



CHTH 320/420

Public Theology and Social Justice

Course Outline 2022

SEMESTER 1, 2022

Class Times:

Monday 12.00 – 1.50pm

- February 28
- March 7, 14, 21, 28
- April 6, 11
- May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Classes will be held at the Wellington Anglican Centre, 18 Eccleston Hill, Thorndon, and simultaneously live-streamed (via Zoom) to students in an AV room on campus in Dunedin, and available (via Zoom) to students located elsewhere.

Lecturer:

Dr Andrew Shepherd

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What is 'social justice'? How is this commonly used term conceived of within the Christian theological tradition? How does the Christian tradition understand and respond to the concerns of the 'Other'? This course employs the metaphor of hospitality to offer a critical and constructive theological ethic which responds to local, national, and global justice issues. Topics reflected upon include anti-Semitism and Islamophobia; racism and civil rights; global refugees and asylum-seekers; human-trafficking and slavery; the criminal justice system; and the role of surveillance within contemporary societies.

LECTURER'S INTRODUCTION

Dr Andrew Shepherd is the Theology Programme Lecturer in Theology and Public Issues, based in Wellington. His working life has alternated between academic teaching roles and leadership responsibilities in Christian and non-profit organisations. His research interests include:

- Ecological Theology and Environmental Ethics
- The Ethics and Practice of Hospitality
- Theology and Phenomenology
- Theology and Economics
- Peace Theology
- Contemporary theologies of social transformation – including social movements & neo-monasticism

For further information, see: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/staff/otago720307.html>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Offer a theological account of the concept of 'justice' and describe the place/role of the 'Other' within the Biblical narrative.
- Describe how historical examples demonstrate and deconstruct concepts of 'justice'.
- Demonstrate an understanding of a selection of justice issues within contemporary society.
- Describe how a theological ethic of hospitality may shape the actions of the Church in response to a contemporary justice issue.
- Outline how the principles of a theological ethic of hospitality may be applied to public policy in response to a contemporary justice issue.

In addition, students completing this paper at 400-level will be able to:

- Demonstrate more advanced research skills and be able to explain and compare the relationship between divine and human justice in an in-depth case study.

This paper is designed to foster the following graduate attributes identified in the University of Otago Teaching and Learning Plan (2013-2020) and Graduate Profile:

- **GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE:** Appreciation of global perspectives in the chosen discipline(s) and the nature of global citizenship.
- **INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE:** Commitment to intellectual openness and curiosity, and the awareness of the limits of current knowledge and of the links amongst disciplines.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Ability to communicate information, arguments and analyses effectively, both orally and in writing.
- **CRITICAL THINKING:** Ability to analyse issues logically, to challenge conventional assumptions, to consider different options and viewpoints, make informed decisions and act with flexibility, adaptability and creativity.
- **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING:** Knowledge and appreciation of biculturalism within the framework of the Treaty of Waitangi; knowledge and appreciation of multiculturalism; and an ability to apply such knowledge in a culturally appropriate manner.
- **ETHICS:** Knowledge of ethics and ethical standards and an ability to apply these with a sense of responsibility within the workplace and community.
- **RESEARCH:** Ability to conduct research by recognising when information is needed, and locating, retrieving, evaluating and using it effectively.
- **SELF-MOTIVATION:** Capacity for self-directed activity and the ability to work independently.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDY HOURS

Public Theology and Social Justice is offered as either a 300-level or 400-level paper. CHTH320 is an 18-point paper and the expectation is of 180 hours of study over the 13-week semester (10 hours of study per point). CHTH420 is a 20-point paper and the expectation is of 240 hours of study over the 13-week semester (12 hours of study per point). This averages out to 14-18 hours per week respectively. Please plan accordingly.

COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is divided into three modules.

Module 1 – Encountering the Other: Theories and Theologies of Justice

- Introduction
- Conceptualising Justice
- Questioning and Deconstructing Justice
- Hospitality & the Other
- Human Rights & Justice

Module 2 – Historical Reflections

- Las Casas – The Origins of Human Rights?
- Nazism, Anti-Semitism, and the Confessing Church
- Race, Civil Rights, and the Beloved Community

Module 3 – Contemporary Issues

- “Constructing Walls” – Refugees, Asylum Seekers, & Islamophobia
- “Security and Sharing”: Policing and Privacy in Surveillance Societies
- “Lock them up”: Crime, Punishment & Restoration
- “Trafficking Flesh”: Modern-day Slavery

TEACHING

The course consists of two elements: *independent* learning and *collaborative* learning.

Independent learning involves doing the necessary pre-reading before classes, and the additional reading, research and writing for assessment tasks. Day to day, the bulk of your study hours will be spent completing the course readings (**All reading material for the course is available on e-Reserve via Blackboard**) alongside the accompanying Reading Guide Notes. Completing the reading means:

- 1) Carefully and attentively reading the assigned texts for each class/topic.
- 2) Utilising the Reading Guide notes to ensure that you have understood and engaged deeply with the readings.
- 3) Making notes responding to the questions linked to these readings.

NOTE: Tasks 3 (above) is *especially* important. A proportion of our class times will involve facilitated discussions around the assigned readings. Being prepared for class discussions includes being able to identify things that remain unclear to you and being ready to share your critical thoughts and reflections.

There are 12 class sessions/video-conferences scheduled during the course.

Monday 12.00 – 1.50pm

- **February 28**
- **March 7, 14, 21, 28**
- **April 4, 11**
- **May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30**

Students located in the Wellington region are encouraged to join Andrew in a seminar room located at the **Wellington Anglican Centre, 18 Eccleston Hill, Thorndon** (in close proximity to the Wellington Anglican Cathedral) for these class times. Dunedin-based students will gather in the assigned AV suite in the Information Services Building on University of Otago campus and participate via Zoom. Distance students can utilise Zoom to participate in these class times.

The class sessions/video-conferences are an opportunity for *collaborative* learning. In each of the twelve sessions, I will usually open the class with introductory lecture material to help frame the theme and focus attention on some of the key issues that need addressing. This lecture-style input is not intended to *replace* or *repeat* the pre-reading material but rather is designed to *complement* and *complexify* the content you have already engaged with. The sessions will also involve an interactive component where I will utilise the Socratic method and small-group discussions to assist us to reflect critically upon the readings and lecture material.

Attendance at class times is strongly recommended. If you are unable to attend, then please, out of courtesy to myself and your classmates, inform me of your intended absence. All classes will be recorded, uploaded to Blackboard, and therefore will be available for viewing later. If you are Distance student and unable to participate in class sessions due to work or family commitments, then, upon request, there is the option of running two evening tutorial sessions during the course to provide the opportunity to engage in discussion on course material.

Outside of class times I will be available for meetings with students, either in person (in Wellington) or by phone or Zoom. To arrange a meeting time or phone/Zoom call contact me by email: andrew.shepherd@otago.ac.nz

ASSESSMENT TASKS

The University identifies two forms of assessment: *formative* and *summative*. Formative assessment takes place day to day, week to week through your engagement with the readings and the Reading Guide notes for each topic. This paper provides *summative* assessment through the writing of three assessment tasks. The first task engages primarily with the material covered in Module 1. The second task engages primarily with the material covered in Module 2. The third task engages primarily with the themes explored in Module 3.

CHTH320

Assessment Task #1: Online Discussions (1200-1600 words)	25%
Assessment Task #2: Essay on Historical Example (2000 words)	30%
Assessment Task #3: Research Essay on Contemporary Issue (3000 words)	45%

CHTH420

Assessment Task #1: Online Discussions (1200-1600 words)	25%
Assessment Task #2: Essay on Historical Example (2500 words)	30%
Assessment Task #3: Research Essay on Contemporary Issue (4000 words)	45%

Please ensure that you are aware of the word count for the appropriate level. Submitted written work should be within 10% +/- of the stated word count. Referencing and bibliography are excluded from the word count.

Task #1 – Online Discussions (CHTH320 & CHTH 420)

Value: 25%

Word Count: 1200-1500 words (3 posts of 400-500 words each)

Due date: Midnight on Friday March 4th, March 18th, April 1st.

Description:

Students are required to contribute to the three set online discussion forums. These discussion forums are designed to:

- assist your reflection upon what you are learning.
- facilitate discussion with classmates that *continues* and *extends* upon the themes/ideas being addressed in the course.
- Strong contributions will show evidence of personal reflection and engagement with course material (readings and lecture content).
- Follow-up posts will ask pertinent questions and/or enter into constructive dialogue with other student's contributions.
- For grading, the three online discussion postings (and follow-up posts) are equally weighted.
- Brief references to sources should be included at the end of your post.

Key assessment criteria:

- Students offer their online post to the posed question before the due deadline.
- Students offer at least one follow-up response to the posting of others within 7 days of the initial deadline.
- Contributions are clear, concise and considered.
- Follow-up contributions engage thoughtfully and respectfully with other students.

Three discussion posts:

- (1) In 400-500 words outline your conception of what 'social justice' is. How do you understand 'social justice'? What traditions, discourses, and narratives provide the philosophical/metaphysical foundation upon which you ground your understanding of 'social justice'? What role do the doctrines of the classic Christian tradition – Christology (the person, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ); Ecclesiology (the role of the Church and its place within the world and relationship to the State) and the narratives of the Scriptures play in your conception of 'justice'?

Due: Midnight Friday March 4th/6th. (Follow-up post due March 11th/13th).

- (2) Four weeks into the course, reflect upon how your understanding of justice has changed / been challenged / deepened / broadened as a result of your reading, thinking, and discussions thus far. *What have been the key idea(s)/concept(s) that have stood out for you?* Write a 400-500 word reflection. You should cite at least two readings from the course.

Due: Midnight Friday March 18th/20th. (Follow-up post due March 25th/27th).

- 3) Offer a creative piece of writing (poetry and/or prose) of 400-500 words in which you reflect upon an 'Other' within a Biblical narrative. How does this character and the narrative in which they are embedded have the potential to shape the theological and ethical imagination and thus thinking and practice of the contemporary Church with regard to their seeking justice?

Due: Midnight Friday April 1st/3rd. (Follow-up post due April 8th/10th).

Task #2 – Historical Essay (CHTH320 & CHTH 420)

Value:	30%
Word Count:	2,000 words for CHTH320; 2,500 words for CHTH420
Due Date:	May 6 th /8 th

Write an essay outlining what you believe is the significance of Las Casas' Defense of the Indians, or the German Confessing Church's resistance to Nazi fascism, or the African-American Church's resistance to Jim Crow racism? What is the legacy of these historical episodes? What do you consider are the key elements/principles from these historical examples that the contemporary Church needs to remember in its seeking of justice? What lessons from these examples need to be in the consciousness of a broader society seeking to enact justice? You should cite at least three course readings in your essay.

Task #3 – Research Essay on Contemporary Issue (CHTH320 & CHTH 420)

Value:	45%
Word Count:	3,000 words for CHTH320, 4,000 words for CHTH420
Due Date:	May 27th

Pick one of the contemporary issues from Module 3. To what extent does the Biblical tradition that prioritises the Other and a theological ethic of hospitality offer potentially new ways of framing and understanding this issue? How might a theology and ethos of hospitality shape the Church's practice? How might a theology and ethos of hospitality contribute to the formation of public policies and practices which 'seek justice'? You should cite at least four readings from the assigned course readings and show evidence of at least four other additional readings not included in the course readings.

RESOURCES

- Blackboard, the University's online learning tool;
- This Course Outline and the Reading Guides available for each Topic on Blackboard;
- eReserve, a resource for electronic readings, which you can access via Blackboard;
- The Department's "Study and Style Guide" which recommends students use the 16th edition of the Chicago citation style when writing essays. It is available online at <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>
- The handbook *Distance Learning Information and Support 2018*, providing 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!

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 ASK OTAGO immediately so that these can be resolved.** See: https://otago.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/2183/related/1

You will find there is a lot of helpful information and resources on the Theology Programme website. In particular, we require you to read the section called “Essential Student Information.” You will find it here: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

This page provides a number of useful resources such as the 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.

VIDEOCONFERENCES

Information and instructions about accessing Zoom can be found on the Department webpage (<http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>). This will also be posted on the course Blackboard site. This is also where you will find the URL needed to join the sessions.

REFERENCING SYSTEM

For writing essays, the Theology Programme requires that you use the 16th edition of the Chicago Style Guide, which is the norm for many academic journals in the Humanities and is often recommended for theses in the humanities. The Programme has prepared a Style Guide, which outlines the Chicago Style and offers other advice on essay presentation. You can find it via the Theology Programme’s “Student Resources and Information” page: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK

All assignments shall be submitted electronically via the “Assignment” feature on Blackboard by midnight on the due dates notified. **Written work should be in a WORD document, not PDF format.** 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.

Assessment tasks #2 and #3 must be submitted with a completed student *Plagiarism Declaration Form* as the preface to the essay.

- Download the file from <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>;
- copy the text;
- fill out the form;
- insert at the beginning of your essay.

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 Theology Administrator:
Email: theology@otago.ac.nz Phone: 03 479 8639

We recommend that you contact the Programme 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.

THEOLOGY PROGRAMME

University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054, New Zealand
www.otago.ac.nz/theology