This paper examines the history and characteristics of the constructed category of ‘Paganism’, as it has developed from late Roman religion to the contemporary revival in Neopaganism.

The first half of the paper examines ‘pagan’ religious traditions of the Roman Empire (including the Mysteries, Neoplatonism, Judaism and Christianity) and the growing suppression of and creation of a pagan ‘other’ during the Christianisation of the Empire. The second half explores the revival of Paganism in European modernity, the modern occult (eg The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, Aleister Crowley), Neopagan movements (eg Witchcraft, Wicca, Ásatrú, and Hellenic Restorationism), and their reception in pagan pop culture (eg Black and Pagan Metal, and the fiction of Alan Moore).

You may take this course either:
- At 200-level or 300-level, by enrolling either in RELS 229 or RELS 329;
- On-campus or by distance.

No prior paper in Religion is required to enrol at Stage 2.

**COMMUNICATION**

Please Note:

You **must have access to Blackboard and your University email address** in order to complete this paper. You will receive access once your enrolment is complete. Communications from your lecturer regarding teaching matters will be provided **only** through Blackboard and your University email address, as outlined in the University's Student Communications Policy, so you must check these emails regularly. eVision will also send important messages through your University email. If you have any concerns about your access to Blackboard or to other course resources, please contact the lecturer or administrative staff immediately so that these can be resolved.
LECTURER'S INTRODUCTION

Deane Galbraith lectures on Judaism and Paganism. He received his Ph.D. in ancient Judaism in the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Otago and has taught at the University of Otago and Massey University. Deane’s major area of research is in the development of traditions within the Pentateuch, in particular the Jewish founding myths of exodus and conquest, and the formation of traditions about giants living in the land before settlement by the 'Israelites'. He is also interested in the reception history of religion, and is a founding editor of the journal Relegere: Studies in Religion and Reception.

Please contact him either by telephone or email:

Dr. Deane Galbraith | deane.galbraith@otago.ac.nz | 03-479-4232 (office); 021-236-6294 (mob)

Office hours: after class or by appointment.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete RELS 229 will be able to:

- Identify and discuss the basic characteristics of religion in the Roman Empire and its practices, as well as the theories surrounding it;
- Identify and discuss the way in which ‘Paganism’ and the practices of the ‘pagans’ have been portrayed in Christianity, European intellectual tradition and modern theories and historiographies of religion;
- Identify and discuss various pagan revivals of the Renaissance and later, including 20th- and 21st-century Neopaganism;
- Distinguish between traditional Roman religious practices in their original historical context and from their later polemisation or, alternatively, their later valorization.

Students who successfully complete RELS 329 will, in addition to the four learning outcomes listed above, be able to:

Identify and discuss the way in which late antique religionists and their early modern heirs reconfigured the traditional religion of Roman antiquity as a full theology and, based on this, produced a universal theory and history of religions;
Identify and discuss how contemporary neopagans rely on contemporary categories of understanding.
This paper is taught by:

(On-campus)
- Twice-weekly lectures, Monday and Thursday, 11.00–11.50 am
  (note: Distance students are welcome to attend on-campus classes).

(Distance)
- Recorded twice-weekly lectures with PowerPoint slides, via Capture on Blackboard;
- An online forum in Blackboard. As Distance students do not usually have the benefit of being able to ask questions in class, or to meet during office hours, an online forum will be available to ask questions or discuss lectures, readings, and anything else related to the course. I will review the forum regularly, and pose questions for discussion, but everyone in the class should feel free to contribute, or suggest answers based on their knowledge. If you are writing something lengthy, it is best to draft it offline first, and then copy it to Blackboard (to make sure what you write doesn't get lost in the submission process). On-campus students are welcome to join in, too.

This course is divided into five Parts:

*Part 1*: Paganism and the Western Imaginary

*Part 2*: The Original Pagans: Religion in the Roman Empire

*Part 3*: Pagans versus Christians

*Part 4*: The Revival of Paganism

*Part 5*: Neopaganism

Part 1 provides a theoretical introduction to the concept of Paganism, interrogating some of the attempts to define the category in modernity. Parts 2 and 3 examine the emergence of the category of ‘Paganism’ in antiquity, in dialogue with its binary opposite, Christianity. In Parts 4 and 5, we shift to modernity, from the revival of Paganism in the Renaissance to the emergence over the last century of self-professing pagans within various neopagan groups and movements.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART ONE: Paganism and the Western Imaginary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday 27 Feb</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1  Lecture: Situating ‘Paganism’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday 2 Mar</strong></td>
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<td>1.2  Lecture: Paganism and the history of religions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monday 6 Mar</strong></td>
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<td>1.3  Lecture: The Price of Monotheism</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday 9 Mar</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4  Lecture: Mosaic Distinction vs. Pagan Monotheism</td>
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<tr>
<td>PART TWO: The Original Pagans: Religion in the Roman Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday 13 Mar</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.5  Lecture: Paganism in Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday 16 Mar</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6  Lecture: Paganism in Christianity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday 20 Mar</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7  Lecture: Roman Family and Civic Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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</table>
| Thursday 23 Mar | 2.8     | Roman Mystery Cults: Secret Knowledge, Initiation, and Devotion  
| Monday 27 Mar | 2.9     | Roman Mystery Cults: Magna Mater, Isis, Mithras, Hermes Trismegistus  
| Thursday 30 Mar | 2.10    | Neoplatonism  

**PART THREE: Pagans versus Christians**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Monday 3 Apr | 3.11    | The Myth of Pagan Persecution of Christians  
| Thursday 6 Apr | 3.12    | The Myth of Pagan Tolerance of Christians  
| Monday 10 Apr | 3.13    | Christianization of the Roman Empire  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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**PART FOUR: The Revival of Paganism**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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**PART FIVE: Neopaganism**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 15 May</td>
<td>5.21 Lecture:</td>
<td>The Witch’s Craft 2</td>
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<tr>
<th>Thursday 18 May</th>
<th>5.22 Lecture:</th>
<th>Ásatrú (Odinism), Race, and Nationalism</th>
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<tr>
<th>Monday 22 May</th>
<th>5.23 Lecture:</th>
<th>Metal Paganism</th>
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<tr>
<th>Thursday 25 May</th>
<th>5.24 Lecture:</th>
<th>Fictional Paganism: Alan Moore between Art and Religion</th>
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<tr>
<th>Monday 29 May</th>
<th>Lecture:</th>
<th>The Restoration of Hellenism</th>
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</table>
|                | Reading:     | http://www.hellenion.org/Mission.html  
http://novaroma.org/nr/Category:Religio_Romana_%28Nova_Roma%29  
http://novaroma.org/nr/Declaration_of_Roman_Paganism |

| Thursday 1 Jun | Lecture:     | Course revision and conclusions |
RESOURCES

- Blackboard, the University’s online learning tool;
- A Course Book containing a Study Guide and most required readings
- This Course Outline, which explains how the course is taught
- eReserve, a resource for extra readings, which you can access via Blackboard;
- Discussion forum, which you can access via Blackboard;
- The Department's “Study and Style Guide” which recommends students use the 16th edition of the Chicago Style Guide when writing essays. It is available online at http://www.otago.ac.nz/religion/courses.resources.html
- For distance students, the handbook Distance Learning Information and Support 2017, provides advice on administrative matters not covered in this course book and on the Distance Library Service. (You may download the PDF from the 'Essential Information' web page).

THIS IS IMPORTANT!

You will find there is a lot of helpful information and resources on the Department’s website. In particular, we require you to read the section called “Essential Student Information." You will find it here:

http://www.otago.ac.nz/religion/courses/resources.html

This page provides a number of useful resources such as the Study and Style Guide and the Plagiarism Declaration Form you must attach to your assignments. It supplies detailed information on assessment and student support. In particular, it contains guidance on the topics of plagiarism and deadlines, both of which can incur penalties if not heeded. This also is where you will find instructions for making online discussion posts and submitting assignments electronically. So it is very important you make yourself familiar with this material. Our assumption is that you have read it.

We will make reference to information on the website in the following pages, so do take the time to follow the links and absorb the material. It will save you from making costly mistakes and help to make the practical experience of distance study a straightforward one.
The assessment for this paper comprises three elements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>RELS 229</th>
<th>RELS 329</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay (2000 words)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay (2500 words)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination (2 hours)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</table>

**ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS**

**Assignment One: Contemporary Pagans and their Use of the Past**

Due date: Monday 10 April 2017

200-level: 2,000 words (20%)
300-level: 2,500 words (25%)

Choose a website of a contemporary group or person using one of the following terms as a self-description:
- “pagan”
- “heathen”
- “neopagan”
- “wiccan”
- “witch”

On the basis of their website alone, identify, describe, and critically analyse:

a) their key practices and beliefs; and

b) the nature of the various claims they make about the past and any other uses they make of the past.

**Guidelines for Completing Assignment One**

Assignment One asks you to acquaint yourself with a contemporary pagan movement or author, based on their own website, and to demonstrate this by your description and analysis. For this purpose, you must select their own personal or group website, not a website by a third party. You are welcome to choose the website of a pagan author or group that you are already familiar with. But in that case, make sure that what you write is supported by what is published on the website. If you are not familiar with any such person or group, it may help if you browse through Part 5 of the Study Guide in order to get an idea of what is meant by contemporary pagans and pagan groups, and then browse the internet to search for contemporary pagans or pagan groups. The early lectures in Part 1
should be useful too in considering the terms “pagan”, “heathen”, and “neopagan”, but you will not be expected to be familiar with scholarship on Neopaganism (which will be introduced in Part 5). In selecting a group or person, it will help your completion of the assignment if the website is sufficiently detailed, with a number of pages within the website (but not links to other websites).

For this assignment, you only have to read what the group or person has written. You do not have to read any secondary literature (i.e., the things written about the person or group by others). In most cases, there simply won’t be any specific secondary literature available, anyway. If there is, it may help you develop your own analysis. But what you will be assessed on is your ability to read, understand, and analyse the person’s or group’s own literature. So really get to know where they are coming from!

You will still need to carefully reference each separate point in your description of the pagan author or group whom you select. References must include the author’s name, webpage name, website name, date, and specific URL: e.g:


The Department of Theology and Religion has a Style Guide, available on the Department's website ('Essential Information') which sets out the recommended style. What is most important, however, is that you provide sufficient references to allow a reader to refer to the sources you used, and do so in a consistent style. Please also make sure that your presentation style is legible and scholarly, and that you write in full sentences in an essay style, employing correct English grammar, syntax, and that the finished product is easy to follow and coherent.

At the beginning of the essay, briefly identify and describe the group or author, and their website. Once you have selected a person or group, and read and made notes on their website, you might want to make lists of (a) key practices and beliefs; and (b) their claims about or other uses of the past. These lists should then be developed into more detailed descriptions and analyses of each point on the list. It is, of course, impossible to say all that can be said about the person or group. So you will need to choose the most significant points, and develop these. You might find some of the points on the list more interesting, or that they require more critical explanation. So rather than offering short and disconnected observations on dozens of points, you might like to choose a few that you feel you could write well on, and perhaps summarise some other points more succinctly. The overall aim is to present an accurate and representative description and analysis of the group’s or person’s website.

In respect of the group’s or person’s key practices and beliefs, you should provide a summary of their overall goal or purpose. In addition, note significant rituals, practices, group meetings or activities, mythologies, gods or goddesses, beliefs about the workings of the world, human abilities and goals in life, oppositions to or difference from other relevant people or groups, etc. In respect of their claims about or other uses of the past, you should note in particular any references to their following of older traditions or authorities. Consider what roles and significance such claims about the past have in the group or for the author. Consider also if or how their sense of identity is related to the past (e.g., do they see themselves as standing in continuity with people, groups, ideas, or practices from the past?) Some of these claims about or uses of the past may be explicit, and some may be less obvious, so identifying them may require some consideration.
Depending on the content of the website, you should devote about half to two-thirds of the assignment to part (a) and about one-third to half of the assignment to part (b).

Assignment Two: Ancient Pagans and the Limits of “Paganism”

Due date: Monday 15 May 2017
200-level: 2,500 words (30%)
300-level: 3,500 words (35%)

Choose one of the following ancient groups or individuals:

- Mithraism
- Mysteries of Isis
- The cult of Magna Mater (Cybele)
- Early Christianity
- Early Judaism
- Plotinus
- Iamblichus
- The Emperor Julian

1. Identify its/his key practices and beliefs, providing in respect of each key practice or belief:
   a. a description of that key practice or belief; and
   b. a discussion of whether, to what extent, and in what sense that key practice or belief might or might not be categorized as “pagan”; and

2. In light of your overall discussion in (1), discuss the benefits and shortcomings of the category “pagan” for understanding the individual or group.

Guidelines for Completing Assignment Two

Assignment Two asks you to consider one of the ancient groups or persons we have encountered in Parts 2 to 3 of this course.

There are three distinct parts to the assignment. Section (1) of the essay has a double purpose. You will need: (a) to provide a detailed description of each of the elements which are important for our understanding of the religious practices and views of the person or group. This should involve noting their significant rituals, practices, group meetings or activities, mythologies, gods or goddesses, beliefs about the workings of the world, and their position and status in the wider Roman world, among other factors. Some of these elements will be more important (or just more interesting) than others, so you will need to consider what weighting to give to each. It is impossible to cover everything about these groups or individuals. But you should also compose this section with an eye on (1)(b), which addresses what is “pagan” about each of those practices and beliefs. So in your description of the person or group, please pay particular attention to such issues as their polytheism, henotheism, or monotheism, their exclusivity or “toleration”, whether they involve “primary” or “secondary” religion (à la Jan Assmann), etc.
Section (2) of the question asks you to consider whether and to what extent the category of “pagan” is appropriate or inappropriate for understanding the person or group in question. As you will be aware by this stage in the course, it has been traditional to emphasise the monotheistic nature of Judaism and Christianity. But how much of this categorisation is a result of a tendency to construct a contrast with other religions? Or conversely, to what extent is there paganism within Judaism and Christianity? In respect of Mithraism, the mysteries of Isis, the cult of Magna Mater, and also for Julian, Plotinus, and Iamblichus, the issue is similar, but the common assumptions are the other way around. Although often categorised as “pagan” religion or as “pagans”, in what ways do these groups or individuals challenge the very category of “paganism”? A discussion of “pagan monotheism” or “henotheism”, introduced in Part 1, should form a part of your answer. What are the problems inherent in the classification of ancient religion as “pagan” or “Christian”? Does the distinction help or hinder our understanding of the ancient religious phenomena or people? Or perhaps bits of both? Near the beginning of the essay, you will need to define the term “pagan” as you will employ it in your essay.

The assignment should be answered in a continuous essay form. Remember the points about footnoting and style in the notes to assignment one.

In order to research your group or person, begin with the relevant study guides and the Required and Further readings in the reading lists. After that, 200-level students might, and 300-level students should make use of further library resources (both physical and online materials) to conduct additional research. Unlike the first assignment, be wary of websites which discuss your groups or individuals, as many websites do not meet academic standards. Your main resources should be academic books and journal articles on your chosen group or individual. Websites which host academic translations of ancient texts can be very useful, though. There is a range of academic opinions out there on each of the groups and persons. I don’t care what you conclude (really, I don’t!) But what I do want to see is a coherently presented and sound argument, in which you use your research to support whatever conclusions you come to.

About 80–90% of the body of the essay should address section one of the assignment (concerning key practices and beliefs and their categorisation as “pagan” or otherwise). Probably the easiest way of tackling this is to consider which elements of your group or individual you wish to discuss, and then discuss each one by one. That leaves 10-20% of the body of the essay to address the second section of the assignment (concerning the benefits and shortcomings of the category “pagan” for analysis of ancient religion). Succinct introductions and a conclusion are a must, too, and these should set out what you will attempt to argue, and then summarise your conclusions. Lastly, it is probably best to choose a subject that most interests you (hopefully one does!) It’s usually easier to write (and easier for others to read) when you have an interest in what you’re researching.

**REFERENCING SYSTEM**

For writing essays, the Department requires that you use the 16th edition of the *Chicago Style Guide*, which is the norm for many academic journals in the Humanities. The Department has prepared a *Study and Style Guide*, which outlines the Chicago Style and offers other advice on essay presentation. You may find it via the Department’s “Student Resources and Information” page: [http://www.otago.ac.nz/religion/courses/resources.html](http://www.otago.ac.nz/religion/courses/resources.html)
## SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK

All assignments shall be submitted electronically via the “Assignment” feature on Blackboard by midnight on the due dates notified. Please do not submit paper copies. For full instructions about how to submit assignments electronically via Blackboard as well as other important information on plagiarism, grading, and deadlines, please see the “Essential Information” web page.

## PLAGIARISM

All Assignments submitted in the Department of Theology and Religion must be prefaced with a student Plagiarism Declaration Form. They will not be deemed to have been submitted unless and until the Plagiarism Declaration Form has been submitted.

It can be downloaded from http://www.otago.ac.nz/religion/courses/resources.html It is also on the Blackboard site for this course.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity means being honest in your studying and assessments. It is the basis for ethical decision-making and behaviour in an academic context. Academic integrity is informed by the values of honesty, trust, responsibility, fairness, respect and courage. Students are expected to be aware of, and act in accordance with, the University’s Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic Misconduct, such as plagiarism or cheating, is a breach of Academic Integrity and is taken very seriously by the University. Types of misconduct include plagiarism, copying, unauthorised collaboration, taking unauthorised material into a test or exam, impersonation, and assisting someone else’s misconduct. A more extensive list of the types of academic misconduct and associated processes and penalties is available in the University’s Student Academic Misconduct Procedures.

It is your responsibility to be aware of and use acceptable academic practices when completing your assessments. To access the information in the Academic Integrity Policy and learn more, please visit the University’s Academic Integrity website at www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity or ask at the Student Learning Centre or Library. If you have any questions, ask your lecturer.

http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116838.html
http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116850.html

## STUDENT SUPPORT

The “Essential Information” web page provides helpful information on how to access the University Library’s resources, as well as a guide to the support services available to
students at the University of Otago, including the Student Learning Centre and Disability Support.

For all administrative enquiries, please contact:
The Administrative Assistant for Theology and Religion.
Email: theology@otago.ac.nz  Phone: 03 479 8516

For all distance learning enquiries, please contact:
Katherine Rae, Administrative Assistant for Theology and Religion.
Email: katherine.rae@otago.ac.nz  Phone: 03 479 8639

We recommend that you contact the Department as soon as possible if you have any problems participating in the course or accessing resources. Please remember to check your University email account regularly for updates and announcements.