

**CERTIFICATE IN THEOLOGY (CertTheol)
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE ASSOCIATE IN
THEOLOGY [THA])**

The Course:

The course is intended to further the education of adults in relation to Christian faith and life. Its aim is to stimulate the interest of alert and enquiring minds. What is required is not so much academic scholarship as an understanding of Christian theology and its implication for contemporary life.

Entry Requirements:

Open to persons who have satisfactorily completed Year 10 in an Australian school system (or equivalent); or to such other persons approved by the Board of Directors.

The closing date for applications for the First Semester enrolments is March 15; for the Second Semester enrolments, August 15. Late applications will not be accepted after March 31 or August 31 and a late enrolment fee will be applied. Applications must be made on the prescribed form, which can be downloaded from the ACT website www.acttheology.edu.au.

Course Structure:

The course consists of the following units:

Christian Belief
Christian Leadership & Management
Christian Mission and Missions
Christian Worship
Church History
Cults and Sects
Elementary Greek
Ethics and the Christian Faith
Evangelism
Introduction to Christian Spirituality
Introduction to Pastoral Care
Lay Ministries Field Education
New Testament
Old Testament
Preaching
Religious Education
World Religions

Candidates are required to pass six units including Old Testament, New Testament, Christian Belief and any other three.

Graduating Levels:

Candidates with an overall average of not less than 80% are awarded a Pass with Distinction; those with an overall average of not less than 65% a Pass with Merit; those with not less than 50% in all units a Pass.

Examinations and Essays:

(i) Examinations are held about the second week of June and November each year. A one-hour written examination of three questions in each unit is required (unless stated otherwise). Where the

syllabus is divided into sections, candidates should expect to be examined in each section.

In addition, a written essay of 1,500 words is required in each unit (except where stated), which is graded on the basis of 50% for the written examination and 50% for the essay. Essays of a length outside the specified range will be penalised. Essay topics are listed according to unit.

Candidates are expected to give evidence in their essays that they are familiar with the basic references. When possible, essay assignments should be typed. A bibliography should be attached.

Essays must be submitted to the Supervisor at the time of the relevant examination for transmission to the examiner. Candidates are advised to read the guidelines for essays printed in this Handbook.

- (ii) ACT Diploma Colleges may teach the CertTheol on a term basis. There should be two equal terms per semester. Furthermore, Diploma Colleges may assess the CertTheol by means of a one-hour examination and 1,500 word essay, *or* may replace the exam with two essay assignments together amounting to 1,500 words. Students would need to score 50% or better in the 1500 word essay, as well as 50% overall in the two shorter essays, though one of these might score as low as 40%.
- (iii) The CertTheol could be awarded on completion of six internally assessed diploma units with no less than 40% in the major assessment marked at diploma level. At least one unit should come from each of the fields of OT, NT and Theology. Students intending to take out this award would enrol unit by unit as non-award students.

There must be an exam worth 60% in units from the departments of Bible and Languages and Christian Thought units. Students require 40% in the exam and 50% in the unit overall.

Passing grades:

Candidates who fail the examination but secure a passing mark for the essay will have the essay mark carried forward to the next semester. Similarly, candidates who pass the examination but fail the essay, may submit a fresh essay at the time of the next examination but carry forward their former examination mark to the next semester.

Marks will not be carried forward for more than one semester. If a student chooses not to complete the unit in the following semester they will receive a fail grade for the unit and must repeat all assessments when re-enrolling. Students can apply to the ACT Dean to have this regulation waived in exceptional circumstances.

Private Candidates:

The CertTheol can be done as a private candidate directly enrolling with the ACT. However, candidates who choose this option should be aware that no tutorial assistance is given to private candidates. Students are encouraged to purchase or download the current Undergraduate Handbook for full information regarding syllabus and assessment. No other material will be supplied.

**UNIT OUTLINES****CHRISTIAN BELIEF****Aim:**

To provide an introductory study of the Christian faith, which will give sound knowledge and strengthen faith and commitment to God.

Outline:**Section A: Understanding God**

- Being of God, attributes
- Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Section B: Creation and Fall

- Creation and providence
- Man's place in the created order, image of God
- Sin and fall, nature of sin both individual and corporate, evil and suffering
- Relation of these biblical doctrines to considerations of science and technology, evolution, work, environment

Section C: Jesus Christ

- Person of Christ including humanity and deity, titles
- Work of Christ including public ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and session

Section D: Personal Christian Life

- Salvation, including forgiveness and justification, regeneration and sanctification of believers
- Disciplines of the Christian life including prayer and nature of discipleship

Section E: Corporate Christian Life

- Nature of the church, mission, ministry and worship
- Sacraments
- Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Section F: Christian Hope

- Kingdom of God, fulfilment of all things in Christ
- Return of Christ, judgement, Heaven and Hell

Basic References (suggested for guidance only):

- Grudem, W., *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith* (Abridged ed. by J. Purswell; Leicester: IVP, 1999).
- Hammond, T. C., *In Understanding Be Men* (6th ed.; Leicester: IVP, 2002).
- McGrath, A. (ed.), *The New Lion Handbook: Christian Belief* (Lion Hudson, 2007)
- McGrath, A., *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (3rd ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).
- Milne, B., *Know the Truth* (2nd ed.; Leicester: IVP, 1998).

2010 Essay Topics (select one)

1. Give an outline of the biblical doctrine of creation. What insights does this doctrine give for mankind's relationship with the environment?
2. Paul lists some examples of spiritual gifts in Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, such as teaching and encouraging. What are spiritual gifts and what is their purpose? Using THREE of these examples, illustrate how a spiritual gift can be exercised for the life and growth of your church.
3. What is the Kingdom of God and how is it expressed in the life and ministry of Jesus?
4. From an examination of Psalm 89 and Psalm 90 discuss generally some of the attributes of God that are mentioned there.

2011 Essay Topics (select one)

1. Describe the work of each person of the Trinity in the salvation of a Christian. What are some implications for evangelism?
2. What questions are raised by human suffering? As a Christian, and giving your answer from scripture, in what ways can you respond to these questions?
3. What is involved in the celebration of the Lord's Supper? Outline the various ways in which the church has understood what happens at the Lord's Supper.
4. What is the relationship between the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the Christian hope?

**CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT****Aim:**

To provide an introduction to the principles and dynamics of Christian leadership applicable in a church or mission setting.

Outline:**Section A: Biblical Principles of Leadership**

Biblical basis and models of leadership.

Section B: Leadership Qualities

Defining leadership; characteristics of effective leaders; gifts and abilities; the process of leadership development.

Section C: Leadership Styles

Appropriate styles for different situations and people.

Section D: Transformational Leadership and Management

Developing clearly stated purposes, objectives, goals and detailed ministry strategies; implementing change; methods of evaluation; feedback.

Section E: Collaborative Leadership and Management

Developing and maintaining a healthy team; being part of a team.

Section F: Power, Authority, Responsibility and Influence

Authority, structures and responsibility; the use of power and influence; managing conflict.

Section G: Principles of Organisation

Alternative structures; ministry descriptions; decision-making processes, accountability, time-management.

Basic References (suggested for guidance only):

Hersey, P. & K. Blanchard *et al*, *Management of Organisational Behaviour: Utilizing Human Resources*, (9th ed.; Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2007).

Ford, L., *Transforming Leadership* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1999).

Hybels, B., *Courageous Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).

Jones, G. & R. Jones, *Teamwork: How to Build Relationships* (London: Scripture Union, 2003).

Malphurs, A., *Advanced Strategic Planning* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999).

Malphurs, A., *Being Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).

Rendle, G., *Leading Change in the Congregation* (Washington: Alban, 1998).

Tidball, D., *Builders and Fools* (Leicester: IVP, 1999).

Wright, W., *Relational Leadership* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000).

2010 Essay topics (select one)

1. What do you understand about the servant nature of leadership? Support your answer from the Scriptures.
2. 'Authority can generally be seen as the *right* to do something, whereas power is seen as the *ability* to do it.' How might a leader use authority and power responsibly? What precautions should a leader put in place to ensure this authority and power isn't abused?
3. What would be the greatest challenges facing a Christian leader today? How might a leader meet such challenges?

4. Many leadership definitions speak of the ability to influence others. Discuss how you might define Christian leadership, including the place of influence.

2011 Essay Topics (select one)

1. Discuss the emphasis that the Scriptures give regarding the character of those who are to be in Christian leadership.
2. Why are teams important in Christian leadership and management? How might a Christian leader build a healthy and effective team ministry?
3. Leaders often need to be flexible, sometimes exhibiting approaches which they might not always be accustomed or adept. Discuss the various leadership styles which Christian leaders may need to develop to respond to differing circumstances.
4. Discuss the differences between transformational and transactional leadership. How do these two approaches complement each other?

**CHRISTIAN MISSION AND MISSIONS****Aim:**

- 1 To give an understanding of the missionary nature of the Church.
- 2 To give an outline of the history of Christian missions from the 16th to 21st centuries.
- 3 To study the contemporary situation.

Outline:**Section A: The mission of the People of God:**

The formation of the People of God in the Old Testament.

The Christian Community as the new People of God in the New Testament.

The nature of the mission of the Church.

The laity and lay ministry.

Section B: The Church at Mission

The study of the history of Christian missions from the 16 to the 21st centuries.

Identification of changes of policy and emphasis at different periods.

Mission and the Kingdom of God.

Section C: The contemporary mission scene

The context of missions today: rapid social changes, urbanisation, secularisation, pluralism, nationalism and rejection of colonialism.

Mission into Church; indigenisation.

Working with people of goodwill, dialogue with people of other faiths.

Basic References: (Suggested for guidance only):

Neill, S. C. & O. Chadwick, *A History of Christian Missions* (rev.; 2nd ed.; New York: Penguin, 1991)

Moreau, A. S., G. R. Corwin & G. B. McGee, *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical and Practical Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004).

Piper, J., *Let the Nations Be Glad* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).

Shenk, W. (ed.), *Enlarging the Story: Perspectives on Writing World Christian History* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002)

Stott, J., *Making Christ Known* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996)

2010 Essay topics (select one)

1. It has been claimed that Christians are arrogant if they share their faith with others. What is your response? Why?
2. Compare and contrast missionary motives and methods in the 1500-1900 and 1900-2000. Give reasons for the recent changes.
3. How can the local church express its missions responsibility?
4. Outline the people reached, the methods used, and the outcome of a mission you have studied.

2011 Essay topics (select one)

1. "All religions are equal lead to God and salvation." Discuss this claim.
2. Mission was a passion of Paul's life. Outline how this affected his life and theology.
3. "We have no right to invade other cultures with Christianity." What is your response to this statement?
4. "Missions have given birth to new churches." Outline this process in a mission you have studied.



CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Aim:

To give an introduction to the nature of worship and to examine the development of Christian worship and, in particular, its relation to life.

Outline:

Section A: Worship as a human phenomenon.

- (a) Worship as a response to God.
- (b) Worship as a way of life.
- (c) Prayer: its nature and purpose.
- (d) Prayer and discipleship.

Section B: Worship in the Bible and the early church.

- (a) Worship in the Old Testament; the Covenant, the sacrificial system, the role of priests and prophets; the development of the synagogue. The use of the psalms and sacred writings. The major feasts.
- (b) The practice and teaching of Jesus Christ concerning worship.
- (c) The worship of the early church as discerned in the New Testament.
- (d) Development of Christian worship in the post-Biblical period (e.g. in the *Didache*, Justin Martyr.)

Section C: The principles of liturgy:

- (a) in the forms of the Anglican tradition (The Book of Common Prayer and modern books derived from it, in particular in An Australian Prayer Book (1978)
- (b) in one of the classical Reformed traditions (Calvin, Luther, Zwingli and their disciples)
- (c) in the Orthodox churches
- (d) in the Free Churches
- (e) the modern Liturgical Movement; its origins and development
- (f) the Liturgy of the Church of South India, the modern Roman rites and the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy (Vatican II)
- (g) the influence of Taizé.

Section D: The practice of liturgy

- (a) the main emphases of the recent approaches to liturgy
- (b) the setting where worship takes place
- (c) the use of music and other forms of worship (e.g. dance, drama, silence) as supplementary to the spoken word.

Basic References: (suggested for guidance only):

Buchanan, C., *Anglican Worship Today* (London: Collins, 1980).

Carson, D. A. (ed.), *Worship by the Book* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).

Galbraith, D. et al, *Worship in the Wide Red Land* (Melbourne: UCA, 1985).

Kimball, D., *Emerging Church, Creating Worship Gatherings for New Generations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004).

Ray, D., *Wonderful Worship in Smaller Churches* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 2000).

White, J. F., *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993).

White, J. F., *An Introduction to Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2000).

Numerous volumes in the Grove Liturgical Studies (Grove Books) may be found useful for reference, especially in connection with the essays. So will the Grove Booklets on Ministry and Worship.

2010 Essay topics (select one)

1. The synagogue as a pattern for Christian worship.
2. The significance of 1 Cor 10–14 for Christian worship.
3. Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition*—its influence on Christian worship.
4. Reformation principles of worship.

2011 Essay topics (select one)

1. Old Testament feasts as background for Christian worship.
2. The Lord's Supper in the New Testament.
3. Which should be central in Sunday worship, pulpit or altar?
4. Liturgical Developments this century in one Australian denomination.

CHURCH HISTORY

Aim:

To give an introduction to formative periods of the church's past which help us to understand the church today.

Outline:

Section A: The first five centuries:

Development of "institutions"; house-church and church buildings, liturgy, ministry, Scriptures, creeds, doctrines, councils, papacy, monasticism and relations with the State and society, and emergence of some significant Christian figures.

Section B: The Reformation and later:

- The extent and decay of medieval Catholicism, the new vigour from learning, discovery and nationalism.
- The Protestant Reformers: Luther and the Lutherans, Calvin and the Reformed tradition.
- The English Reformation: the break with Rome; later schools of thought—Evangelicals, Anglo-Catholics and Liberals.
- The Counter-Reformation; 19th century developments, Vatican II
- The origins of later denominations; Independents (Congregationalists); Baptists; Methodists; Churches of Christ.
- The evangelical revivals; missionary movement; the rise of Biblical Criticism; the ecumenical movement; the rise of Pentecostalism; the next Christendom.

OR

Section C: A survey of the historical background of Chinese Christian churches and their development within and outside China, including their interaction with Communist and Western culture.

- The Nestorian Mission during the Tang Dynasty in China (635-980)
- Nestorian Christianity during the Yuan Dynasty in China (1260-1368)
- The Roman Catholic Mission in late Ming and Qing Dynasties (1583-1839)
- Theology and culture: the Rite controversy
- The interaction of Christian mission and imperialism after the Opium War
- The social conflict: Taiping Heavenly Kingdom and the Boxer Uprising
- The anti-Christian movement and theological contextualisation
- The impact of nationalism and communism on the Chinese church
- Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the House Church Movement
- The cultural revolution and its impact on the Chinese church
- The Chinese church in Taiwan
- The Chinese church in Hong Kong
- The Chinese church in Australia

Basic References: (suggested for guidance only):

- Bettenson, H. & Maunder, C. (eds), *Documents of the Christian Church*, (3rd ed. OUP, 1999).
- Cairns, E.E., *Christianity Through the Centuries*, (Zondervan, 1996).
- Chidester, D., *Christianity: A Global History* (London: Penguin, 2000).
- Dowley, T. *The History of Christianity: A Lion Handbook*, (Lion, 1977)
- Jenkins, P. *The Next Christendom*, (OUP, 2002)
- McManners, J. (ed), *The Oxford History of Christianity*, (OUP, 1993).
- Norris, F. W., *Christianity: a Short Global History* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002).
- Renwick, A.M. and Harman, A.M., *The Story of the Church*, (2nd ed., IVP, 1986).
- Shelley, B. *Church History in Plain Language*, (Nelson, 1995).

Basic References in Chinese Church History (Chinese Language, translated titles):

- Chao, J., *A History of Christianity in Socialist China 1949-1997* (Taiwan: CMI, 1997).
- Lun, L. K., *Blessing Upon China* (Hong Kong: Tien Dau, 1988).
- Ching, T., *100 years of Chinese Church History* (Hong Kong: Lutheran, 1990).
- Fu, Y. S., *A History of the Chinese Church* (Taiwan: Commerce, 1991).

2010 Essay topics (select one)

- Analyse the expansion of the Church in the first three centuries. What factors helped it and what factors hindered it?
- 'Augustine stands like a colossus in the early Church'. Discuss.
- Analyse the debate between Luther and Erasmus over the freedom of the will.
- What brought about the rise of the modern Protestant missionary movement? What are some of its lasting effects?

2010 Essay topics (Chinese language syllabus)

- What were the essential features of the Rite controversy? How did this controversy influence the development of the Chinese church?
- Write an essay on the topic "The Three-Self Patriotic Movement".
- Why was Wang Ming-Tao such an influential figure for the modern Chinese church?
- "The Cultural Revolution did not destroy the Chinese church." Assess this statement with evidence.

2011 Essay topics (select one)

- Why were the early Christians persecuted? What effect did the persecutions have on the Church?
- Explain how the Christological controversies were resolved at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Were they resolved?
- What impact did Calvin's ministry in Geneva have on the wider Church?

4. Analyse the response of the Church to modern challenges such as Biblical criticism, Darwinism, and interaction with other cultures and religions. You may choose to discuss **either** the Roman Catholic Church **or** the Protestant Churches.

2011 Essay Topics (Chinese language syllabus)

1. Analyse and assess the significance of the approaches and strategies of the Roman Catholic Mission in the late Ming and Qing Dynasties.
2. What was imperialism? Why were the Christian missions of the west regarded as being imperialistic?
3. Write an essay on the topic, "Watchman Nee and his theology".
4. Describe the features of the Chinese church in Hong Kong. In what ways can the Chinese church in Australia learn from them?



CULTS AND SECTS

A study of contemporary cults and sects and their relation to Christian faith.

Aims:

1. To enable candidates to identify the characteristics of modern cults and sects;
2. To analyse factors involved in the growth of such movements in the Western world;
3. To enable candidates to acquire a general knowledge of particular movements;
4. To help candidates bring a Christian response to such movements, their teaching and followers.

Outline:

Section A: Definitions, Terms, Characteristics

1. Definition of terms: cult; sect; church; denomination; religion; movement.
2. Factors involved in the contemporary growth of cults, sects and other alternative religious movements, and their common characteristics.
3. Christian responses to cults and sects and their followers.

Section B: Particular Movements

The history, beliefs, structures/organization, and means of propagation of **three** cults or sects, such as:

Transcendental Meditation; Children of God; Church of Scientology; the Unification Church; New Age movements; Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons); Jehovah's Witnesses.

Basic References: (Suggested for guidance only)

- Clifford, R. & P. Johnson, *Jesus and the Gods of the New Age* (Oxford: Lion, 2001).
 Enroth, R., *A Guide to New Religious Movements* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2005).

Hexham, I., S. Rost & J. Morehead (eds), *Encountering New Religious Movements* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004).

Martin, W., *The Kingdom of the Cults* (Rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Bethany, 2003).

Partridge, C. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of New Religions* (Oxford: Lion, 2004).

2010 Essay topics (select one)

1. "The 1970s was the decade of authoritative gurus and swamis, while the 1990s was the decade of New Age and Internet-based spiritualities." Discuss this statement in the light of how cult devotees viewed their leaders as figures of spiritual authority. As more people now explore their own spirituality on the Internet and in non-creedal faiths like New Age and Neo-Paganism, in what ways is the non-Christian concept of spiritual authority changing?
2. "Cults are the unpaid bills of the Church." Discuss this statement and in your answer give some examples of how Christian neglect of Biblical teaching and practices can lead to the creation of cults and new religions.
3. "Cults are really unreached people groups that ought to be approached in the same way missionaries reach out to overseas tribes." Discuss.
4. What are the differences in approaches taken toward the cults by the secular anti-cult movement and the Christian counter-cult movement? What weaknesses do you discern in the secular anti-cult approach? In what ways could the Christian counter-cult movement improve its response to the cults?

2011 Essay topics (select one)

1. Many Christian apologists recommend that in witnessing to cult devotees we must refute their teachings. What are the strengths and weaknesses in this approach?
2. "Cults are organised heresies." Is this an accurate definition of the word 'cult'? Are there any drawbacks in defining cults as heresies?
3. Jedi-Knights ("Star Wars"), Matrix-based faith ("The Matrix"), Vampirism ("Buffy the Vampire Slayer"), and "Da Vinci Code" reading groups are new religions developing on the Internet. Consider how popular TV-shows, movies and novels are contributing to the emergence of new religions. Is there a positive place for storytelling the revelation of God in Jesus Christ in outreach with today's spiritual seekers?
4. "Mind control theories of cult conversion are a secular alternative to believing in demon possession." In the light of this statement, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the mind control/brainwashing theories about cults.



ELEMENTARY GREEK

Aim:

To provide an introductory study in New Testament Greek.

Outline:

The syllabus is based on the Greek text of Luke 10:25–11:4, ch. 15. Passages will be chosen for translation into English. Paraphrases employing the vocabulary of these sections may also be set for translation. The vocabulary of these sections will also be used for tests in accidence and parsing. A full working grammar is recommended. Students should refer to the following work:

Duff, J., *The Elements of New Testament Greek* (3rd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Assessment

There is no essay in this unit. Assessment is by way of examination only.

Basic References (Suggested for guidance only):

See the bibliography for LA002 and LA004 in the Diploma Unit Outlines in this Handbook.

**ETHICS AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH****Aims:**

- a) To introduce candidates to ethical character and decision making in the light of Biblical teaching and Christian principles.
- b) To enable candidates to develop a Christian approach to some contemporary ethical issues.

Outline:**Section A: The nature of ethical character and decision:**

- (a) Ethical teaching of the Bible: using the Bible in ethics, ethical themes of creation, sin, covenant, law, freedom, love and community in the Old and New Testaments.
- (b) Brief reviews of some ethical theories: theories of obligation and virtue, absolutism and relativism.
- (c) Personal and social ethics
- (d) The Christian and personal ethical decisions: the place of the ten commandments, the Bible, the teachings of the Church, character, conscience, natural law, divine commands, principles, context etc.

Section B: Contemporary ethical issues

Candidates will choose and make an introductory study of *any two* of the following subsections:

- (a) Sex and family
Marriage, family, pre-marital relations, fidelity, divorce and remarriage, homosexuality, child abuse, domestic violence, rape.
- (b) Violence
War, pacifism, revolution, just war theories, aggression, arms race and arms manufacture, weapons of mass destruction, genocide and ethnic cleansing, political activism.
- (c) Environment
Technology, pollution, global warming and climate change, population, animal rights, conservation,

doom v. optimist theories, sustainable development.

- (d) Drugs of addiction
Recreational drugs, legal and illegal, hard and soft drugs, addiction and dependence, illegal drug trade, harm minimisation, zero tolerance, methods of drug rehabilitation.
- (e) Money
Private and state ownership, wealth and poverty, work and leisure, employment, debt, development, two-thirds world poverty, business ethics, gambling.
- (f) Media
Principles and practice of censorship, propaganda and advertising, pornography and the portrayal of violence in the media, freedom of speech, public morals.
- (g) Value of human life
Abortion, euthanasia, birth control, IVF, surrogacy, genetic engineering, cloning, embryonic stem cells, capital punishment.
- (h) Respect for persons
Discrimination based on race, ethnic group, gender, politics, religion, disability, age; the socially disadvantaged due to government policies, unemployment, mental illness or disability, homelessness, welfare dependency etc; indigenous Australians; refugees

Basic References (Suggested for guidance only):

- Childs, J., *Ethics in Business: Faith at Work* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995).
- Cole, D., *When God Says War Is Right* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook, 2002).
- Hays, J. D., *From Every People And Nation: A Biblical Theology Of Race* (Leicester; Downers Grove, IL: Apollos; IVP, 2003).
- Dixon, P., *The Truth about Drugs* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1998).
- Grenz, S. J., *The Moral Quest: Foundations of Christian Ethics* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1997).
- Harvey, A. E., *Strenuous Commands: The Ethic of Jesus* (London; Philadelphia: SCM; Trinity Press International, 1990)
- Hayes, R. B., *Moral Vision of the New Testament* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996)
- Heintzman, P. et al, *Christianity and Leisure: Issues in a Pluralistic Society* (Sioux Centre, IN: Dordt College, 1994).
- Henttlass, J. & A. Nichols, *Media Ethics* (Melbourne: Acorn, 2003).
- Janzen, W., *Old Testament Ethics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994).
- Kirk, J., *Cherish the Earth* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald, 1993).
- Mouw, R., *The God Who Commands* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1990).
- Rae, S. & P. M. Cox, *Bioethics: a Christian Approach in a Pluralistic Age* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).
- Stassen, G., *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War*, (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 1998).

- Stott, J., *New Issues Facing Christians Today* (Marshall Pickering: London, 1999).
- van Leeuwen, M. S., *Gender and Grace: Love, Work and Parenting in a Changing World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1990).
- Vardy, P., *The Puzzle of Sex* (London: Fount, 1997).
- Vardy P. & P. Grosch, *The Puzzle of Ethics* (London: HarperCollins, 1999).
- Webb, B. G. (ed.), *The Ethics of Life and Death* (New York: Lancer, 1990).
- Wheeler, S., *Wealth as Peril and Obligation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995).
- Wright, C. J. H., *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Leicester: IVP, 2004).

2010 Essay topics (select one)

1. Outline a particular approach to virtue ethics (eg Aristotle, Aquinas, Hauerwas). Then compare this approach with biblical teaching on Christian character, using a particular ethical issue (either sex and marriage, or money, or violence) to illustrate any similarities and differences between the two.
2. What problems do we face when we seek to use the Bible as an ethical textbook? Can such problems be overcome when addressing some of the complex issues of our day? Use a particular ethical issue (either addictive drugs, or pornography or euthanasia) to illustrate your answer.
3. Taking in account the biblical teaching on human stewardship, outline a Christian response to some of the major 21st environmental challenges.

2011 Essay topics (select one)

1. Evaluate the strengths and weakness one of the following ethical theories (utilitarianism, Kantian categorical imperative, situation ethics, hedonism) and determine the extent to which it conforms to a Christian ethical approach.
2. Discuss the nature of the status of the human embryo, the basis for making this determination and the impact this has on a Christian approach to one of the following: IVF, abortion, or the experimental and therapeutic use of embryonic stem cells.
3. Taking in account Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, discuss the basis and validity for justification of the use of war or force to defend the rights of the innocent, the oppressed and the weak.



EVANGELISM

Aim:

To provide an introduction to the principles and practices involved in the evangelistic task of the Church today, particularly as they apply to the life and ministry of the laity in the local church.

Outline:

Section A: The nature of evangelism:

- (a) Defining evangelism; understanding the evangelistic task in relation to other aspects of the Church's mission.
- (b) The message of evangelism: the basic elements of the Christian gospel and their relevance to the needs of modern man.
- (c) What is involved when a person responds to the gospel: an understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in evangelism; the meaning of repentance, faith, conversion and regeneration.

Section B: Motivation for Evangelism:

- (a) The Church's divine commission to evangelise: the early Church, its attitude and approach to evangelism, the situation today.
- (b) Responsibility for evangelism: the role of clergy and laity; approaches to motivating and training Church members for witness and evangelism.
- (c) Spiritual resources for evangelism.

Section C: The practice of evangelism:

- (a) Preparation for evangelism: earning the right to speak.
- (b) Communicating the gospel: person to person, through human relationships, through small groups, through dialogue, through teaching and preaching, by witness and life-style. The use of the Bible in evangelism.
- (c) Resources for evangelism: the advantages and disadvantages of various approaches, e.g. parish missions; home meeting; coffee houses; beach missions; visitation. The use of media, literature, etc. Appropriateness of various methods for different groups e.g. children; youth; family; nominal church members.
- (d) Follow up to evangelism, methods of nurture.

Basic References (Suggested guidance only):

- Chapman, J., *Know and Tell the Gospel* (3rd ed.; Sydney, Matthias Media, 2002).
- Drummond, L. A., *Reaching Generation Next: Effective Evangelism in Today's Culture* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002).
- Green, M., *Evangelism through the Local Church* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990).

Basic References (Chinese language, translated titles):

- Little, P. (Trans. J. Hu), *How to Give Away Your Faith* (Christian Communication Ltd, Hong Kong, 1968)
- Packer, J. I. (Trans. C. Chao), *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (2nd ed.; Taipei: Reformation Translation Fellowship, 1972).
- Teng, P., *To Seekers of Truth* (Hong Kong: Chinese Alliance, 1971).
- Tong, S., *The Theology of Evangelism* (Taipei: Campus Evangelism Fellowship, 1987).

2010 Essay topics (select one)

1. "Evangelism is the most important task of the church". Discuss.
2. Should evangelism be the responsibility of only gifted evangelists?
3. What are the critical factors that lead to successful youth evangelism?

2011 Essay topics (select one)

1. What characterised the early church's approach to evangelism?
2. Critically evaluate the message and approach of one evangelism tool.
3. What is distinctive about Generations X & Y? What are the keys to reaching these generations with the gospel?

**INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY****Aim:**

To give an introduction to the nature of spirituality and to examine basic spiritual disciplines, their biblical basis and contemporary practice.

Outline:**Section A: Christian Spirituality Defined**

- (a) Spirituality as a response to the redemptive work of Christ
- (b) Spirituality as an outworking of sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit
- (c) Spirituality as a component of being the people of God
- (d) Identify the classic spiritual disciplines practiced by Christians.

Section B: Cultivating Spirituality

- (a) Various forms of prayer will be examined and opportunity for practice will be given to students
- (b) Journal writing and accountability and "spiritual friendship" or spiritual direction will be considered
- (c) Further reflection will centre on concerns to do with the cultivation of intimacy with God; simple lifestyle, activating justice, compassion and humility before God
- (d) Suffering and its place in spiritual formation will be discussed.

Section C: Practice

Students will be given an opportunity to commence journal writing practice. Participants will be encouraged during the course to use varying forms of prayer in their devotional lives. A retreat time will be held during one of the sessions. The purpose of personal and community retreats will be outlined as part of the exercise.

Basic References (Suggested guidance only):

Calhoun, A.A., *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2005).

Dallas, W., *The Renovation of the Heart* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001)

McGrath, A., *Christian Spirituality* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1999).

Paul, S.R & Green, M., *Living the Story* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003)

2010 Essay topics (select one)

1. What are the "classical" spiritual disciplines and how do they interrelate with divine grace? In your essay demonstrate your understanding of "grace" and "spiritual disciplines" and the working connection between the two areas of Christian experience. Provide evidence of wide reading.
2. What is "godliness" and how does it relate to Christian spirituality? In your reflection give evidence of reading, comparing and contrasting the writings of H Nouwen, R.Foster, and/or R Banks and R Lovelace. Other reading needs to be evident.
3. What are the characteristics of the spirituality of the gospel of Matthew or of John? The reflection needs to give evidence of good interaction with the Scripture concerned and with other reading.
4. What is the "communion of the saints" and what significance does this concept have for spiritual formation?

2011 Essay topics (select one)

1. What is the relationship between divine grace and spiritual disciplines?
2. Various forms of prayer that have been practiced by Christians. List and explain six such forms and comment on the comparative value for contemporary evangelical Christians.
3. List the "classical" disciplines and discuss means of implementing the disciplines into one's daily life.

**INTRODUCTION TO PASTORAL CARE****Aim:**

To further an understanding of the pastoral ministry in relation to the personal and corporate needs of individuals and to promote growth in maturity.

Outline:**Section A: Biblical foundations for pastoral care.**

- (a) Patterns of the pastor's role, e.g. Ezekiel 34, John 14, 16, Ephesians 4, the Pastoral Epistles.
- (b) The pastoral role of the congregation, e.g., John 17, Acts 2, Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4-6, Colossians 3-4.
- (c) Biblical insights on the nature of human individuals and human groups.
- (d) The maturity theme, individual and corporate, within the New Testament.
- (e) The distinction between pastoral care and pastoral counselling.

Section B: The demands made by crisis situations, for example: illness, alcoholism and drug dependence,

youth homelessness and delinquency, marriage problems, terminal illness, death, bereavement.

Section C: Pastoral care with small groups and families; the local church and the helping professions; preventative care.

Section D: Developing skills in pastoral care.

- (a) Upbuilding skills; teaching, encouragement, recognition of gifts.
- (b) Coping with negativity, e.g. criticism, gossip, scapegoating.
- (c) Individual 'discipling'.
- (d) Pastoring the pastors.

Basic References (suggested for guidance only):

- Benner, D., *Strategic Pastoral Counselling* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).
 Dawn, M. & E. Peterson, *The Unnecessary Pastor*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).
 Stairs, J. *Listening for the Soul* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000).
 Tidball, D. J., *Builders & Fools* (Leicester: IVP, 1999).

2010 Essay topics (select one)

1. After reading Jean Stairs' book discuss how pastoral carers might be care for by others. Other course texts need to be consulted and used for research as well as Stairs.
2. How do the biblical images of pastors as 'soldiers', 'athletes' and 'farmers' (2 Timothy 2:1-17 NRSV) inform pastoral practice both personally and in the life of the church? Consult with Tidball and Dawn, where applicable, as part of your work.
3. Describe the attitudes and actions that are required of a pastoral carer for ministers with a person of a different generation to their own who suffers long term restrictive chronic illness. Course texts will assist preparation.
4. What do you understand by 'scape-goating' in a family or a congregation? How might a pastor enable people to grow beyond this debilitating behaviour and attitude?

2011 Essay topics (select one)

1. Discuss the role of a pastor as who is a builder of the church. In the essay make references to 1 Corinthians 3: 10-17 (NRSV). Then go on to expand on the practical components of pastor care that are equipping, and prompt congregational maturity. In your essay make references to course texts.
2. Acts 20:28 records Paul's directive to the elders of the church at Ephesus to *Shepherd the church the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son* (NRSV). Explore both the context of this apostolic directive and Ezekiel 34 with the view to identifying the ways in which pastoral care is put into practice in a local congregation. In your essay make references to course texts.
3. In 2 Corinthians 1: 3-7 (NRSV) the apostle Paul discusses his own sufferings or and the way God

consols him in the midst of affliction. He then goes on to add that his experience of affliction and of divine consolation does not stop there, but that his affliction and consolation benefits the people he serves. After reading the passage and exploring its meaning draw out the implications for pastoral care and counselling practice. Always make references to readings in your essay.

4. Outline pastoral strategies for care of a long term unemployed husband and father. In your essay include some discussion explore the way the church can access community resources in this situation. Make reference to course text where they apply in your essay.



LAY MINISTRIES FIELD EDUCATION

Experiential-based supervised learning through observation, participation and reflection related to at least one major area of individual and/or corporate ministries experienced and engaged in by Christians.

Aim:

- a) To provide candidates with the opportunity to be exposed to ministry within a local congregation and/or in the wider community;
- b) To enable candidates to reflect upon personal life and ministry from a Christian perspective.

Outline:

- 1 A total of not less than 100 hours' experience-based learning, including
 - (a) Keeping a personal daily journal for at least 1 month, together with a written reflection upon the ministry experiences of daily life during that time;
 - (b) Observation and participation in some aspects of lay ministries undertaken in a local congregation, involving at least 50 hours' active work by the candidate;

OR

- 2 Observation and participation in ministries undertaken in the wider community, which involve Christians (e.g. state school councils, homeless care, sports/leisure ministries, food co-operatives), involving not less than 50 hours' active work by the candidate.

Note: Students may wish to choose 50 hours from the first section and 50 from the second.

In each case—

- (a) Appropriate supervised reflection, including written verbatims, is to be undertaken by the candidate, and voluntary support groups utilised to provide peer feedback and support;
- (b) Candidates are to identify and evaluate the support structures used;

- (c) Candidates are to identify ways in which personal relationships and community structures were related to the life of the local congregation concerned.

(Note the minimum 50 hours active work would be supplemented by a minimum 50 hours of observation/reflection upon active work to achieve the 100 hour experienced based limit for the course).

Assessment:

For candidates who are doing the unit within a college or group setting (i.e., all participants are enrolled in the unit):

- Candidates are to submit a 1500-word report (to their college) on their work for this unit along the lines indicated in the syllabus document. (50%)
- Candidates are to submit a minimum of 2 verbatim transcripts (to their college) of active ministry engagement. (25%)
- Candidates are to submit their personal daily journal (to their college) containing at least 1 month of field work entries that reflect upon the ministry experiences and daily life during that time. (25%).

Students must provide satisfactory work in each category.

For candidates who are doing the unit on their own:

The same requirements as above however these are to be forwarded to the ACT by the student's supervisor.



NEW TESTAMENT

Aim:

- To study the New Testament writings in their original context.
- To discover their meaning for the life of the Christian and the Christian community today.

Outline:

Section A: The general background of the New Testament community and its writings.

Section B: The Founder and Head of the Christian Community:

- The Gospels: their nature, purpose, authors.
- The Gospel according to St. Mark: its contents, structure and simple exegesis.

Section C: The Early Christian Community:

- Its life, belief, mission and growth (a study of Acts 1–15).
- An early congregation: difficulties encountered and Paul's response to them (a study of 1 Corinthians 1–11)
- A message of hope to churches under threat of persecution (a study of 1 Peter).

Basic References: (suggested for guidance only):

Introductions to the New Testament

- Achtemeier, P. J., J. B. Green & M. M. Thompson, *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).
 Drane, J., *Introducing the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001).
 Gundry, R. H., *A Survey of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003).

Commentaries on Set Books

- Wright, T., *Mark for Everyone* (London: SPCK, 2001).
 Telford, W. R., *Mark* (Sheffield: Continuum, 2003).
 Wright, T., *Paul for Everyone: 1 Corinthians* (London: SPCK, 2003).
 Hahn, S. & C. Mitch, *1 and 2 Corinthians* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2004).
 Boring, M. E., *1 Peter* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999).
 Senior, D. & D. J. Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2003).

2010 Essay topics (select one)

- What makes the Gospel of Mark different to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke?
- From a careful study of 1 Corinthians, construct a picture of church life in Corinth. Consider such issues as leadership, ethnicity, gender, age and social groupings, the conduct of services, and the tensions that exist in the Corinthian church and their causes.
- Account for the differences and similarities between the Gospels.
- Outline the factors contributing to the Maccabean revolt and indicate how the revolt influenced Judaism during the period up to the birth of Christ.

2011 Essay topics (select one)

- Discuss the meaning and significance of Jesus' parables and their relevance to today.
- Outline the major features contributing to the growth of the early church. Discuss the principles involved that may be relevant to church growth today.
- Discuss the Roman government of Judea and Galilee in the first century A.D.
- From your study of 1 Peter and Acts 1-15 write an essay on the threat of persecution faced by Christians in the first century.



OLD TESTAMENT

Aim:

- To deepen each student's understanding of the historical framework of the content and the theological insights derived.
- To introduce students to the different literary forms of the Old Testament.
- To strengthen their faith in this God who continues to interact with his creation.

Outline:**1. Study of:**

- (a) the different genres found in the Old Testament; the use of oral tradition, history, poetry and prophecy.
- (b) The historical outline of the content.
- (c) Religious institutions and beliefs.

2. Study of special topics within the theology of the Old Testament: the purposes of God; Creation; redemption and salvation; the People of God; worship and sacrifice; the prophetic message; the Messiah; Wisdom Literature.

These topics are to be studied with direct reference to the text of the Old Testament. Therefore, familiarity with the Biblical text is important.

3. Special study of**Either****(a) Genesis 1-11**

- Its place and purpose in the Old Testament
- Knowledge of the content
- Interpretation of the Creation, Fall, and the narratives of Cain and Abel, the Flood and Babel
- The permanent value of these chapters

Or**(b) the book of Deuteronomy**

- purpose of the book
- its relation to the text of the Pentateuch
- Main themes: covenant; people of God; obedience; law; justice; individual rights; corporate responsibility
- The role of Moses as a prophet
- Permanent value of the book e.g. the place of the Law in relation to the subsequent history of nation Israel; place of the Law in the context of the New Testament covenant.

Basic References (suggested for guidance only):

- Alexander, D. & P. Alexander, *The Lion Handbook to the Bible* (3rd ed.; Oxford: Lion, 1999).
- Arnold, B. & B. Beyer, *Encountering the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999).
- Drane, J., *Introducing the Old Testament* (Oxford: Lion, 1986).
- Hartley, J. E., *Genesis* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000).
- Scullion, J. J., *Genesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1992).
- Turner, L. A., *Genesis* (Sheffield: SAP, 2000).
- Brueggemann, W., *Deuteronomy* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001).
- Cairns, I., *Deuteronomy: Word and Presence* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992).
- Harman, A., *Deuteronomy: The Commands of a Covenant God* (Fearn: Christian Focus, 2001).

2010 Essay Topics (select one)

1. What theological ideas form the basis for the sacrificial system as it is described in *Leviticus*?
2. What led to the majority of Israelites calling for a monarchy to be set up to lead the nation?

3. Compare the prophetic messages of *Amos* and *Hosea* as they diagnose what was wrong with the northern kingdom of Israel prior to the Assyrian invasion.
4. How do the Old Testament prophets interpret the meaning of the exile in Babylon?

2011 Essay Topics (select one)

1. How do the different literary forms contained in the book of *Genesis* inform our understanding of God as the God of history?
2. What theological insights does the Wisdom Literature offer concerning the existence of suffering and the sovereign rule of God?
3. What hope is evident in the prophetic message of Ezekiel?
4. In what ways was the post-Exilic community different after their return from exile in Babylon?

**PREACHING****Aim:**

To introduce students to the theological basis of preaching and the elements of sermon preparation and presentation.

Outline:

The course will consist of prescribed readings, class lectures, and field work. Students who successfully complete the unit would be able to prepare and present a message which demonstrates a measure of homiletical skill.

Section A: Theoretical Study

1. Preaching as ministry of the Word
2. The aims, forms, and contexts of preaching
3. Principles of exegesis and exposition
4. The theme of the message
5. The context (audience) of preaching
6. The structure of the sermon:
 - Methods of sermon construction
 - Sermon introductions
 - Sermon conclusions
 - Transitions
 - Illustrations
7. Methods and techniques of public speaking:
 - Delivery: verbal communication
 - Delivery: non-verbal communication
8. Sermon preparation

Section B: Field Work

The student is to prepare and present two sermons under supervision.

- a) One sermon is to be preached and criticised in class. Full texts or notes are to be submitted to the supervisor before the sermon is preached.
- b) The other sermon is to be preached in the context of a regular worship service. Comments are to be obtained from at least one regular preacher and at least two congregational members on the forms provided (copies of which can be obtained from the ACT office).

Assessment:

Students are to prepare and present two sermons under supervision:

For candidates who are doing the unit within a college or group setting (i.e., all participants are enrolled in the unit):

- one sermon is to be preached and criticised in class. Full texts or notes are to be submitted to the supervisor before the sermon is preached (30%).
- the other sermon is to be preached in the context of a regular worship service. Comments are to be obtained from at least one regular preacher and at least two congregational members on the forms provided. Copies can be obtained from the ACT office (30%).
- Homework exercises (40%)

For private candidates who are doing the unit on their own:

- one sermon is to be written up and then preached. Full texts are to be submitted to the supervisor before the sermon is delivered for forwarding to an external examiner appointed by the ACT. A video of the sermon should accompany the text. Notes only will not be acceptable (30%).
- the other sermon is to be preached in the context of a regular worship service. Comments are to be obtained from at least one regular preacher and at least two congregational members on the forms provided. Copies can be obtained from the ACT office (30%).
- Homework exercises (40%) – to be set and marked by supervisor.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION****Aim:**

To give an introduction to the nature of education, to the psychology of learning and to methods of teaching, particularly as they apply to the education of persons in the Christian faith.

Outline:**Section A: Education**

- What it is, its aims, its role in the community.
- Role of the teacher.
- Theories of learning.

Section B: Education in the Christian Faith

- Its objectives; its scope; Christian teachers; the role of the congregation; relation to worship.
- The use of the Bible.
- Unplanned learning: what it is; home, church, community as areas of unplanned learning.
- Religious and educational issues involved in questions of baptism, confirmation and admission to communion, participation in worship.

Section C: Age groups

- Adults: Features of adult learning, motivation, continuing education.

The adults as learners in their own right, and not merely in order that they may teach others.

Significance of adult education for the education of other groups in the life of the parish.,

Methods of learning: group discussions, buzz groups, participation training, action-projects, seminars, conferences.

- Youth:** Features of adolescence, motivation for learning, role in congregation, youth worship patterns.

Methods of learning: assignment, action-projects, group discussion, camps and conferences, role of significant adults.

- Children:** importance of environmental and physical factors, the role of the teacher, readiness for learning.

Evaluation of Sunday Schools, day school instruction, alternative means of religious education for children.

Methods of learning: stories, visual aids, questioning, creative activities, drama projects, excursions.

Basic References: (suggested for guidance only):

Various Teacher's Manuals published by Joint Board of Christian Education.

Anthony, M. J. (ed.), *Christian Education Foundations for the Twenty-first Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001).

Bridger, F., *Children Finding Faith – Exploring a Child's Response to God* (London: Scripture Union, 2000).

Pazmino, R. W., *Foundational Issues in Christian Education* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008).

Tye, K. B., *Basics of Christian Education*. (St Louis: Chalice Press, 2000).

Westerhoff, J. H., *Will Our Children Have Faith?* (Harrisburg; Toronto: Moorehouse; Anglican Book Centre, 2000).

Wilhoit, J., *Christian Education and the Search for Meaning* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992).

Wilhoit, J. & L. Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000).

2010 Essay topics (select one)

- Compare the teaching of religion in Australia today with conditions in a selected previous era e.g. before World War I or II.
- Education can assist in the significance of Christian worship. Discuss this statement.
- List some changes you would wish to see in the conditions for the teaching of religion in state schools.
- Learning is shown to have taken place through the process of assessment and testing. How can this be done in Christian education conducted within a church congregation?

2011 Essay topics (select one)

- Select a specific syllabus in Christian education (at any school level) and make comments on its implementation. Suggestions might be made for its improvement, especially if you have taught this syllabus.

2. What characteristics contribute to making a good person into a good teacher? In Christian education how can teacher examples contribute to knowledge as well as to attitudes?
3. Select an historical period in Australian or biblical history and compare the aims, curriculum and teaching procedures in the religious education of children with those of today.
4. Do a brief review of two texts on child development and relate them to the field in religious education in which you are now engaged. Show how a knowledge of child development is valuable in modifying teacher expectations of pupil achievement.



WORLD RELIGIONS

Aim:

To give some understanding of the beliefs, organisation and life of the major religions in the world today.

Outline:

EITHER:

1. A survey of features common to peoples of all faiths in the contemporary world; Christian relations with and approaches to peoples of other faiths.
2. Survey of the beliefs, practices and purposes of three of the following major world religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam – and an assessment of their influence in contemporary society in east and west.
3. Survey of the beliefs of secularism and animism and their influence on major world religions.

OR

4. A study of the major Chinese religions: Taoism, Confucianism and Chinese Buddhism, including the influence of primal and folk religion. The study will involve an examination of the historical roots and development in the beliefs and practices, cultural influence and contemporary reforms of the various religions.

Basic References: (suggested for guidance only):

- Burnett, D., *Clash of Worlds* (Grand Rapids: Monarch, 2003).
- Halverson, D., *The Compact Guide to World Religions* (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1996).
- Dickson, J., *A Spectator's Guide to World Religions: An Introduction to the Big Five* (Sydney: Blue Bottle, 2004).
- The New Lion Handbook, *The World Religions* (Oxford: Lion, 2005).

Basic References for Chinese Religions (in Chinese Language, translated titles):

- Ching, J. & H. Kung, *Chinese Religions and Christianity* (Hong Kong: San Lien, 1990).
- Smith, H., *The World's Religions* (Hong Kong: Christian Literature Service, 1989).
- Wu, E., *Five Great World Religions* (Hong Kong: Christian Literature Service, 1989).

2010 Essay topics (select one)

1. What are the place, the strengths and the weakness of contextualisation in missions?
2. Show how local animistic beliefs have affected one of the major religions you have studied.
3. What are the role and forms of prayer in two of the religions you have studied?
4. Religious fundamentalism is an issue today. Outline reasons for the rise of fundamentalism in one of the religions you have studied. What effect is it having?

2010 Essay Topics (Chinese language syllabus)

1. Describe and evaluate a personal experience of an encounter with a person of another faith.
2. Briefly describe the beliefs and practices of Taoism.
3. Describe the basic beliefs of Confucianism
4. Compare and contrast the concept of vanity, or emptiness, in Christianity and Buddhism. What are the ensuing implications for living in accordance with these two concepts.

2011 Essay topics (select one)

1. What is the role of faith in daily life in two of the religions you have studied?
2. Is faith in Christ the only way of salvation available to humankind?
3. All religions have some common features. What are these? Outline the ways in which the forms and, in some cases, the purposes, of these common features differ.
4. It has been claimed that Christian missions have been one of the greatest secularising forces in history. Discuss this claim.

2011 Essay topics (Chinese language syllabus)

1. Discuss the influence of primal and folk beliefs and practices on one or more Chinese religions.
2. Briefly describe the origin and development of Buddhism.
3. Compare and contrast the teaching of life after death of Christianity and one other Chinese religion.
4. How can human beings know God? Compare the Christian answer to this question to that of one of the Chinese religions and relate your discussion to the Christian claim that Jesus Christ is unique.

