates in these spaces.

This module examines how different theological perspectives can be mobilised to challenge and change structures that perpetuate homelessness, with particular attention to the conceptualisation of race/racism. It weaves immersion experiences in sites ministering to people who are experiencing homelessness with critical analysis of theological literature. That literature is diverse, incorporating texts about the idea of home, social teachings about ethical principles involved, pastoral responses to homelessness as a social phenomenon, and doctrinal work relating to creation, racism, migration, and inclusion/exclusion. The module structures a path through these multifaceted approaches by beginning with an examination of biblical references to homelessness and how these have been interpreted, moving to Catholic Social Teaching, bringing in liberation theologies based on the stories of people who have experienced racism and/or homelessness and concluding with contemporary Christian doctrines (and their inherent theological anthropologies). Consistent reflection on volunteer immersion experiences animates and challenges students’ movement through these sources.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Critically evaluate different theological approaches to homelessness, with a specific focus on their application and implications in the Irish context.
- Analyze how factors such as race, sexism, economic inequality, and other systemic injustices contribute to homelessness.
- Evaluate the impact of colonial modernity on the creation of racialized landscapes and how these contribute to contemporary homelessness.

- Develop practical skills to engage with individuals experiencing homelessness, informed by theological perspectives and a deep understanding of systemic injustices.
- Critically assess the role of theology in addressing homelessness, considering its potential to both support and challenge systemic injustices.
- Create effective engagement strategies that integrate theological resources and contemporary social justice issues, particularly regarding race and gender.

Select Reading

- Siobhán Garrigan, *A Theology of Home in a Time of Homelessness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2025).
- Tim Gorrige, *A Theology of the Built Environment: Justice, Empowerment, Redemption* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- Willie James Jennings, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).
- David Nixon, *Stories from the Street: A Theology of Homelessness* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).
- Laura Stivers, *Disrupting Homelessness: Alternative Christian Approaches* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011).

Economic Justice and Theological Reflection EM7704

Co-ordinator: Dr Kevin Hargaden (Email: hargadek@tcd.ie)

Time: Semester 2

Format: Weekly lectures and seminars

Assessment:

Assessment Component 1: Weekly applied reflections - Formative and 5 Summative Individual 30%

Assessment Component 2: 2,500-word essay where the question is set by the student, in consultation with the instructor - Summative Individual 70%

Overview

This module explores the intersection of economic thinking, social justice and theological reflection, engaging students in critical analysis of how theological discourses have informed and can critique economic systems. The course considers Christian responses to wealth, poverty, inequality, and other key economic concepts through history. It will familiarise students with the primary Christian texts relevant to economic discourse but will also draw in the perspectives of other religious traditions. Students will critically engage with contemporary issues, especially as they relate to Irish society and the European Union such as wealth distribution, the place of work, and environmental sustainability, considering how theology can contribute to a just economic order. Through lectures, seminars, and case studies, participants will develop the skills to articulate informed theological positions on economic justice and apply these to practical contexts. The module also encourages students to reflect on their own ethical commitments as they relate to wealth.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Articulate key theological perspectives on economic justice.
- Assess how theological ideas have shaped and continue to shape economic and political policies.
- Critically evaluate economic structures through theological lenses.
- Develop informed, ethical approaches to economic justice in practical contexts.

Select Readings

- Albino Barrera, *Biblical Economic Ethics: Sacred Scripture's Teachings on Economic Life* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2015).

- Matthew T. Eggemeier and Peter Joseph Fritz, *Send Lazarus: Catholicism and the Crises of Neoliberalism* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2020).
- Mary L. Hirschfeld, *Aquinas and the Market: Towards a Humane Economy* (Cambridge: MA, Harvard University Press, 2018).
- Dotan Leshem, *The Origins of Neoliberalism: Modeling the Economy from Jesus to Foucault* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2016).
- Helen Rhee, *Loving the Poor, Saving the Rich: Wealth, Poverty, and Early Christian Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012).
- Paul Olsington (ed.), *Adam Smith as Theologian* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011).

Gender and Sexuality Justice EM7705

Co-ordinator: Prof. Siobhán Garrigan (Email: garrigs@tcd.ie)

Time: Semester 1

Format: Weekly seminars on campus and at sites around Dublin city.

Assessment:

Assessment Component 1: Weekly reflection posted to group-visible Blackboard blog (art-find plus 200 words) - 5 Formative and 5 Summative, Individual, 50%

Assessment Component 2: 2000-word Essay on a question set by the student (with the Professor's pre-approval of it) - Summative, Individual, 50%

Overview

This module aims to critically explore the intersections between theological thought and ideas about gender and sexuality, with the goal of fostering a deeper understanding of how religious beliefs, practices, and traditions influence and are influenced by concepts of gender and sexual identity. The module seeks to equip students with the knowledge, analytical skills, and ethical frameworks necessary to engage with these issues in ways that promotes justice, inclusivity, and respect for diverse identities within both religious and societal contexts.

This module examines the ways that concepts of gender and sexuality have shaped and been shaped by Christian theology. A survey of the evolution of key terms, studied via the histories of a sequence of controversies, is followed by an in-depth study of theological approaches to sexuality and gender in the past fifty years. Based largely in a liberation theology approach, the module guides students through a diverse range of texts in feminist theologies (with particular attention to womanist, Mujerista, Asian and African feminist theologies) and (historically ‘LGBT’, now) Queer theologies, with particular intersections with eco-theology (including but not limited to eco-feminism) and disability theologies. The module engages students in current debates about intersex recognition, trans’ rights, so-called ‘conversion’ or ‘reparative’ therapies, women’s ordination, and the Church’s views on same-sex marriage.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Articulate and appraise key theological concepts related to gender, sexuality, and justice, including traditional and contemporary perspectives.
- Identify how race, class, and other identity-markers intersect with gender and sexuality in theological discourse, and how these intersections impact lived experiences.
- Distinguish different theological arguments regarding gender and sexuality justice, assessing their implications for both religious communities and broader society.
- Demonstrate skills of engaging in respectful and constructive dialogue on gender and sexuality issues in religious as well as secular contexts.
- Question the roles played by the media and visual culture in both historical and contemporary theological constructions of gender and sexuality.

Indicative Reading

- Ellen T. Armour, *Seeing and Believing: Religion, Digital Visual Culture, and Social Justice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2023).

- Susannah Cornwall, *Constructive Theology and Gender Variance: Transformative Creatures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022).
- Melanie L. Harris, *Eco-Womanism: African American Women and Earth-Honoring Faiths* (New York: Orbis, 2017).
- Kwok Pui Lan, *Post-colonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2005)
- Laurel C. Schneider and Thelathia Nikki Young, *Queer Soul and Queer Theology: Ethics and Redemption in Real Life* (New York: Routledge, 2021)

Mysticism, Politics, and Justice EM7706

Co-ordinator: Dr Jacob Erickson (Email: ericksoj@tcd.ie)

Time: Semester 2

Format: Weekly lectures

Assessment:

Assessment Component 1: 4,000-Word Essay Project engaging a significant theme of the module and reflect on the whole of the programme - Formative and Summative Group and Individual 100%.

Overview

The module aims introduces students to the interconnections between the study of mysticism/apophatic theology and justice and serves as an overall programme reflection on student practices for sustaining interconnections between theology and social justice. This module introduces students to the rich field of negative theology, sometimes called apophatic theology or mysticism, as it relates to issues of justice, politics, and activism. Negative theologies creatively inquire how one cultivates theological humility, ‘unsays’ and avoids false-certainties, and honours religious mystery. These theologies are known for their rich, constructive creativity of metaphor, deep questioning of authority, querying 35 of embodied experience, expressive languages of desire, and contemplative practices. Mysticism has resurged in recent years, as some turn to historical theologies and

practices to shape and sustain themselves navigating late modern injustices. This module will engage both historical texts in Christian negative theology as well as contemporary theologies and practices that politically engage and support justice movements. In these theologies we will explore themes of power, gender, multiple religious belonging, activism, decoloniality, and ecospirituality.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Articulate the contours of the study of negative theology and the study of mysticism, exploring the differences and relation of cataphatic and apophatic approaches to God-talk and truth.
- Articulate connections between mysticism and politics in historical and contemporary theologies.
- Articulate the interconnections between theories of mystical theologies and embodied practices.
- Explore contemporary theologies that connect historical mysticisms to contemporary issues of justice (e.g., in gender, desire, multiple religious belonging, interfaith dialogue, decoloniality, and ecology).
- Survey contemporary apophatic theologies and practices that support contemporary justice movements and serve as a source for avoiding burnout in the work of justice, resistance, and activism.
- Articulate your own perspective and practices.

Select Reading

- Johannes Aakjær Steenbuch, *Negative Theology: A Short Introduction*. Cascade Books, 2022.
- Catherine Keller, *On the Mystery: Discerning Divinity in Process*. Fortress Press, 2007.
- Douglas Christie. *The Insurmountable Darkness of Love: Mysticism, Loss, and the Common Life*. Oxford University Press, 2022.

- Wendy Farley. *Beguiled by Beauty: Cultivating a Life of Contemplation and Compassion*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2020.
- Barbara A. Holmes. *Crisis Contemplation: Healing the Wounded Village*. CAC, 2021.

Critical Social Analysis for Theology EM7707

Co-ordinator: Dr Kevin Hargaden (Email: hargadek@tcd.ie)

Time: Semester 2

Format: Weekly lectures, seminars, and GIS computer workshops

Assessment:

Assessment Component 1: Dataset Processing Workshop - Formative 40 Group and Individual 5%

Assessment Component 2: Interview Coding Workshop - Formative Group and Individual 5%

Assessment Component 3: GIS Processing Workshop - Formative Group and Individual 5%

Assessment Component 4: Data Visualisation Workshop - Formative Group and Individual 5%

Assessment Component 5: Short Essay Module - Summative Individual 20% Assessment

Component: Policy Research Proposal Module LOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Summative Individual 60%

Overview

The module provides a broad introduction to the creation of social science data in service to theological reflection. The module will allow the student to develop literacy of social scientific methods to serve critical evaluation of contemporary policy discourse from a theological perspective, while also serving as a foundation for the development of advanced skills in their future career.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Articulate the limitations of social research and how it constructs political and social realities, rather than offering an ostensible neutral description of reality.
- Engage theological analysis with existing social science research and data.
- Differentiate social scientific data, understand its construction, and begin to critically evaluate the role of such qualitative or quantitative methods in theological argument and within the wider policy sphere.
- Forge – with the support of the programmes other modules – policy positions on pressing areas of social justice such as homelessness, the environmental crisis, the welcome of those seeking International Protection, or prison policy – drawing on both theological reasoning and policy analysis.
- Communicate effectively on areas of social justice through data processing's and visualization, accompanied with theological argument.

Select Reading

- David Beer, *Metric Power*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016.
- Jason Blakely, *Lost in Ideology: Interpreting Modern Political Life*, New York, NY: Columbia, 2024.
- Jason Blakely, *We Built Reality: How Social Science Infiltrated Culture, Politics, and Power*, Oxford: Oxford, 2020.
- Fiona Dukelow and Mairéad Considine, *Irish Social Policy: A Critical Introduction*, Bristol: Policy Press, 2017.
- Linsey McGoey, *The Unknowers: How Strategic Ignorance Rules the World*, London: Zed Books, 2019.

Research Methods EM7700 (Joint module with EM7479)

Co-ordinator: Dr Andrew Pierce (Email: piercean@tcd.ie)

Module Teaching Staff and academic title: Prof. Andrew Pierce, Prof. Jude Lal Fernando, Dr. John O’Grady.

Module aim: The module immerses students in the methods and skills of research, focusing in particular on fields of scholarship privileging liberative praxis.

Module Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

1. Conduct a needs-analysis towards the fruitful pursuit of their research, including choosing appropriate modular pathways; research writing (essays and thesis) seminar presentation, fieldwork, library resources, study skills, peer interaction and supervision;

PLO: 4 & 5

2. Describe the role of hermeneutics in relation to substantive religious traditions in their texts, contexts and cultures, acknowledging their uniqueness and interaction with other belief systems;

PLO: 1 & 2

3. Critically evaluate a range of research methods – deductive, inductive, analytic, action-based, social, participative, with particular attention to the challenges raised by research activity in the interests of justice, peace and integrity of cosmos;

PLO: 3 & 6

4. Distinguish between proper academic use of the work of others and inappropriate plagiarism

PLO 4

Module description – content:

The principal elements of the module are concerned with:

The conventions governing good academic research and writing.

The importance of research ethics, both as a general concern and as specific requirement of assessment in College.

The significance of hermeneutics (interpretation theory) for the development of the researcher, their research project and the wider impact of their research.

Constructing a viable research project and articulating its importance in a research proposal.

(73 words out of 150)

Module Teaching and Learning Approaches:

Lecture

Group Discussion

Guided Reading

Workshop on note-taking and précis-writing

Study Skills

Fieldwork and Case-Study Workshop

Dissertation Seminar

(21 words out of 100)

Rationale for these Strategies

These strategies have been selected by the teaching team to reflect the key concerns of taught postgrad students as they prepare to develop a research project. As a result, the module keeps its focus on the dissertation project and situates its various requirements in that context. The conventional lecture format for some classes forms a backbone for the module and helps to anchor the explicitly didactic concerns to be addressed (e.g., college regulations on plagiarism, or the framework within which research ethics are addressed). But the ethos of the lecture room is geared towards maximum interaction with students and student concerns. For students who have been out of formal education for some time, the workshop on note-taking and précis-writing has proven valuable in helping gain a measure of control over the literature relevant both to their dissertation and to their other coursework. Students beginning postgraduate study are often unaware of the literature that supports the praxis of scholarship (particularly in teasing out appropriate methodologies and demonstrating how a particular project evidences best research practice), and this kind of existentially embedded reflection on research activity is a key component of the module. This is particularly the case where case studies or fieldwork forms the interpretative horizon of a student's project, and students are assisted in addressing the issues relating to their own positionality as researchers. Students are required to develop a seminar, usually an hour in length, relevant to their research project.

(241 out of 300 words)

Module Assessment

The module is assessed both formatively and summatively. The formative assessment activity involves note-taking and précis-writing, and is structured as a workshop with peer feedback. Research relies on the management of information. In the humanities, coping with scholarly literature and other data presents significant challenges to students as they interpret the material at their disposal. Note-taking and précis-writing are basic ways in which to take ownership of a field, whilst acknowledging one's own indebtedness to the

work of others. Moreover, this assessment task is as much concerned with time management as with substantive research and has proven a salutary experience for students during the years in which it has formed part of the module assessment.

The summative assessment component requires students to produce a proposal for their dissertation, using a template produced by the Irish Research Council. Over recent years it has been our experience that students benefit greatly from unpacking their project along the lines indicated by this template (several categories, e.g., budgeting and time allocations are left out as not being relevant to taught masters students). Whilst it is true that the module as a whole is geared towards completing this task, the impact of working out the nature of a project, its disciplinary impact, its ethical implications, its methodological commitments, etc., pays dividends in the final project. Moreover, it is not unknown for students to complete a proposal, and thereby exhaust their interest in a topic, and so submit a dissertation on a completely different topic.

(250 out of 250 words)

Module assessment, separate components, and their weighting to be mapped into SITS:

Assessment Component: Note-Taking and Précis-Writing Workshop

Module LOs: 2,3,4

Formative

Group and Individual

0%

Assessment Component: Research Proposal

Module LOs: 1,2,3,4

Summative

Individual

100%

Additional Assessment Requirements: NA

Inclusive/accessibility: 100%.

Module Specific online environment: NA

Reading List:

Chris Hart, *Doing Your Masters Dissertation: Realizing Your Potential as a Social Scientist*, London: SAGE, 2005.

Diana Ridley, *The Literature Review: A Step-by-Step Guide for Students*, London: SAGE, 2008.

Kjell E. Rudestam and Rae R Newton, *Surviving Your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process*, Fourth Edition, London etc: Sage, 2014.

John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, London: SCM, 2006.