

Michaelmas Term Modules 2013-14

MODULE CODE	MODULE TITLE	CREDIT VALUE	LEVEL	TEACHER(S)
AR305	Christian-Muslim Relations	15	5&6	Ahmad Achtar / Damian Howard
PH328	Heidegger after Nietzsche	15	5&6	Terry Walsh
PH349	Aesthetics	15	5&6	Peter Gallagher
PS303	Interpersonal & Sexual Ethics	15	5&6	Agneta Sutton
ST308	--- Political Theology	15	5&6	Michael Kirwan
PH201	Contemporary Philosophy of Religion	15	5	Elizabeth Burns
PS310	Psychology of Religion	15	5&6	Rachel Blass
PH344	Philosophy of Language	15	5&6	Stephen Law
PH352	Philosophy of Mind	15	5&6	Tom Crowther et al.
ST306	Ecclesiology	15	5&6	Peter Coughlan / Gemma Simmonds

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MODULE CODE	MODULE TITLE	CREDIT VALUE	LEVEL	TEACHER(S)
PH330	Modern French Thought	15	5&6	Anthony Carroll
PH335	Religious Experience & Spirituality	15	5&6	Paul Rout
PS304	Bioethics	15	5&6	Agneta Sutton
ST309	Theologies of Liberation	15	5&6	Michael Kirwan
TH301	Human Person in Christian Tradition (Enlightenment to Postmodernity)	15	5&6	Martin Poulson
PS311	Sociology of Religion	15	5&6	James Sweeney
PH301	Metaphysics	15	5&6	Tom Crowther
PH346	Naming Necessity & Natural Kinds	15	5&6	Stephen Law
ST307	Ecumenism	15	5&6	Peter Coughlan

Michaelmas Term Modules Descriptions

AR305 Christian-Muslim Relations

This module will examine how Christians and Muslims have perceived and interacted with each other since the rise of Islam until the present day. The topics which are going to be covered are as follows:

- History of Christian-Muslim relations
- Jesus and Mary in the Qur'an
- Muslim perceptions of Christianity
- Christian perceptions of Islam: Muhammad and the Qur'an
- Contemporary Christian-Muslim dialogue

PH328 Heidegger after Nietzsche

Heidegger's confrontation with Nietzsche's writings in the 1930s initiated a period of intense revision and reinterpretation by Heidegger of his own philosophical project. This module will examine the effect Nietzsche had on Heidegger's later writings, including *The Word of Nietzsche: God is Dead*, *the Letter on Humanism*, and *The Question Concerning Technology*. By the end of the course students will understand Heidegger's critique and rejection of the Western metaphysical tradition and the essential role that art and poetry play in his conception of thinking at the end of metaphysics.

PH349 Aesthetics

This module addresses a wide variety of questions about the ways in which we experience, appreciate and evaluate artworks as well as the beauty of the natural world. Typical topics include: the function and ontological status of artworks; the perception of art; taste and objectivity in aesthetic judgement; representation and illusion; copying, forgery and authenticity; the pleasure and value of tragedy; emotional expression and imagination; engagement with-fiction; and the relationship between beauty and moral virtue. The views of classic authors from Plato and Aristotle to Hume and Kant are discussed, as well as contemporary debates about art and the aesthetic.

PS303 Interpersonal & Sexual Ethics

This module examines the ethical issues which arise in regard to interpersonal relationships, including sexual relationships. The topics considered and analysed include: truth telling and lying; promise keeping; fidelity in relationships; confidentiality; the appropriateness or otherwise of various kinds of sexual activity within different kinds of relationships; divorce and second marriage and the demands of special relationships.

ST308 Political Theology

Political Theology seeks to explore how Christianity in particular and religious faith in general can be responsibly and appropriately mediated through social and political life. This module will trace this as a historical theme, from Augustine's *City of God* through medieval and Reformation thinkers. Modern political theology, which emerges from post-war Europe, is in some ways a first-world counterpart to liberation theology. Theologians such as J.B. Metz and J. Moltmann seek to challenge the 'privatised' and alienating understandings of the gospel which have left it adapted and domesticated by liberal capitalism. Other issues, such as religion and violence, and political theology in non-Christian traditions, will be explored. This module can be taken by itself, or together with ST309 Theologies of Liberation.

PH201 Contemporary Philosophy of Religion

This module will enable you to study key twentieth-century Philosophers of Religion in their historical and religious contexts, and to focus on themes in the Philosophy of Religion which have been particularly significant during the twentieth century.

Themes/philosophers studied may include:

- Absolute Idealism – Bradley, Bosanquet
- Personal Idealism – Rashdall, Tennant
- American Pragmatism – Peirce, James, Dewey, Rorty
- Personalism – Rosenzweig, Buber, Macmurray
- Existential Philosophy – Tillich
- Process Philosophy – Whitehead, Hartshorne, Griffin
- Wittgensteinian Philosophy of Religion – Phillips
- Reformed Epistemology – Plantinga
- Religious Diversity – Hick
- Comparative Philosophy of Religion – Ward
- Philosophy of Religion and Spirituality – Cottingham

PS310 Psychology of Religion

An introduction to psychology of religion, a psychological discipline contributing to religious studies and theology. The module explores how different psychological approaches, (e.g. Freudian, Jungian, social, etc.), can enhance our understanding of religion and takes up selected issues in the psychology of religious belief and behaviour, including conversion, religious development and the association between religion and prejudice.

PH344 Philosophy of Language

This module introduces key issues in the philosophy of language, focussing particularly on the issue of how proper names and definite descriptions function. We begin with the work of Bertrand Russell and Peter Strawson on names and descriptions, and Gottlob Frege on sense and reference. We then move on to more recent and sometimes revolutionary developments made by philosophers Keith Donnellan, Hilary Putnam and Saul Kripke. This module can be taken by itself, or can be usefully combined with the Lent Term module PH346 Naming, Necessity and Natural Kinds, though it is not a prerequisite.

PH352 Philosophy of Mind

Philosophy of mind is one of the most exciting areas in contemporary philosophy. Amongst the questions that philosophers of mind are interested in are: "What is consciousness?"; "What are mental states?"; "How do mental states acquire their power to be about objects and properties in the spatially distant world"; and also "Are there really any mental states at all?". One important theme of this module is how a range of important and interesting ideas within the philosophy of mind are capable of being understood in terms of physicalism; the worldview of contemporary natural science, according to which (crudely put) *everything is physical*.

On this module you will be introduced to some of the central ideas, arguments and problems in contemporary philosophy of mind, and encouraged to think for yourself about how you think these issues should be approached. Specific topics on the module include: dualism, behaviourism, the identity theory of mind, functionalism, eliminativism and fictionalism, physicalism and supervenience, content, mental causation, varieties of consciousness, phenomenal consciousness, the knowledge argument.

ST306 Ecclesiology

As Dibelius prophesied in 1927, the 20th century proved to be 'the century of the Church', a time of unprecedented consideration of the Church itself by Christians of many different traditions, both separately and together, in ecumenical dialogue. Why does the following of Christ take a communal form, as 'the Church'? How is the Church described in the New Testament and in the Creeds? What are some of the principal forms that the Church has taken during the course of its history and why? What is the inner mystery of the Church's life and how is that related to the visible reality? What is the relationship of the Church to society as a whole and to creation itself? These are some of the questions that this module seeks to address, with particular attention to the ecumenical movement and to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.

Lent Term Modules Descriptions

PH330 Modern French Thought

This module will introduce students to modern French thought. Beginning with the tradition of structuralism in thinkers such as Ferdinand de Saussure, Marcel Mauss and Lévi-Strauss this module will trace the developments of this movement in the domains of linguistics, social sciences and philosophy. Post-structuralist reactions to structuralism in philosophers such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Julia Kristeva will also be considered. Epistemological issues raised by French thought will also be considered through an engagement with the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty. Contemporary developments in French phenomenology through an engagement with philosophers such as Jean-Luc Marion and Michel Henry will conclude this module.

PH335 Religious Experience & Spirituality

This module explores areas within what can be called the spiritual dimension of human existence through a focus on the notions of *religious experience and spirituality*. Questions that will be addressed include: can we somehow step beyond the difficulties of trying to describe God in human language and experience God directly? Are religious experiences simply the product of our upbringing, the community we live in, the books we read, and so on? What do we understand by the term *spirituality* and in what ways might this be related to religious experience? Can spirituality be understood in a non-theistic way and what might be the implications of this? Can a theistic understanding of *religious experience and spirituality* be judged to hold any rational meaning for human life today? What do *religious experience and spirituality* tell us about the nature of human identity?

PS304 Bioethics

This module explores in detail various ethical dilemmas (as well as proffered solutions) that arise in regard to numerous procedures encountered in the world of medicine. Topics considered include: human gene therapy; genetic screening and counseling; reproductive technology; euthanasia and the prolongation of life; transplants; research and experimentation and resource allocation.

ST309 Theologies of Liberation

This module will introduce the distinctive challenge and contribution made by liberation theologies from Latin America and elsewhere. Liberation Theology represents a major paradigm shift in modern theology: faith seeking, not just understanding, but transformation. Christian truth is to be articulated from the determinative experience of those who are suffering poverty and injustice; they are set at the forefront of the theological agenda. Theology is seen as 'critical reflection on historical praxis', undertaken on behalf of the poor in situations of oppression and injustice (G. Gutiérrez). We will look at some of the main themes and writings of Latin American liberation theology, and those of other related movements of theology, such as Black and Asian theologies of liberation and, especially, Feminist, which similarly seeks to do theology from the 'margins' - namely, from women's experience of being marginalised and subjugated by religious traditions and institutions. This module can be taken by itself, or can be usefully combined with the Michaelmas Term module ST308 Political Theology.

TH301 Human Person in the Christian Tradition (Enlightenment to Postmodernity)

This module looks into what it means to be human in post-Enlightenment Christianity. It does so by investigating the issues raised by modernity's 'turn to the subject' and the subsequent questioning of this in postmodernity, with reference to some important primary sources in these periods, including Pascal, Barth, Rahner and Schillebeeckx. Themes to be explored include: the aftermath of the justification debate; the turn to the subject in Romanticism; theological anthropology and the relationship between grace and creation in the twentieth century; the theological crises of modernity; Barth's dialectical theology; feminism; postmodern theologies of the self.

PS311 Sociology of Religion

This module explores the relationship between religion and society, both historically and in the present day. It offers an introduction to sociological theory for theologians, and reflects on how sociology both challenges and illuminates pastoral practice.

PH301 Metaphysics

This module addresses such topics as: theories of substance; properties and universals; causation; identity and persistence through time, including the problem of personal identity; free will; and the metaphysics of mind. *Some previous study of metaphysics is required.*

PH346 Naming, Necessity & Natural Kinds

This module explores some of the remarkable consequences of developments in the philosophy of language made in particular, by Saul Kripke. The core reading is Kripke's *Naming and Necessity*, one of the most important and influential philosophical works of the 20th Century. We will look in particular at the issue of natural kinds and real essences (is it an a posteriori necessary truth that water is H₂O?); the nature of necessity (what *makes* necessary truths necessary?); whether there are contingent a priori truths; and whether Kripke succeeds in showing that physicalism is false and that pain *cannot* possibly be a brain state. These are all areas in which Stephen Law, the lecturer, continues to research and publish.

ST307 Ecumenism

One of the outstanding features of the 20th century was the growing movement towards unity among the various Christian churches. This module studies the historical development of the ecumenical movement, with such landmarks as the foundation of the World Council of Churches in 1948 and the Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council in 1964, and considers the theological and spiritual principles of ecumenism. Since the 1960s, there have been many notable achievements in ecumenical dialogue. We follow the progress of some of the main dialogues and consider some of the principal agreed statements. We consider church unity schemes and local ecumenical partnerships, and we also examine some of the major issues in current dialogue, such as the need for and nature of a universal primacy.