



PAST 219/319

Christian Witness in a Secular World

Short Course Description

Lecturer: Dr Lynne Taylor

Brief Introduction to the Paper

This paper offers a fresh look at Christian witness in the light of today's "secular" context. It considers the implications of our changed and changing world for Christians, churches and faith-based agencies. How might they live out the gospel in Aotearoa today?

The paper unpacks the meaning and significance of secularisation, explores what drives contemporary meaning-making, and considers what the shape of Christian witness might therefore be. It homes in on methods and models of evangelism, as one expression of Christian witness and notes implications for churches and ministry leaders.

Assessment

This paper is fully internally assessed. There is no examination.

PAST 219: Two 1500 word essays (25% each), one 1800 word assignment (30%); and online discussion (20%).

PAST 319: Two 1800 word essays (25% each), one 2000 word assignment (30%); and online discussion (20%).

Teaching schedule

This paper is taught by distance through six video-conferences, plus a teaching day. Most video-conferences are 1 hr 50 mins but the first is 50 mins. The teaching day is in-person in Wellington.

Timetable details are available at <https://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/> (See the hyperlinks under “Timetables”, on the right hand side)

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete the paper at 200-level should be able to:

- Compare and contrast selected secularisation theories
- Outline what scholars mean by 'authenticity', including its origins and current forms
- Understand how the trope of authenticity can be understood in the light of Christian tradition
- Describe ways Christians and local congregations can and do engage in Christian witness
- Articulate specific ways an understanding of secularisation and/or authenticity can shape the practice of a local congregation
- Apply understandings to a specific ministry context

Students who successfully complete the paper at 300-level should be able to:

- Compare, contrast and evaluate selected secularisation theories
- Outline what scholars mean by 'authenticity', including its origins and current forms
- Critically evaluate how the trope of authenticity can be understood in the light of Christian tradition
- Critically evaluate selected models of evangelism in relation to an aspect of contemporary NZ society
- Articulate specific ways an understanding of secularisation and/or authenticity can shape the practice of a local congregation
- Critically apply understandings to a specific ministry context

For more information

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