

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies

Open Modules 2024/25



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

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WELCOME

Welcome!

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 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

This handbook lists and describes the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies (RTPS) course modules that may be taken by student taking a Trinity Open Module. Please retain it for future reference. The information provided in this handbook is accurate at the time of preparation. Any necessary revisions are notified to students via TCD e-mail or Blackboard announcements. Please note that in the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the general regulations published in the University Calendar and the information contained in programme or local handbooks, the provisions of the General Regulations in the Calendar will prevail.

Please note: Junior Fresh (1st-year) modules will have a late start in Michaelmas Term (Semester 1), running from the week starting 23 September to the week starting 25 November 2024.

Course modules are taught for one term, two hours per week. Timetables will be available on the [Current Students webpage](#). The grades awarded for exercises/term essays are communicated to the student's home university by TCD Academic Registry.

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](#).

School Undergraduate Policies

For School's Policies please refer to the Undergraduate Programme BA Religion Handbook, which will be made available before the start of the Academic Year on the [Current Students webpage](#).

Module Descriptors and Assessments

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

The School reserves the right to alter module descriptors and/or assessments during the academic year.

Links to University regulations, policies, and procedures

[University Calendar](#)

[Academic Policies](#)

[Student Complaints Procedure](#)

[Dignity and Respect Policy](#)

Feedback and Evaluation

All modules will be evaluated by anonymous survey of students towards the end of each term.

JUNIOR FRESH (1ST YEAR)

Michaelmas Term (Semester 1)

Junior Fresh (1st-year) modules will have a late start in Michaelmas Term (Semester 1), running from the week starting 23 September to the week starting 25 November 2024.

REU12101 Introducing the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible

Module Coordinator: Dr 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
Exam	End-of-term Examination	50

REU12501 Ethics Matters: Global Questions, Ethical Responses

Module Coordinator: Dr Cathriona Russell

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

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

Assessment Component	Assessment Description	% of total
‘Three slides’ presentation	Prepare a short presentation on a key ethics debate	30
Take- Home, Open-Book Exam	2,000 words	70

REU12701 Approaches to the Study of Religion

Module Coordinator: Dr 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, kinship and gender relations; 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 critical 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 exploring 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	1,000 words	30
Essay	2,000 words	70

REU12731 Jewish Thought and Practice

Module Coordinator: Dr 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 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).

Assessment

Assessment Component	Assessment Description	% of total
Book Review	1,200 words	50
Essay	2,000 words	50

REU12772 Introduction to Hinduism and Buddhism

Module Coordinator: Dr 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	2,000 words	50
Essay 2: Hinduism	2,000 words	50

Hilary Term (Semester 2)

REU12112 Introduction the New Testament: Texts and Contexts

Module Coordinator: Dr 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

REU12312 Introducing Theology: Key Texts and Methods

Module Coordinator: Dr Siobhán Garrigan

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

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 groundbreaking 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/Review	1,000 words	40
Essay	1,500 words	60

REU12522 Love and Justice: Intersections in Theology and Ethics

Module Coordinator: Dr Jacob Erickson

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

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

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

REU12724 Introducing Islam

Module Coordinator: Dr 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

Assessment Component	Assessment Description	% of total
Essay bibliography — annotated	Full bibliographic details of 3 sources for the essay, describing their content & relevance for the essay question (300 words)	10
Essay	1,500 words	40
Exam	Exam	50

REU12741 Religions in the Ancient Mediterranean

Module Coordinator: Dr 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

Assessment Component	Assessment Description	% of total
Review Article	1,000 words	40
Essay	2,000 words	60

SENIOR FRESH (2ND YEAR)

Michaelmas Term (Semester 1)

REU22331 Christology: Jesus in History, Politics, and Love

Module Coordinator: Dr Siobhán Garrigan

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 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-word Christological reflection on a piece of art	40
Essay	2,000 words	60

REU22502 Creaturely Ethics: Humans and Other Animals

Module Coordinator: Dr Jacob Erickson

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

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	50
Topical Essay	1,500 words	50

REU22512 Religion, Gender and Human Rights

Module Coordinator: Dr 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	50
Group Presentation plus Individual Reflection	5 Slides plus 500-word reflection	50

REU22712 Researching Religion: New Religious Movements

Module Coordinator: Dr Alexandra Grieser

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

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 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.

Assessment

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

REU23104 Qur'an: Scripture, History and Literature

Module Coordinator: Dr 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
Exercise	Qur'anic case study	50
Essay	1,700 words	50

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

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

Jesus is undoubtedly one of the most important figures in Western Civilization. His name permeates world cultures, and his morality is widely considered. For Christians, who Jesus is has eternal consequences and belief in him is growing rapidly in the developing world. But what do we know about the historical person Jesus and how do we know it? Can we know anything about the Jesus who lived in time and space and if so, then why are there so many different historical portraits of his life? Jesus has been seen to be a Cynic philosopher, revolutionary, social progressive, magician, exorcist, and apocalyptic prophet. However, he could not have been all of these. This module is interested in historical sources and historical methods. Regarding sources, we will consider the not only the gospels of the New Testament but ask whether “lost” gospels contribute to historical Jesus research. In relation to methods, we will explore the so-called “Quests” for the historical Jesus and ongoing debates about the relationship of history to theology. Anyone interested in the texts and contexts, from Nag Hammadi to the Dead Sea Scrolls, stands to benefit from this exploration of the historical person Jesus.

Assessment

Assessment Component	Assessment Description	% of total
Essay	2,000-word essay on selected topic	50
Exam	End of term examination	50

REU22322 Medieval Theology: Women, Learning, Universities

Module Coordinator: Dr Fáinche Ryan

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

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

REU22513 Digital Innovation to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

Module Coordinators: Dr Linda Hogan, 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: Dr 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)	40
Essay 1	1,500 words	30
Essay 2	1,500 words	30

REU23302 Cosmology, Religion and Science

Module Coordinator: Dr 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 the conditions under which they have been understood to 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 as inhabitant of the earthly *cosmopolis*.

Assessment

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

REU23501 Ethics in Sport and in Media

Module Coordinator: Dr John Scally

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

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

JUNIOR SOPHISTER (3RD YEAR)

Michaelmas Term (Semester 1)

REU33114 The Apostle Paul: Life and Letters

Module Coordinator: Dr 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

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.

Assessment

Assessment Component	Assessment Description	% of total
Essay	1 x 2,000-word essay on selected topic	50
Exam	End of term examination	50

REU33332 God and Human Freedom

Module Coordinator: Dr Fáinche Ryan

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

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

REU33531 Theology and the Climate Crisis

Module Coordinator: Dr Jacob Erickson

Semester: Michaelmas – Semester 1

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

REU33704 Christianity in the Cultures of Late Antiquity

Module Coordinator: Dr 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

REU33732 Hindu Mythology

Module Coordinator: Dr 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)	20
Fuller critical responses	Fuller critical responses (1,500 words)	30
Essay	Essay (2,000 words)	50

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

Module Coordinator: Dr Siobhán Garrigan

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

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, sexuality, 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 churchgoers 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

REU33522 Environmental and Technology Ethics

Module Coordinator: Dr Zohar Hadromi-Allouche

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

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

Assessment Component	Assessment Description	% of total
Formative	Poster	30
Formative	Essay	70

REU33713 Life of Muhammad: Sources, Methods and Debates

Module Coordinator: Dr 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, annotated bibliography (300 words)	20
Presentation	Class presentation	20
Essay	3,000-word essay	60

REU33722 Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere

Module Coordinator: Dr Alexandra Grieser

Semester: Hilary – Semester 2

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	10
Input Research Team	Group presentation of peer-reviewed case projects: short PPT + 500 words	20
Research Essay	Final version of Case Study 2,500 words	70

CONTACT US

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

School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies

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