

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies Open Modules 2022-2023



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

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WELCOME!

You are very welcome here at the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies, Trinity College Dublin, where you will find an open-minded and diverse set of scholarly approaches to the study of Religion and Theology as well as International Peace and Conflict Studies. We are ranked among the top such Schools in the world, within the top university in Ireland and one of the most historic and leading universities in the world.

The School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies at Trinity 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 at Trinity can trace its origins to the very foundation of the university and is pursued in a non-confessional way, meaning that we are aligned with an international academic community of scholars of Religion and Theology whose approach is critical and progressive. Our teaching is therefore for people of all faiths and of none. One of the best things about a degree in Religion is that it teaches you multiple modes of thinking – philosophical and historical and political and literary and anthropological, amongst others.

Peace Studies at Trinity is also a very significant discipline in the University, led by an international cohort of scholars many of whom are deeply involved in civic engagement and activism at local, national and international levels. Its teaching is primarily at post-graduate level, with a choice of Masters' programmes, a Certificate in Mediation and a thriving post-graduate research culture.

*Our students go on to find employment across a wide range of career trajectories, with particular concentrations in the non-profit sector, teaching, broadcasting, the public sector, **NGO's, government, advocacy and activism, religious ministry, academia, publishing, marketing, banking, law and management consultancy.***

Inclusivity

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.

Join us! You'll be most welcome.

Siobhán Garrigan
Head of School

WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY

“

The School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies in TCD is a hidden gem in our city. When I arrived, I had no idea of the incredible learning adventure that I would embark on. My understanding of the complexities of ethics, equality, the climate crisis, and social justice are deepened greatly thanks to the professional expertise of the hard-working staff. This along with wide ranging theological assessment has served to allow me to critically assess my beliefs and how I contribute to society. Anyone not sure what degree to do would benefit greatly from this experience as it forms a solid basis for critical thinking and helps to form a strong moral compass.



Sheila Keegan
Religion Single Pathway Student

“



I have really enjoyed my two years studying as a mature student in the School of Religion, finding it informative and thought provoking. I have learnt about the study of religion, ethics, and theology. I have gained new insights into the origins and practices of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and have a new appreciation of their traditions. The quality of lectures is very high, and the readings and assignments have been both challenging and enjoyable. There is a very open, supportive, and respectful environment in the School, allowing students to challenge and question the topics being addressed. I have no hesitation in recommending studying here.

Paul Burns
Middle Eastern, Jewish and Islamic Civilisations
and Religion Student

JUNIOR FRESH (1st YEAR)

Introducing the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible (REU12101)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Benjamin Wold and Dr Neil Morrison

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Gobbet	1,500 words	50
Wiki	1,500-2,000 words	50

Introduction the New Testament: Texts and Contexts (REU12112)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Daniele Pevarello

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Gobbet	500 words	30
Wiki-Style Entry	500 words	30
Essay	1,500 words	40

Introducing Theology: Key Texts and Methods (REU12312)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Siobhán Garrigan

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Essay	1,500 words	50
Essay	1,500 words	50

Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses (REU12501)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Cathriona Russell

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

Love and Justice: Intersections in Theology and Ethics (REU12522)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Jacob Erickson

Learning Aims

In everyday speech, casual use of the word “ethical” simply means “good.” To say that someone is ethical, we might assume, means that they’re a good or moral human being. But the academic study of ethics itself is older, deeper and more complex. In such study, we ask and interrogate the diverse moral principles, stories and practices that individuals, communities, and cultures orient their lives around (from “God” to “justice” to “love”). We ask where those moral principles emerge from in the first place (their sources), how those principles are created, what meaningful stories are told, and how those stories impact or shaped by the world. And we ask how ethical thinking or practices conflict or interact with one another in everyday life or the public sphere. Why might someone consider one action a “moral good” while another thinks the very same action is “morally wrong”?

Content

Theological ethics, as the focus of this module, is a genre of ethics that asks how diverse Christianities imagine everyday ethical principles and moral value. How does the way one imagines God shape ethical imaginations? This module serves as an introduction to theological ethics (or theo-ethics), through—in the first half of the module—the sources often called upon by theologians in ethical discernment, and—in the second half—engaging some of the major themes and styles in contemporary theo-ethics.

Assessment

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Wiki style assignment	Blackboard Wiki Post	10
Short Essay	400 words	20
Essay	1,500 words	70

Approaches to the Study of Religion (REU12701)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Alexandra Grieser

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 of a sociology, anthropology and psychology of religion and the more recently developed 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 can be studied.**



Assessment

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Exercise (open Books Assignment)	1,000 words, reproduction of acquired knowledge	30
Essay	2,000 words, research project, application and discussion	70

Introducing Islam (REU12724)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Zohar Hadromi-Allouche

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

This module surveys the emergence, development, beliefs and practices of Islam, from 7th century to present.

Assessment

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Essay	1,500 words	50
Exam	Exam	50

Jewish Thought and Practice (REU12731)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Benjamin Wold

Learning Aims

The aim of this module is to provide a critical overview of Judaism as a world religion and to allow students 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

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

Religions in the Ancient Mediterranean (REU12741)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Daniele Pevarello

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?



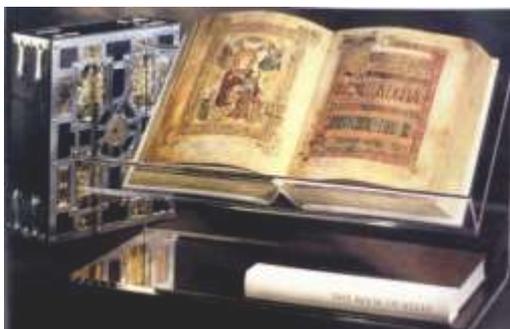
Assessment

<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)

The Historical Jesus and the Gospels (REU22111)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Benjamin Wold



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 discipline.

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
2 x Gobbet	Short gobbet (c. 500 words each) commentary on selected passaged	25% each (total 50%)
Essay	1,500 words essay on selected topic	50%

Medieval Theology (REU22321)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Fáinche Ryan

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Summative assessment	Summary review of selected article (1,000 words)	40
Summative assessment	Exam	60

Christology: Jesus in History, Politics, and Love (REU22331)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Siobhán Garrigan

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Essay	1,500 words	40
Exam Essay	2,000 words	60

Religion, Gender and Human Rights (REU22512)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Linda Hogan

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Essay	3,000 words	100

Researching Religion: New Religious Movements (REU22712)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Alexandra Grieser

Learning Aims

The module introduces New Religious Movements as a contested yet vital element of global religious history. It aims at reflecting on how to study non-mainstream religion and provides students with knowledge about classical and contemporary theories of religion. The focus lies on NRMs as part of a critical history of modernity and supports students in learning how to creatively interlink historical knowledge, theoretical thinking, and concrete empirical research methods.

Content

This module combines two goals: it introduces students to the field of New Religious Movements developing from the 19th to the 21st century; and helps students to develop research skills for studying religion as a cultural practice. Often **labelled as ‘cults’ and ‘sects’, cases such as** Scientology, modern Islamic groups, romantic Occultism or spiritual environmentalism bring up more general questions about how to study religion: How do religions evolve? Why did they emerge as a response to modernity, colonialism, and globalisation? Are these groups more **‘dangerous’ than traditional religions? What is the role of terms such as ‘doomsday cult’ in public discourse and cultural politics?**

By studying different aspects of these movements, students will become familiar with classical and contemporary approaches and will be able to analyse relations between religion and violence, **gender, body politics, or the “invention of traditions”**. They will choose a research case (either historical or contemporary) and will learn to apply different research methods and concepts. For students who find empirical work interesting, this module builds up skills that will help to develop a research question and choose a method as is required in the final dissertation.

Assessment

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Essay	2000-2500 words; case study	70
Exercise	800 words; draft of case study; discussion of acquired knowledge	30

Qur'an: Scripture, History and Literature (REU23104)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Zohar Hadromi-Allouche

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

Islamic tradition regards the Qur'an as the revealed word of God, sent down to earth to the prophet Muhammad through the mediation of the angel Gabriel.

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



Assessment

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Essay	1,700 words	50
Exam	Exam	50

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

Module Coordinator: Dr Neil Morrison

Learning Aims

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

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, Ahab and Jezebel. 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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Weekly Critical reflections	350-400 words	20
Essay	1,500 words	80

Philosophical and Theological Approaches to God (REU23301)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Michael Kirwan

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Essay	1,500 words	50
Essay	1,500 words	50

Cosmology, Religion and Science (REU23302)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Cathriona Russell

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Review / Reflection	1,000 words	30
Essay	2,000 words	70

Book of Kells (Bespoke Module – REU23332)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Fáinche Ryan

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Portfolio – Three pieces of work with theological focus:	Tourist leaflet OR presentation to community group (any medium)	30
	Review of museum visit	30
	Essay - a detailed theological reading of one page of Kell's manuscript (1,000 words)	40

JUNIOR SOPHISTER (3RD YEAR)

Paul and Palestinian Judaism (REU33113)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Benjamin Wold

Learning Aims

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

Content

This module explores the question whether Paul’s writings and 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. Who was Paul from Tarsus and what were the cultures and intellectual movements that shaped his thinking? What tools are available for the historical study of this man and his writings? 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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
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

Words to the Wise: Israelite and Jewish Wisdom Literature (REU33132)

Module Coordinator: Dr Neil Morrison

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Weekly critical reflections	Weekly critical reflections (350-400 words) x 9	9
Fuller critical responses	Fuller critical responses (1,500 words)	41
Essay	Essay (2000 words)	50

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

Module Coordinator: Prof. Siobhán Garrigan

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Formative assessment	One one-on-one tutorial per student	
Formative assessment	Verbal feedback on weekly student reflections posted to Blackboard	
Summative assessment	Midterm Essay 1500 words	40
Summative assessment	Final Essay 2000 words	60

Reformation and Enlightenment (REU33322)

Module Coordinator: TBA

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Formative assessment	Continuous Assessment	100

God and Human Freedom (REU33332)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Fáinche Ryan

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Summative assessment	1 x 3,000-word essay	100

Environmental and Technology Ethics (REU33522)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Cathriona Russell

Learning Aims

This module explores key concepts and debates in environmental and technology ethics: the commitments and values operative in models of sustainable development (theories of justice, capability and agency); questions of human populations (demographics) food production and food security; sustainable transport; values at work in approaches to biodiversity conservation (wild, agricultural, urban); and conflicts and convergences in aiming for smart and sustainable cities.



Content

This module explores key concepts and debates in environmental and technology ethics: **productionism and the ‘tragedy of the commons’; instrumental versus intrinsic value;** demographics and consumption; food security and related aspects of animal agriculture; justice and sustainable development; environmental citizenship and the future of work. It will examine

key ethics responses rooted in hermeneutics, in philosophical and religious traditions (Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Daoism) and characterise the role of the ethicist in ‘expert’ cultures and in policy development in Ireland, the EU and internationally.

Assessment

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Formative	Poster	30
Formative	Essay	70

Theology and the Climate Crisis (REU33531)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Jacob Erickson

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Continuous Assessment	1500-word essay	40
Continuous Assessment	1500-word essay	40
Continuous Assessment	Class presentation	20

Christianity in the Cultures of Late Antiquity (REU33704)

Module Coordinator: Dr Daniele Pevarello

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

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Review Article	1,000 words	30
Essay	2,000 words	70

Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere (REU33722)

Module Coordinator: Prof. Alexandra Grieser

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 (often conflictive) role of religion in the public sphere and how worldviews develop and change. Our 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 an "expert group" on one of the weekly readings and develop a case study over the course of the semester.

Assessment

<i>Assessment Component</i>	<i>Assessment Description</i>	<i>% of total</i>
Essay	3,000 words; Research proposal based on case study and draft	100

CONTACT US

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

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