

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies

Short Courses – Autumn 2024



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

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COURSES

These are **day-time and face to face courses**. Each course is **auditing-based** and has either two, one-hour lectures or one two-hours lecture per week.

Time and Place

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

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

Duration

Autumn Term runs from week starting 9 September to week starting 25 November 2024.

Please note: Some modules will have a late start in the Term, running from week starting 23 September to week starting 25 November 2024. Those will be marked with ** after the module name.

Note: No lectures during reading week starting 21 October 2024.

REGISTRATION AND FEE

Registration

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

Fee

The fee per module is **€150**. A concession rate of €100 is available to second and third level students, unemployed persons and those in receipt of a social welfare pension. Payment can be made in person at the School of RTPS (Old Physiology Building) at the following dates/ times: **Monday to Friday, 10 AM-12 PM / 3 – 4 PM**.

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

Executive Officer

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies Building (Old Physiology Building)

Trinity College Dublin, College Green, Dublin 2, D02C1F6

AUTUMN 2024 MODULES

Introducing the Old Testament/ Hebrew Bible**

Lecturers: Dr Neil Morrison, Dr Benjamin Wold

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

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

Introducing Theology: Key Questions**

Lecturers: Dr Michael Kirwan and others

Days/ Times: Tue and Fri 11 AM – 12 PM

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

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

Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses**

Lecturer: Dr Cathriona Russell

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

The module will begin with a consideration of the nature of ethics argumentation and its application in contemporary issues. Students will be introduced to schools of ethics in philosophy and theology (virtue, autonomy, utility, the common good), 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 & displacement, international food security; sustainable transport; biodiversity conservation; 'smart' technologies; artificial intelligence (applied statistics) and the future of work; genetic 'enhancement' of future generations and 'advance directives' in dying.

Jewish Thought and Practice**

Lecturer: Dr Benjamin Wold

Days/ Times: Tue -32 PM and Wed 12-1 PM

This module introduces key social, cultural, and religious aspects of Jewish thought and practice from antiquity to our own time. The focus of this module is on Judaism as a major world religion that has shaped Western Civilization. Rabbinic textual traditions that underpin Jewish religious thought—especially the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrashim—are explored. Calendar, festivals (esp. Day of Atonement, New Year, Festival of

Booths, Passover, Hanukkah), and rites of passage (e.g., birth, circumcision, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, marriage, divorce, death) are studied both within the classroom as well as, when appropriate, in visits to local Jewish synagogues and museums. Contemporary Jewish movements and the history of their traditions come into view along with their different beliefs and practices (e.g., kashrut, Sabbath, worship, prayer)

Introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism**

Lecturer: Dr Seema Chauhan

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

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

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

Religion, Gender and Human Rights

Lecturer: Dr Linda Hogan

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

The relationship between religion and human rights is controversial and contested. On the one hand is the claim that human rights require a religious grounding. This module aims to explore the complex connections between religion and human rights, both in terms of the evolution of the contemporary human rights regime, and in relation to the specific disputed issue of gender. ng, and have their antecedents in religious traditions, while on the other hand is the view that human rights provide a necessary antidote to the prejudices and inequalities that are characteristic of religion. The module will begin with a consideration of contemporary understandings of human rights, of the role of religion in the evolution of the language, values and norms of human rights, and of contemporary debates about orientalism, colonialism and post-colonialism in the articulation and implementation of human rights. The second section considers debates about the nature and politics of gender, the role that different religions play in the construction and maintenance of gender norms, and the manner in which different religions deal with the issue of women’s rights. Key contemporary debates will be considered in depth including debates about conceptualisations of gender equality, embodiment, complementarity, and heteronormativity; about LGBTQ rights and religion; sexuality, reproduction, and the role of family; and gender and religious practices. The module will conclude with a consideration of freedom of religion and the limits of accommodation, with a focus on how states should deal with religiously-motivated values and conduct that offend democratic values.

Researching Religion: New Religious Movements

Lecturer: Dr Alexandra Grieser

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

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 in all its appearances. 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. Be prepared to discuss also controversial themes and phenomena with an analytical attitude.

Qur’an: Scripture, History and Literature

Lecturer: Dr Zohar Hadromi-Allouche

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

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.

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

Lecturer: Dr Neil Morrison

Days/ Times: Fri 4-6 PM

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

The Apostle Paul: Life and Letters

Lecturer: Dr Benjamin Wold

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

The Apostle Paul’s significance for 2,000 years of Western Civilization is profound. Paul’s thirteen letters dominate the pages of the New Testament. His writings shape Christian theology more than any other part of the New Testament. Many have asked whether Paul was a follower of Jesus or the founder of Christianity. His letters, written between 50-68 CE, are the earliest Christian writings we have. From these we learn about the founding of early churches throughout much the Mediterranean world. In this module, attention is given to the social and cultural location of Paul’s activities and his

correspondences with the urban Christian communities he founded. Students will learn about Paul as a first century leader dealing with conflict, controversies, and challenges. Indeed, Paul and his activities were polarizing in his own time. We will explore, from a historical perspective, the issues that were important to him and Christians in the first generation of Christians..

God and Human Freedom

Lecturer: Dr Euan Grant

Days/ Times: Tue 11 AM-12 PM and Fri 1-2 PM

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.

Christianity in the Cultures of Late Antiquity

Lecturer: Dr Daniele Pevarello

Days/ Times: Thurs and Fri 11 AM-12 PM

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.

Hindu Mythology

Lecturer: Dr Seema Chauhan

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

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.



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REGISTRATION FORM

Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

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

Please note: The modules marked with ** will have a late start in the Term, running from week starting 23 September to week starting 25 November 2024.

- Introducing The Old Testament/Hebrew Bible**
- Introducing Theology: Key Questions**
- Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses**
- Jewish Thought and Practice**
- Introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism**
- Religion, Gender and Human Rights
- Researching Religion: New Religious Movements
- Qur'an: Scripture, History and Literature
- From Invasion to Exile: The Ancient Histories of Israel and Judah
- The Apostle Paul: Life and Letters
- God And Human Freedom
- Christianity in the Cultures of Late Antiquity
- Hindu Mythology

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

Registration and payment in cash can be made in person at the School of RTPS (Old Physiology Building) from **Monday to Friday, 10 AM – 12 PM; 3 PM – 4 PM.**

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For further queries, please call: 01 896 4789 or email: srundergrad@tcd.ie.