

Students in Public exemplar details

Faculty, School and Subject Area: Cliff College (validated by the University of Manchester)

Course Unit/activity: PT1 Public Theology

Course Unit Director/activity leader: Dr Justin Thacker

What is the assignment/knowledge product for dissemination to a public audience?

In this Level 6 unit, there are three compulsory assignments, two of which are in a traditional narrative mode, and one of which comprises two non-traditional modes, one of which must be chosen by each student.

a) One element is an essay of 1,500 words, comprising 25% of the unit grade. Students critically assess any specific example of Christian public engagement that has taken place within the last 12 months.

b) One element is an essay of 3,000 words, comprising 50% of the unit grade. Students choose one from a list of seven options relating to public theology issues.

c) One element consists of two assessment modes, one of which is chosen by a student. These modes are a mock radio interview, lasting 15 minutes, and a mock press release, plus theological reflection, amounting to 1,500 words in total. Both assignment tasks comprise 25% of the unit grade.

Why was it introduced?

The non-traditional assignment mode was introduced in order to test the kind of 'real-life' skills that are required by an effective public theologian, namely the ability to communicate a religious viewpoint on a public issue to a general audience. Students may choose the assignment mode either to play to a known strength, or to stretch themselves in a direction where they know they are likely to be engaged in the future.

Where is/could it be published?

Currently, none of the assignments have been published in a public setting, but in principle there is no reason why they could not be published in this way.

What are the challenges (e.g. copyright)?

Copyright rests with the college and so there are no particular challenges here.

What are the student perceptions/responses/attainment?

Students have very much welcomed this assignment. Interestingly, average marks on the mock radio interview have tended to be higher than the marks awarded on the essay component of this module.

If published, how do you monitor use of the resource/s?

n/a

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIT

The unit examines the theology, history and practice of public theology

AIMS

The unit seeks to:

- Assist students to understand and assess the history and practice of public theology
- Provide students with a theological framework to critically assess expressions of Christianity in the public square
- Enable students to formulate effective public engagement strategies for Christianity

OBJECTIVES (INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES)

Category of outcome	By the end of this course students will be able to:
Knowledge and understanding	• Comprehend and critically analyse a range of themes, debates and methods within the area of public theology • Develop a critical awareness of different strategies and tactics in use in public theology • Demonstrate a systematic understanding of the theological issues associated with engagement in the public square • Demonstrate an acquisition of a coherent and detailed knowledge of these areas
Intellectual skills	• Reason critically about issues relating to public theology • Demonstrate an increasing awareness of the complex nature of public theology • Engage creatively with a wide variety of viewpoints within the field of public theology
Practical skills	• Apply key methods and concepts of theological, historical, contextual and ethical analysis as they apply to public theology • Retrieve, sift and select information from a variety of

	sources • Develop strategies for effective Christian public engagement
Transferable skills and personal qualities	• Develop independent, self-directed study/learning demonstrating flexibility to adapt to tasks assigned and a commitment to address identified strengths and weaknesses • Structure and communicate ideas effectively to audiences of differing theological abilities and to the public • Refine problem-solving skills and demonstrate the ability to locate, analyse and utilise information • Work independently and direct their own learning • Develop further self-confidence in tackling problems • Assess the relevance and importance of the ideas of others • Evaluate their own perspectives and their effect upon the perspectives of others

ASSESSMENT

Assessment task	Length	Weighting within unit
Formative: 2 x essay outlines + one tutorial	500 words each	
Summative: 1 essay – reflecting theologically on a public theology issue	3000 words	50%
1 essay – critically assessing a contemporary example of Christian public engagement	1500 words	25%

1 mock radio interview		
OR		
1 mock press release (with theological commentary)	15 mins (1500 words equiv)	25%
	1500 words	

Content	The unit will consider the following themes: • Biblical Perspectives on public engagement • Jesus and public engagement • Theology of public engagement • Political Theology • History of public theology • Contemporary public theology methodologies • Homosexuality and Gay Marriage • Abortion & Euthanasia • Religion and Education • Theology and Global Poverty • Christians and the media
Feedback students can expect to receive	• written feedback on essays 1 and 2 • additional one-to-one feedback regarding mock radio interview
Information updated	14 th October 2014