

Type: Core
Course Code: CHCU E3025
Title: Philosophy of Religion and Development of Christian Doctrine
Pre-requisites: The completion of Level II CHCU Examinations.

Aims and Objectives:

The main objective of this course is to present an overview of the general approach to religion from the perspective of other disciplines and to present the growth and development of Christian Doctrine including the basic thought of important Christian thinkers.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course unit the students will be able to identify the characteristics of the cosmic and the meta-cosmic religions and they will be able to analyse the religious phenomena from the perspective of modern academic disciplines. They also will be able to recognize the philosophical trends, doctrinal conflicts, and the principal contributors to the making of Christianity in the course of history.

Course Content:

Part I

The various views of religion in the course of history; the new approaches to religion; modern critique of religion. Introduction to philosophy of religion: the nature and the role of philosophy of religion. Anthropological approach to religion: relationship between religion and other human realities like poverty etc. A study of rituals, sacredness and mystery of religion. Rapport between religion and human life.

Part II

1. The first formulation of doctrines in the short formulae of the New Testament followed by the more systematic formulae that

are called the Creeds. The student is expected to know the Apostles Creed and the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed - its origins, its usage in the first centuries and today, the ability to write a short essay on each of the doctrinal statements of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed.

2. Knowledge of the following thinkers: Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Irenius, Augustine of Hippo, Thomas Aquinas, Bernard of Clairvaux, Martin Luther, Friedrich Schleiermacher, John Henry Newman, Paul Tillich, Karl Barth, Teilhard de Chardin, and Karl Rahner,

3. The revival of the Biblical, Liturgical and Catechetical traditions in the church during the twentieth century.

4. The social concerns of the Christian Churches with a focus on *Rerum Novarum* (1891) paying special attention to the following: private property, a just wage, the rights and duties of employers, the rights and duties of employees. A study of the Pastoral Constitution on "Church in the Modern World" of the Second Vatican Council in regard to the development of culture, socio-economic life, the life of the political community, war and peace. A knowledge of the declarations of the General Assemblies of the World Council of Churches and a knowledge of the following themes: Christian responsibility and to what extent a Christian can be involved in freedom struggles.

5. Christian thought on women, environment and peace.

Methodology: Lectures, discussions and presentations.

Scheme of Evaluation: Year-end examination.

Recommended Reading:

Part I

Durkheim, E. (1998). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: tr. K.E. Fields, The Free Press.

Frazer, J. (1994). *The Golden Bough: A History of Myth and Religion* (abridged volume). London.

Galloway, G. (1945). *The Philosophy of Religion*. Tot Clark, Edinburg.

Houtart, F. – Lemercinier, G. (1985). *The Great Asian Religions and their Social Functions*. Louvain-la-Neuve.

Otto, R. (1959). *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*. Middlesex.

Pals, D.L. (1996). *Seven Theories of Religion*. New York:Oxford University Press.

Panikkar, R.(1978). *The Intrareligious Dialogue*. New York.

Smart, N. *The Religious Experience of Mankind*, Oxford: University Press.

Smart, N.(1992). *The World's Religions*. Cambridge: University Press.

Weber, M. (1963). *The Sociology of Religion*, tr. E. Fischoff, Boston.

Part II

Ford, D.F. (ed.)(1994). *The Modern Theologians*. Oxford:Blackwell .

Kelly, J.N.D. (1976). *Early Christian Creeds*. London:Longman.

McGiffert, A.C. (1954). *A History of Christian Thought*.(Vols. I-II), Blackwell, NY.

McGrath, A.E. (1993). *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*, Blackwell, Oxford (relevant sections).

McGrath, A.E. (1998). *Historical Theology. An Introduction to the History of ChristianThought*, Blackwell, Oxford.