

MODULE CODE: HPTR7002
TITLE: Self and Suffering: Ascetic Life in Christian History
DATED: 06/072017
LEVEL: 7
CREDITS: 20

JACS CODE: V600

AIM(S)

- To introduce students to elements of Christian asceticism.
- To introduce students to historical, theological and theoretical analysis and evaluation of Christian asceticism.
- To develop critical interaction with primary and secondary materials.
- To develop oral and written presentation skills through the course assessment.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

1. Articulate the multiple dimensions of the main elements—and great variety—of religious asceticism and its importance in the history and development of Christianity.
2. Discuss/write responsibly regarding both primary and secondary source materials, and demonstrate the ability to critically access a wide range of arguments advanced by historians, theorists and theologians relating to asceticism.
3. Engage in appropriate scholarly research in the advanced study of religion; produce a written essay that conforms to standards that are established and upheld by the scholarly community, including the construction of a thoughtful claim that can be supported by evidence from the texts.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

This course will investigate the nature of asceticism and ascetic life in early and medieval Christian history. Particular attention will be paid to the role of the individual and the individual's will and choice in the development of an ascetic life or ascetic practice. In addition, students will consider the role of asceticism (and the suffering body) in managing religious identity and/or contributing to social change. While course content will concentrate on early Christianity, medieval or contemporary Christian approaches to ascetic life can be included in a student's individual research as appropriate.

LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

E.g. Lectures will introduce the students to the concepts, principles and practices. Tutorials and seminars will introduce practical examples which will be used to support the application, discussion, and critical evaluation of techniques learned. Case studies will also be used to develop understanding and application of the techniques.

The allocation of teaching to deliver the module is:

Activity type	Hours	Percentage
Scheduled learning	20	10%
Independent learning	180	90%

Placement learning	0	
TOTAL	200	100%

NB. If this module is taken as a distance learning module, then Independent Learning is 200 hours – 100%.

ASSESSMENT

Description of each assessment component and its weighting, together with an example for new forms of assessment:

Assessment Component 1 – 100%

One essay of 5000 words (100%)

Example of the type of question or task that could be used: A naïve or uninformed approach to monastic asceticism could lead one to conclude that monks and nuns are self-harming; how can knowledge of ascetic theology of purification (body mortification, deprivation or the sick role) assist us in better understanding an individual's decision to engage in methods of self-harm such as cutting, burning, healing prevention, carving or trichotillomania? Primary sources to consider include: *The Lives of Simeon the Stylite*, *The Life of the Holy Radegund* or a primary source of your choosing.

Assessment Summary

Activity type	Percentage
Written exam	
Coursework	100%
Practical	
TOTAL	100%

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD)

Does the module contribute to ESD?	Yes
If yes please provide brief details (no more than 100 words): This module is designed in line with 2 of the 5 pedagogic approaches to sustainable development identified by UNESCO: • Critical and Creative thinking • Systemic thinking The module seeks to help the student develop the fundamental skills of research and visual inquiry. This forms part of the sustainable assessment/sustainable teaching agenda which sees the assessment process as developing skills that can be used beyond the end of the programme of study and also the skills the individuals need to know in terms of working, learning and thriving in a future which is as yet unknown.	

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Classification	Reading List entry	Electronic*
Essential	<i>Asceticism in the Graeco-Roman World</i> (Key Themes in Ancient History) by Richard Finn, Cambridge University Press.	☒
Essential	<i>Subversive Virtue: Asceticism and Authority in the Second-Century Pagan World</i> 1st Edition by James A. Francis, Penn State University Press; 1 edition (2008)	☒
Essential	Additional secondary sources – as assigned	☒
Essential	Additional primary sources – as assigned	☒
Recommended	Vincent L. Wimbush (Editor), Richard Valantasis (Editor), <i>Asceticism</i> (Oxford University Press, 2002).	
	Richard Valantasis, <i>The Making of the Self: Ancient and Modern Asceticism</i> (Eugene: Cascade, 2008)	
	G. Flood, <i>The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory, and Tradition</i> , (Cambridge University Press, 2004)	

Not required!