

HPSC0022 Science and Religion

BASC0008 Science Meets Religion in the Global Community

Course Syllabus

2024-25 session | Prof. Andrew Gregory | Email Address andrew.gregory@ucl.ac.uk

Course Information

This module is designed to analyse and question the recurring argument in modern society which claims that science and religion are and have always been in conflict with one another. The belief that there are fundamental and irreconcilable differences between these two systems and the ways they view the world actually has a much more recent history than is generally assumed, arising primarily out of the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. This module explores the ways in which people in different cultures and different time periods have attempted to navigate between naturalistic and faith-based understandings of the world we inhabit. We will look at several cultures including the Christian, Islamic and Chinese traditions, as well as various themes such as cosmology, Darwinism and medicine.

The module meetings are structured as follows: each week there will be one two-hour lecture and one hour-long seminar, which will focus on discussion of the primary and secondary readings for that week's topic.

Basic course information

Course website:	n/a
Moodle Web sites:	BASC0008: https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=35644 HPSC0022: https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=37536
Assessment:	One essay of 1000 words (35%), one essay of 2000 words (65%). For Level 6/iBSc students: 1 essay of 3000 words (100%)
Timetable:	www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/hpsc
Prerequisites:	None
Required texts:	See Moodle
Course tutor(s):	Prof. Andrew Gregory
Contact:	andrew.gregory@ucl.ac.uk - t: 020 7679 2490
Web:	https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/staff/gregory

Office location:	22 Gordon Square office 1.1
Office hours:	Wednesdays 1-2 and Thursdays 1-2 pm and by appointment

Schedule

Note: There will be brief supplementary readings from primary sources each week, in addition to the secondary materials on the library Reading List.

UCL Week	Topic	Activity
6	Science and Religion: Historiographic Issues	See Moodle site for Reading
7	The Christian Churches and the Copernican Revolution	See Moodle site for Reading
8	Catholicism, Protestantism and Science	See Moodle site for Reading
9	Science, Religion and Free Will	See Moodle site for Reading
10	The New Atheism	See Moodle site for Reading
11	Reading Week	
12	Science and Religion in Islam	See Moodle site for Reading
13	Science and Religion in China	See Moodle site for Reading
14	Medicine and Religion	See Moodle site for Reading
15	Darwinism and Religion	See Moodle site for Reading
16	Cosmogony and Religion	See Moodle site for Reading

Assessments

Summary

	Description	Deadline	Word limit	Deadline for Tutors to provide Feedback
essay	Critique Essay	18/11/24	1000 words	15/12/24
essay	Research Essay	06/01/25	2000 words	20/02/25
Level 6/iBSc students	Research Essay	06/01/25	3000 words	20/01/25

Assignments

The first essay will be a 1000 word critique of one piece from the reading list.

The second essay will consist of a 2000-word study of a topic either from the list provided on Moodle or of your own choosing (with the tutor's approval).

In order to be deemed 'complete' on this module students must attempt both essays.

Level 6/iBSc students will submit one essay of 3000 words in total.

Criteria for Assessment for this Module:

The departmental marking guidelines for individual items of assessment can be found in the STS student handbook. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/sites/sts/files/sts-student-handbook.pdf>

Aims & objectives

Aims:

This module aims to familiarise the student with the central themes in the historical study of science and religion, particularly the controversial question of conflict between science and religion.

Objectives:

The objectives of this module are to train the student to think critically about the past and to contextualise historical understandings of science and religion.

Attendance policy:

Students are expected to follow the UCL guidelines on attendance, requiring 70% attendance. Students who miss more than 30% of the module may be barred from assessments.

Reading list

See moodle for the full list of required readings.

Religion and Science - [Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy](#)

Thomas Dixon, *Science and Religion, a Very Short Introduction*.

G.B. Ferngren, *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*.

G.B. Ferngren, *Encyclopedia of the History of Science and Religion in the Western Tradition*.

Peter Harrison. *The Cambridge Companion to Science and Religion*.

J.H. Brooke, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives*.

J.H. Brooke, *Science and Religion, The Companion to the History of Modern Science*, ed. R.C. Olby, G. Cantor, J.R.R Christie, M.J.S. Hodge. Ch. 50.

R.L. Numbers, *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*.

E.M. Klaaven, *Religious Origins of Modern Science*.

Basil Willey, *The Seventeenth Century Background*, Ch. 1.

S.F. Mason, *A History of the Sciences*, Ch. 16.

I.B. Cohen, *Puritanism and the Rise of Modern Science*.

R.S. Westfall, *Science and Religion in Seventeenth Century England*.

Reijer Hooykaas, *Religion and the Rise of Modern Science*.

P.J. Bowler, *Reconciling Science and Religion: The debate in early twentieth-century Britain*.

Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*.

R.K. Merton, *Puritanism, Pietism and Science*.

Bertrand Russell, *Religion and Science*.

Ian Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science*.