



# CHTH314/414

## The Theology of Søren Kierkegaard

### Course Outline 2020

#### SEMESTER 1, 2020

**Lecturer:**

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Welcome to CHTH 314/414. In this paper we will examine the theology of Søren Kierkegaard, assess the various strands of his critique of Modernity, and investigate his account of authentic Christian faith.

#### LECTURER'S INTRODUCTION



Dr Greg Marcar completed his PhD at the University of Otago in 2019. His thesis consisted of an investigation of aspects of Kierkegaard's Ethics and their application to the death penalty in the United States of America. He previously completed an MA in Philosophy and Theological Studies at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, and an LLM in Professional Legal Practice at the University of Law, England. He is currently a Research Associate in the Centre for Theology and Public Issues at the University of Otago.

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES

##### CHTH 314

At the end of the course students at 300 level should:

1. have developed a sound understanding of the impact of Modernity on nineteenth century theology.
2. have knowledge of the key aspects of Kierkegaard's critique of Modernity.
3. have developed insight into Kierkegaard's conception of the Christian faith.
4. have developed the capacity to engage critically with Kierkegaard's theological work while taking due account of appropriate secondary literature.

##### CHTH414

At the end of the course students at 400 level should:

1. have developed a sound understanding of the impact of Modernity on nineteenth century theology.
2. have knowledge of the key aspects of Kierkegaard's critique of Modernity.

3. have developed insight into Kierkegaard's conception of the Christian faith.
4. have developed the capacity to engage critically with Kierkegaard's theological work while taking due account of appropriate secondary literature.
5. be able to present a brief paper on Kierkegaard's work in a seminar setting and engage constructively with audience questions and comment.

## COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is comprised of four modules and will consist largely in a study of three of Kierkegaard's key works.

Module 1:	Introduction: Kierkegaard's Life and Times
Module 2:	<i>Philosophical Fragments</i>
Module 3:	<i>The Sickness Unto Death</i>
Module 4:	<i>Works of Love</i>

## TEACHING

The course will be taught through a weekly class meeting on Thursdays from 12.00 – 1.50pm. Campus students will meet together in one of the AV studios and Distance students will join the class through the Zoom Network.

**Note:** An additional videoconference, if needed, will be arranged at a mutually agreed time for the 400 level seminar presentations.

## ASSESSMENT

The course will be assessed through two pieces of written work and a two hour examination.

### CHTH 314 Assignments

**300-level Students** must complete the two compulsory pieces of assessment (worth 20% and 30% respectively) and the final examination (worth 50%) at the end of the semester.

#### Assignment 1

Length:	1800 words
Value:	20% of final mark.
Date Due:	11.59 pm, April 13.

**EITHER** With reference to *Philosophical Fragments*, comment upon whether you think Kierkegaard has fairly been characterised as a proponent of the view that God can only be known through faith.

**OR** Give an account of what Kierkegaard means when he defines the self as “the relation's relating itself to itself in the relation”. How is this connected to Kierkegaard's conception of despair in *Sickness Unto Death*?

**Assignment 2**

Length: 2000 words  
Value: 30% of final mark.  
Date Due: 11.59pm, May 15

**EITHER** Kierkegaard claimed that *Works of Love* would be his response to the charge that his thought lacked a social dimension. What do you think are the main features of Kierkegaard's Christian ethic and how successful is it as a rebuttal to the charge of asociality?

**OR** Give an account of how the Christian lover "believes" and "hopes" all things in *Works of Love*. Do you find this account convincing and why/why not?

**CHTH 414 Assignments**

**400-level Students** must complete the two compulsory pieces of assessment (worth 20% and 40% respectively), and complete the final examination (worth 40%) at the end of the semester.

**Assignment 1**

Length: 1800 words  
Value: 20% of final mark.  
Date Due: 11.59 pm, April 13.

**EITHER** Give an account of how Kierkegaard's *Philosophical Fragments* might be said to challenge some of the basic assumptions of Modernity. Provide a critical evaluation of how successful you think this challenge is.

**OR** With reference to other accounts which have been offered within the Christian tradition, describe the distinctive aspects of how Kierkegaard envisages human sin in *Sickness Unto Death*. What are some implications of this account and what relevance, if any, does it have for theological discussion today?

**Assignment 2**

Length: 2500 words, plus a seminar presentation on the subject of the essay.  
Value: 40% of final mark.  
Date Due: 11.59pm, May 15

**The topic for this assignment should be nominated by the student, and agreed with the course teacher.**

## CLASS SCHEDULE

DATE	CLASS	CONTENT	ASSIGNMENTS
27 Feb	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Intro & Module 1	
5 Mar	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Module 1	
12 Mar	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Module 2	
19 Mar	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Module 2	
26 Mar	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Module 3	
2 Apr	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Module 3	
9 Apr	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Module 4	
16 Apr	Mid-semester break		Essay Due April 13
23 Apr	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Module 4	
30 Apr	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Module 4	
7 May	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Module 4	
14 May	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Seminar Presentations	Essay Due May 15
21 May	Videoconference 12.00 – 1.50pm	Summary/Q&A	
28 May	Spare if needed.		
			Exam Date to be advised

## RESOURCES

- Blackboard, the University's online learning tool;
- This Course Outline and the Study Guide
- eReserve, a resource for electronic readings, which you can access via Blackboard;
- The Programme's "Style Guide" which recommends students use the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Chicago Style Guide 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 Outline 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 the lecturer or administrative staff immediately so that these can be resolved.

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.

## 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 may find it via the Theology Programme’s “Student Resources and Information” page:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

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.

All Assignments submitted in the Theology Programme 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/theology/study/studentresources/>

It is also on the Blackboard site for this course.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

**All Assignments submitted in the Theology Programme must be prefaced with a student Plagiarism Declaration Form.**

It can be downloaded from <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/> It is also on the Blackboard site for this course.

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: [www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology)