

Department of Religions & Theology

MODULE DESCRIPTIONS

Semester A:

Eras and Classical Authors in the History of Christian Thinking BCRE07 (HE1016)

ECTS: 5

Contact hours: 22 hours

Lecturer: Prof Cathriona Russell (russellc@tcd.ie/ext. 3493)

Module Description: This module examines discourse about God in Eastern and Western European Christianity from the Patristic to the Modern eras. It examines key events and themes in theological history. These include: the role and achievements in Christology of the Ecumenical Councils in the Patristic period with a focus on Nicaea (325); the Great Schism East and West in relation to theologies of the Holy Spirit; the role of the Monasteries with a focus on the Rule of St Benedict; the Medieval synthesis of Aristotelian philosophy and Christian theology (Aquinas); the Reformation (Luther) and Counterreformation (Council of Trent); theology in the periods of Enlightenment and Romanticism (Schleiermacher); and in the modern and contemporary eras including the theological reception of humanist atheism (Feuerbach) and nihilism (Nietzsche).

Learning Outcomes: On successful completion of this course, students will be able to

- appreciate the historical development of theological discourse
- explain some major theological achievements in each epoch
- discuss the challenges for theology in the modern period
- be familiar with strategies of academic reading, different types of literature and sources, and skills in academic writing
- present and investigate these concepts and interpretations in class and in a written assignment.

Indicative Reading:

Kelly, J.N.D., *Early Christian Creeds* (London: Continuum, 2006).

Küng, H., *Does God Exist? An Answer for Today* (New York: Crossroad, 1991).

Ramsey, B., *Beginning to Read the Fathers* (Canterbury: SCM Press, 1993).

Young, F., *The Making of the Creeds* (London; SCM, 2002).

Methods of Assessment: 3000 word essay, deadline Fri, December 16, 2016