

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies

Open Modules 2023-2024



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| WELCOME | 4 |
| WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY | 5 |
| IMPORTANT INFORMATION | 6 |
| Statement of Inclusivity | 6 |
| Pronouns | 6 |
| Module Descriptors and Assessments | 6 |
| Coursework Requirements, Attendance, and Absence from Examinations | 6 |
| Plagiarism | 6 |
| JUNIOR FRESH (1st YEAR) | 8 |
| Michaelmas Term (Semester 1) | 8 |
| REU12101 Introducing the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible | 8 |
| REU12312 Introducing Theology: Key Texts and Methods | 8 |
| REU12701 Approaches to the Study of Religion | 9 |
| REU12731 Jewish Thought and Practice | 10 |
| REU12772 Introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism | 11 |
| Hilary Term (Semester 2) | 12 |
| REU12112 Introduction the New Testament: Texts and Contexts | 12 |
| REU12301 Introducing Theology: Key Questions | 12 |
| REU12501 Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses | 13 |
| REU12724 Introducing Islam | 14 |
| REU12741 Religions in the Ancient Mediterranean | 15 |
| SENIOR FRESH (2nd YEAR) | 16 |
| Michaelmas Term (Semester 1) | 16 |
| REU22322 Medieval Theology: Women, Learning, Universities | 16 |
| REU22331 Christology: Jesus in History, Politics, and Love | 16 |
| REU22512 Religion, Gender and Human Rights | 17 |
| REU23501 Ethics in Sport and Media | 18 |
| REU23104 The Qur'an: Scripture, History and Literature | 19 |
| REU23122 From Invasion to Exile: The Ancient Histories of Israel and Judah | 19 |
| Hilary Term (Semester 2) | 21 |
| REU22111 The Historical Jesus and the Gospels | 21 |
| REU22502 Creaturely Ethics: Humans and Other Animals | 21 |
| REU22513 Digital Innovation to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals | 22 |
| REU22703 Religion Through Bollywood | 23 |

| | |
|---|----|
| REU23301 Philosophical and Theological Approaches to God | 24 |
| REU23302 Cosmology, Religion and Science | 24 |
| REU23332 Book of Kells (Bespoke Module) | 25 |
| JUNIOR SOPHISTER (3rd YEAR) | 27 |
| Michaelmas Term (Semester 1) | 27 |
| REU33113 Paul and Palestinian Judaism..... | 27 |
| REU33301 Power and Politics: Liberation, Contextual, and Post-Colonial Theologies | 28 |
| REU33704 Christianity in the Cultures of Late Antiquity..... | 28 |
| REU33722 Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere | 29 |
| REU33732 Hindu Mythology..... | 30 |
| Hilary Term (Semester 2)..... | 31 |
| REU33132 Words to the Wise: Israelite and Jewish Wisdom Literature..... | 31 |
| REU33322 Reformation and Enlightenment..... | 31 |
| REU33332 God and Human Freedom..... | 32 |
| REU33713 Life of Muhammad | 33 |
| REU33531 Theology and the Climate Crisis..... | 33 |
| CONTACT US..... | 35 |



Welcome to our School!

I'm delighted to welcome you to our School as a student taking a Trinity Open Module. I hope you will find your studies in the School of School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies, exciting and enjoyable.

The School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies tackles the big questions facing humanity by seeking to understand the roles of religion, peace-making and theology in their historical settings as well as in contemporary life. We do this under the headings of two disciplines – Religious Studies and Peace Studies. Religious Studies stretches from studies of foundational texts, through theological thought, to the impact of religion on cultures and politics. Peace Studies encompasses understandings of the causes of wars through to critical engagement with how to build sustainable peace. Our approach to all our work is multidisciplinary, critical, and progressive. We encourage students to develop multiple modes of thinking – philosophical and historical and political and literary and anthropological, amongst others. At all times our School strives to be an inclusive learning community, respecting those of differing backgrounds and beliefs. As a community, we aim to be respectful to all, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Join us! You'll be most welcome.

Gillian Wylie
Head of School



WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY

I really valued the interdisciplinary approach of the module I took, as it allowed me to expand on the approach I had been cultivating through Liberal Arts at my home university in Bristol, UK. The teaching allowed for a diverse set of ideas to be formed into a coherent final project. I really enjoyed that the approach of the module opened up religion to me. Learning from a real expert in such a lovely building and having discussions with such a manageable class size: this is what I hoped university would be like.

Tilda Hadley

Visiting Student from Bristol, UK

The classes were extremely interactive which was a change from my law classes. Discussion was also encouraged throughout the classes which meant there was always something new to be learned from a peer. The assignment challenged me intellectually as I had to step away from my usual legal approach, and take a much broader, comprehensive approach to the matter. The Open Module offered me a wonderful experience as I was challenged and pushed to try new ways of thinking.

Casey Pepa

TCD Law

Studying with the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies as an Open Module student was an incredibly positive experience. I found myself enjoying the way the lectures were delivered, with a maximum space for questions and discussion, providing students with open-minded environment to develop in. The inclusive and oftentimes holistic approach of the lecturers with regard to topics discussed made it easy to be excited for every lecture.

Jasmina Svarcova

TCD History and Political Science

I had really inspiring lecturers, that were full of understanding and willing to break down “difficult parts”. They were available for chat, email or any kind of help which made it all so much easier. I have to say I am so grateful that I took these modules as I've learned so much about relevant things and filled in many general knowledge gaps. It is not hard to learn when you have so passionate and giving lecturers.

Ingrid Garacki

TCD Sociology and Modern Language

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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 module 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 or sexual orientation.

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, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Pronouns

Our School affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name or pronoun than what is on the class roster, please let teaching staff know. Feel free to correct us on your gender pronoun if you feel comfortable doing so. You may also wish to consult [Trinity's Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy](#).

Module Descriptors and Assessments

The School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies reserves the right to alter module descriptors and/or assessments during the academic year.

Coursework Requirements, Attendance, and Absence from Examinations

For School's Policies re Coursework Requirements, Attendance, and Absence from Examinations, please refer to the [Undergraduate Programme BA Religion Handbook](#), pages 23-25.

Plagiarism

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 to be academically fraudulent, and an offence against academic integrity that is subject to the disciplinary procedures of the University.

Whenever you draw on another person's work, you are required to acknowledge your source. Failure to do so exposes you to the accusation of passing off someone else's work as your own. This is called 'plagiarism.' The University [Calendar Part II](#) states that this is "a major offence, and subject to the disciplinary procedures of the University". As your essays count towards your final mark, plagiarism in your essays is considered the equivalent of cheating in an examination, a major offence for which you may be expelled.

Plagiarism results from either deliberately using the work of another without proper acknowledgement, or from lack of care in acknowledgements. All quotations and paraphrases of other people's work must be properly referenced to avoid the charge of plagiarism. This includes the work of other students and internet sites. If you use another student's essay notes without acknowledgement, both you and the author of the notes might be charged with plagiarism. To properly reference material taken from an internet site, you should give the full URL of the page.

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](#). It is very important that you familiarise yourself with this information.

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 2023-24 Calendar Part II entry on [plagiarism](#) located on this website and the sanctions which are applied.
- ii. Complete the '[Ready, Steady, Write](#)' [online tutorial on plagiarism](#). **Completing this tutorial is compulsory for all students.**
- iii. Contact your Course Coordinator/ your Lecturer if you are unsure about any aspect of plagiarism.

I have read and I understand the plagiarism provisions in the General Regulations of the [University Calendar, Part II](#) for the current year.

JUNIOR FRESH (1st YEAR)

Michaelmas Term (Semester 1)

REU12101 Introducing the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible

Module Coordinator: Prof. Benjamin Wold, Dr Neil Morrison **Semester:** Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

This module aims to introduce students to the literary genres and theological contours of the Hebrew canon and its transmission, translation and interpretation.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Essay | 1,500 words | 50 |
| Take Home Test | 1,500-2,000 words | 50 |

REU12312 Introducing Theology: Key Texts and Methods

Module Coordinator: Dr Kevin Hargaden

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

This module aims to introduce the student to the distinctive academic discipline of theology and to stimulate their interest in the academic wealth of this tradition. It introduces students to ground-breaking texts in the Christian tradition and teaches them to “read for” chronology, meanings, ideology, rhetoric, empire, capital, patriarchy, anthropology, and ecology.

Content

The course will introduce the students to the concepts of textuality and method, studying classical definitions of theology from Gregory of Nyssa, Anselm and Aquinas through to, and concentrating on, more recent formulations of theology's task from modern theologians such as Jurgen Moltmann, Elizabeth Johnson, and Willie James Jennings. The different methodological approaches to the study of religion will be introduced, and the different ways of conducting the task of theology will be too. In the course of the module, attention will be drawn to patterns of continuity or discontinuity, agreement and conflict in the texts studied. The purpose is to train students to integrate critical, conceptual and historical skills in the reading of theological texts.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Essay | 1,500 words | 50 |
| Essay | 1,500 words | 50 |

REU12701 Approaches to the Study of Religion

Module Coordinator: Prof. Alexandra Grieser

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

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

Content

Religion as a cultural phenomenon is interrelated with possibly all aspects of human life, such as the formation of social communities; identity building; politics; healing practices; or art and literature. Hence, studying the role of religions in their cultural context requires a broad range of approaches and methods.

After a brief introduction to the history of the Academic Study of Religion and its colonial, philosophical, and religious context the module gives an overview of the major approaches to the Study of Religion, both the "classical" approaches (sociology, anthropology, and psychology of religion) and more recently developed ones, such as the economy or the aesthetics of religion.

Examples taken from different religious traditions and from the students' own field observations provide the basis for experiencing the relationships between religion and culture and how they are studied as an important factor of how humans live in a complex world..

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|--|------------|
| Exercise | 1000 words | 30 |
| Essay | 2000 words, research project, application and discussion | 70 |

REU12731 Jewish Thought and Practice

Module Coordinator: Prof. Benjamin Wold

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

The aim of this module is to provide a critical overview of Judaism as a world religion, its cultures and practices. Students learn to evaluate the diversity of Judaism(s) in different periods and localities.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Book Review | 1,200 words | 50 |
| Wiki-style Article | “Wikipedia” style entry - 1,200 words | 50 |

REU12772 Introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism

Module Coordinator: Prof. Seema Chauhan

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

The aim of this course is to critically reflect on the history of debates that have led to the construction of “Hindu” and “Buddhist” identity in the present day.

Content

Why do some people consider animal sacrifice and ecstatic devotion as “Hinduism”, while others consider vegetarianism, non-violence, and meditation to be “Hinduism”? Why do some people regard Buddhism as a philosophy that rejects sexism and racism, while others see Buddhism as a religion that promotes inequality? This course introduces students to the history of Hinduism and Buddhism by reflecting on how and why “Hindu” and “Buddhist” identity has been constructed in various ways across time and place.

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Essay 1: Buddhism | 2000 words | 50 |
| Essay 2: Hinduism | 2000 words | 50 |

Hilary Term (Semester 2)

REU12112 Introduction the New Testament: Texts and Contexts

Module Coordinator: Prof. Daniele Pevarello

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

This module aims at introducing students to the canonical writings of the New Testament, their texts, their content, their origins, their transmission and the history of their interpretation.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Gobbet | 500 words | 30 |
| Wiki-Style Entry | 500 words | 30 |
| Essay | 1,500 words | 40 |

REU12301 Introducing Theology: Key Questions

Module Coordinator: Dr Michael Kirwan

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

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

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Essay/Review | 1,000 words | 40 |
| Essay | 1,500 words | 60 |

REU12501 Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses

Module Coordinator: Prof. Cathriona Russell

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

This module introduces ethics argumentation and schools of ethics through the lens of contemporary international debates in society and politics in ecology, technology, economics and medicine.

The issues to be interrogated may vary from year to year but will be drawn from: planetary sustainability; biodiversity conservation; economic development; technology; demography and migration; and the biomedical sciences and ageing.

Students will be introduced to modes of ethical analysis and reflection, related aspects of the underlying philosophical and theological principles and values, and views of the human person in society.

Content

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

Module Assessment

| <i>Assessment Component</i> | <i>Assessment Description</i> | <i>% of total</i> |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 'Three slides' presentation | Prepare a short presentation on a key ethics debate | 30 |
| Take- Home, Open-Book Exam | 2,000 words | 70 |

REU12724 Introducing Islam

Module Coordinator: Prof. Zohar Hadromi-Allouche

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

This module aims to

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

Content

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

Assessment

| <i>Assessment Component</i> | <i>Assessment Description</i> | <i>% of total</i> |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Essay bibliography – annotated | Full bibliographic details of 3 sources for the essay, describing their content & relevance for the essay question (300 words) | 20 |
| Essay | 1,500 words | 40 |
| Exam | Exam | 40 |

REU12741 Religions in the Ancient Mediterranean

Module Coordinator: Prof. Daniele Pevarello

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

The aim of this module is to investigate the religious beliefs and practices of the people who lived and prospered in the ancient Mediterranean world, with particular emphasis on ancient Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia, Carthage, Greece and Rome.

Content

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

Assessment

| <i>Assessment Component</i> | <i>Assessment Description</i> | <i>% of total</i> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Review Article | 1,000 words | 40 |
| Essay | 2,000 words | 60 |

SENIOR FRESH (2nd YEAR)

Michaelmas Term (Semester 1)

REU22322 Medieval Theology: Women, Learning, Universities

Module Coordinator: Prof. Fáinche Ryan

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

To introduce the students to the distinctive modes of theological expression found in the western medieval period. A particular aim is to develop an appreciation in students for the particular contribution of women to theology in this era.

Content

The purpose of this module is to survey the political, cultural and religious context in which Catholic theology developed in the medieval period. An important aim will be to introduce the student to some representative figures in the theology of the period. This period was particularly fruitful in the formation of theology in the Catholic tradition. The course will study:

- The theology of the Monastic and Cathedral schools
- The emergence of the University
- The significance of Aquinas' work
- The role of women in the medieval period
- The early Irish medieval church

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|--|------------|
| Summative assessment | Summary review of selected article (1,000 words) | 40 |
| Summative assessment | Exam | 60 |

REU22331 Christology: Jesus in History, Politics, and Love

Module Coordinator: Dr Gesa Thiessen

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

The aim of this module is to investigate the historical origins of the idea of "Christ" in the worship of the first Christian communities and the developments in the theological understanding of his person and his work of redemption across all eras and geographies.

Content

Drawing on primary sources, critical scholarship, ritual studies and visual art, the course will devise a historical and theological framework in which to assess theoretical presuppositions and consequences of different interpretations of the person and work of Christ through the ages.

The significance of Christology will be tested by analysing the doctrinal formulations of early, medieval, and modern Christianity and by discussing feminist, anti-racist, post-colonial, and queer interpretations of the figure of Christ. The relationship of various Christologies to current ethical issues, such as ecology, human rights, extreme poverty, and anti-capitalism will be explored.

The class is co-taught and capped at 16 students; it will conduct up to half of its contact hours in the National Gallery of Ireland.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------------------|---|------------|
| Exercise (open Books Assignment) | 1,000 words, e-production of acquired knowledge | 30 |
| Essay | 2,000 words, research project, application and discussion | 70 |

REU22512 Religion, Gender and Human Rights

Module Coordinator: Prof. Linda Hogan

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

This module aims to explore the complex connections between religion and human rights, both in terms of the evolution of the contemporary human rights regime, and in relation to the specific disputed issue of gender.

Content

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

conceptualisations of gender equality, embodiment, complementarity, and heteronormativity; about LGBTQ rights and religion; sexuality, reproduction, and the role of family; and gender and religious practices. The module will conclude with a consideration of freedom of religion and the limits of accommodation, with a focus on how states should deal with religiously-motivated values and conduct that offend democratic values.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Critical Review of Assigned Article | 1,000 words | 40 |
| Annotated Bibliography | 2,000 words | 60 |

REU23501 Ethics in Sport and Media

Module Coordinator: Dr John Scally

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

The aims are to:

- Engage the study of ethics in sport as fields of academic enquiry in a cross-curricular way with a variety of methodological approaches.
- Recognise and critically examine the varieties of ethical traditions, and appreciate the internal diversity within those traditions, in their historical and contemporary manifestations.
- Understand and engage the various methods required for assessment of the media including historical, philosophical, social and cultural analyses.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Student Presentation / Reflection | Student Presentation / Reflection | 30 |
| Essay | 2,000 words | 70 |

REU23104 The Qur'an: Scripture, History and Literature

Module Coordinator: Prof. Zohar Hadromi-Allouche

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

This module aims to introduce students to the Qur'an: its structure, style and main themes and context. It will also familiarise students with the reception history of the Qur'an, and its biblical subtext.

Content

Qur'an — the Islamic scripture — contains, according to Muslim tradition, the literal word of God, which was revealed to the prophet Muhammad through the mediation of angel Gabriel.

This module explores the structure and main characteristics of the Qur'an; discusses its principal themes; reception history; and close relationship with the Bible.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|--|--|------------|
| Essay bibliography — annotated (300 words) | Full bibliographic details of 3 sources for the essay, describing their content & relevance for the essay question | 20 |
| Essay | 1,700 words | 40 |
| Exam | Exam | 40 |

REU23122 From Invasion to Exile: The Ancient Histories of Israel and Judah

Module Coordinator: Dr Neil Morrison

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

This module aims to facilitate students' deeper acquaintance and critical engagement with narratives from Joshua through 2 Kings alongside parallels in Chronicles.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Critical reflections x5 | 350-400 words each | 20 |
| Essay | 1,500 words | 80 |

Hilary Term (Semester 2)

REU22111 The Historical Jesus and the Gospels

Module Coordinator: Prof. Benjamin Wold

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

The aim of this module is to provide a critical overview of research on the historical Jesus and, within this context, the role and significance of the gospel traditions for this topic.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------|
| 2 x Gobbet | Short gobbet (c. 500 words each) commentary on selected passages | 25% each (total 50%) |
| 1,500 Essay | Essay on selected topic | 50% |

REU22502 Creaturely Ethics: Humans and Other Animals

Module Coordinator: Prof. Jacob Erickson

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

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

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Documentary Essay | 1,000 words essay | 50 |
| Topical Essay | 1,500 words essay | 50 |

REU22513 Digital Innovation to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

Module Coordinator: Dr P.J. Wall, Dr Tim Savage

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

The aim of this module is to allow students to explore and analyse the core issues and specific challenges related to how innovation can help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through engaging with authentic cases from the Global South and Europe.

Content

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

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

The module links most strongly with the SDGs which can be addressed by new, disruptive and innovative approaches and technologies. This module has a particular focus on the SDGs which can be addressed by smaller, community-level and citizen-led technology-based initiatives. Examples of this include designing innovative ways of leveraging the ubiquity of mobile phones in

the Global South for healthcare and education, and the design, evaluation, and implementation of innovative techniques which are designed to be ethically, socially and culturally appropriate for their particular context.

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|--------------------------|---|------------|
| Case Presentations | Students will, as a group, present their conclusions from the cases being studied (3) throughout the module. | 30 |
| Case Study Constructions | Completion of an authentic case suitable for case-based learning, that highlights the issues discussed during the module (group). | 70 |

REU22703 Religion Through Bollywood

Module Coordinator: Prof. Seema Chauhan

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

This course explores how religion is conceptualized as a discourse in post-Independence India (1947- present day) through the history of Hindi cinema (“Bollywood”).

Content

When we think of “religion”, the first thing that likely springs to mind is ancient scriptures written by monks isolated from everyone except the small group of highly educated individuals that they address. By contrast, the outlandish world of Bollywood which attracts billions of viewers worldwide is rarely considered a medium in which religious discourse is conveyed.

In this course, students will explore modern representations of “religion” among South Asians from 1947 to 2023 through the contemporaneous history of Bollywood cinema. Students will watch six Bollywood films that were produced in five different decades and examine how each film acts a vehicle, whether intentionally or not, for constructing modern discourses about religion. In particular, students will examine the construction of religious pluralism; Hindu-Muslim relations; and the rise of secularism and atheism.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|---------------------------------|---|------------|
| 6 Film-analysis Journal entries | 300 words per film OR video diaries (5-10 mins per entry) | 60 |
| Essay 1 | 1,500 words | 20 |
| Essay 2 | 1,500 words | 20 |

REU23301 Philosophical and Theological Approaches to God

Module Coordinator: Prof. Michael Kirwan

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

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

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Essay | 1,500 words | 50 |
| Essay | 1,500 words | 50 |

REU23302 Cosmology, Religion and Science

Module Coordinator: Prof. Cathriona Russell

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

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

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Review Essay | 1,000 words | 30 |
| Take-home Exam | 2,000 words | 70 |

REU23332 Book of Kells (Bespoke Module)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Fáinche Ryan

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

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

- Interpret the iconographic vocabulary of the Book of Kells
- Give an account of the creation of this manuscript
- Discuss the theological significance of some of the main fully illustrated pages
- Demonstrate knowledge of the distinctive features of the Celtic Church in this era.

Content

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

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|--|---|------------|
| Portfolio – Two pieces of work with theological focus: | Tourist leaflet OR presentation to community group (any medium); | 30 |
| | Essay - a detailed theological reading of one page of Kell's manuscript (1,000 words) | 70 |

JUNIOR SOPHISTER (3rd YEAR)

Michaelmas Term (Semester 1)

REU33113 Paul and Palestinian Judaism

Module Coordinator: Prof. Benjamin Wold

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

The aim of this module is to evaluate the apostle Paul and his letters within and beyond the so-called “New Perspective,” which is concerned with Paul’s letters in their Palestinian Jewish context.

Content

Who was Paul and why is he significant? The apostle Paul is considered by many not to be so much a follower of Jesus, but rather the founder of Christianity. This module explores Paul’s writings, giving attention to whether his ideas are reflective of, or discontinuous with, Jewish thought in the context of ancient Palestine. The ramifications of Paul’s relationship with Judaism has had a profound impact on how Christian communities in the following millennia related to Jewish communities, often with dire consequences. In this module we explore Paul from Tarsus and investigate the cultures and intellectual movements that shaped his thinking. Tools available for the historical study of this man and his writings are introduced. Key themes and current debates that have come to define Pauline Studies in the last decade, especially the so-called “New Perspective on Paul” (i.e., Paul’s relationship to Palestinian Judaism), are given significant attention.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|---|------------|
| Gobbet 1 | Short Gobbet style entry (c. 500 words) | 25 |
| Gobbet 2 | Short Gobbet style entry (c. 500 words) | 25 |
| Essay | 1 x 1,500-word essay on selected topic | 50 |

REU33301 Power and Politics: Liberation, Contextual, and Post-Colonial Theologies

Module Coordinator: Dr Kevin Hargaden

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

The aim of this module is that students would exit with a complex understanding of issues of power in relation to theology. Through its course, students should gain a thorough understanding of theology's role in political movements in general and the conceptualisation of gender, race, class, disability, protest and wealth in particular.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|--|------------|
| Formative assessment | One one-on-one tutorial per student | - |
| Formative assessment | Verbal feedback on weekly student reflections posted to Blackboard | - |
| Summative assessment | Midterm Essay 1,500 words | 40 |
| Summative assessment | Final Essay 2,000 words | 60 |

REU33704 Christianity in the Cultures of Late Antiquity

Module Coordinator: Prof. Daniele Pevarello

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

The aim of this module is to investigate the historical, socio-economic and cultural factors which contributed to shape the development of early Christianity in the first five centuries of our era.

Content

Using literary sources as well as material evidence (archaeological finds, artwork, inscriptions), this module explores customs, beliefs, institutions and identities of the early Christians within the social, political, religious and cultural context of the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity. The course will help students to think about central questions in the study of early Christianity such as: who were the early Christians? How did they articulate their identities across different languages and in different areas of the late antique world? How and where did they eat, pray and live? How did they

understand their beliefs and interact with the cultures around them? What did their Roman, Greek or Syrian neighbours think about them? Students will reflect on different models of cross-fertilisation between emerging early Christian identities and the cultures and religious phenomena which characterised the later stages of the life of the Roman Empire.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Review Article | 1,000 words | 30 |
| Essay | 2,000 words | 70 |

REU33722 Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere

Module Coordinator: Prof. Alexandra Grieser

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

This module introduces ways of studying and discussing the relationship between religion, media and the public sphere and the presence of religion in the media. Students will be familiarized with studying religion through their media performances. Engaging in critical media research, students will develop research skills in studying the role of religion in the public sphere. These skills include critical media competence and the reflected usage of media when (re)presenting knowledge.

Content

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

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

Rethinking the concept of "media" will include but reach beyond social media and the mass media; scripture and dance, money and microphones are means of mediating religion as well. We will ask, what is a medium, how are religions depicted in the media, how do religions respond to new media, and how can religion be understood as mediation while often claiming to provide "immediate" experiences? Students will sign up for a "research team" and develop a case study over the course of the semester.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|---|------------|
| Draft of Case Study | Guided outline of research idea 500-800 words | 20 |
| Input Research Team | Work in progress presentation and response short PowerPoint + 500 words | 20 |
| Research Essay | Final version of Case Study 2,500-3,000 words | 60 |

REU33732 Hindu Mythology

Module Coordinator: Prof. Seema Chauhan

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

Learning Aims

This course aims to introduce students to the history of Hindu Mythology from 1000BCE to 1000 CE through Sanskrit sources in English translation.

Content

In the world of Hindu Mythology, everything seems up-side down. Demons are virtuous. Gods are deceptive. Animals attain liberation. And humans are mediocre. How and why do Hindus narrate our world in this way?

This course surveys the history of Hindu Mythology from its inception in the Vedic period (1000 BCE) to its height in epics and Purāṇas (1000 CE). Students will explore how premodern Hindu writers used mythology to navigate key religious questions regarding the problem of evil; the ontology of God; gender and salvation; and the creation of the universe.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Theory Mini Essay | 1,000 words | 33 |
| Gobbet 1 | 1,200 words | 33 |
| Gobbet 2 | 1,200 words | 34 |

Hilary Term (Semester 2)

REU33132 Words to the Wise: Israelite and Jewish Wisdom Literature

Module Coordinator: Dr Neil Morrison

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

This module aims to facilitate students' deeper acquaintance and critical engagement with the richness of the Wisdom tradition found in the Hebrew Bible and later Jewish traditions.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|---------------------------|--|------------|
| Critical responses x 5 | Seminar submissions (350-400 words each) | 10 |
| Fuller critical responses | Fuller critical responses (1,500 words) | 40 |
| Essay | Essay (2,000 words) | 50 |

REU33322 Reformation and Enlightenment

Module Coordinator: Dr David Nicoll

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

1. Identify key themes of theological and philosophical dispute from the turn of the High Middle Ages to Nominalism in their relevance for the Reformation and for Modernity
2. Present accurately and creatively Mandatory disputes between the Western Christian traditions and their key representatives
3. Outline the rising significance of hermeneutics in view of conflicting views of biblical sources in modern historical scholarship.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Formative assessment | Continuous Assessment | 100 |

REU33332 God and Human Freedom

Module Coordinator: Prof. Fáinche Ryan

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

The aims of this module are: 1. To introduce students to the long tradition of theological reflection on being human in Christian sources.

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|----------------------|--|------------|
| Summative assessment | 5 x 500-word article review and participation in class seminar | 20% each |

REU33713 Life of Muhammad

Module Coordinator: Prof. Zohar Hadromi-Allouche

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

In this module students will engage and familiarise themselves, with,

- Main themes in the life of the Prophet Muhammad
- Available Islamic sources for the study of Muhammad's life
- The construction of Muhammad's image in Islam.
- Scholarly approaches to the life of Muhammad.
- Islamic and scholarly debates concerning the life of Muhammad

Content

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

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|--------------------------------|--|------------|
| Essay plan | Essay question, argument, methodology, structure, work plan (300 words) | 10 |
| Essay bibliography – annotated | Full bibliographic details of 4 sources for the essay, describing their content & relevance for the essay question (400 words) | 20 |
| Presentation | Class presentation | 20 |
| Essay | 3,000-word essay | 50 |

REU33531 Theology and the Climate Crisis

Module Coordinator: Prof. Jacob Erickson

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

Learning Aims

This module aims to equip students to engage contemporary ethical conversations about global warming and climate change. It offers students a chance to explore the concept of climate justice in diverse theo-ethical perspective.

Content

Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical letter *Laudato si'*: On Care for our Common Home states that, "Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day." Thinking alongside this encyclical, this advanced seminar module will tackle some of the most vexing theo-ethical challenges implicated by human-caused global warming. We'll ask how theological worldviews contribute to, ignore, or creatively respond to global warming. We'll explore the science and politics of climate change alongside theological cosmologies. And we'll ask what resources theological ethics might bring to bear on questions of ecojustice, consumerism, fossil fuel use, biodiversity loss, ocean acidification, water shortages, and adaptation to ecological change.

Assessment

| Assessment Component | Assessment Description | % of total |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Continuous Assessment | 1500-word essay | 40 |
| Continuous Assessment | 1500-word essay | 40 |
| Continuous Assessment | Class presentation | 20 |

CONTACT US

If you have any questions about our modules, please do not hesitate to contact us!

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies

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