

# LIDLAW COLLEGE

*Te Wananga Amorangi*

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## LIDLAW GRADUATE SCHOOL

### MASTER OF THEOLOGY Course Assessment and Delivery Outline

### R223.830 Theology and Media

Auckland

Semester 1, 2015

Dr Stephen Garner (sgarner@laidlaw.ac.nz)  
Credits

NQF Level 8; 30

#### 1. COURSE STRUCTURE:

This course is offered in a two intensive blocks of (Mode 3):

- 1pm-4pm, 23-27 March;
- 1pm-4pm, 25-29 May.

The course consists of pre-reading, two teaching blocks of class time, and assessment tasks to be completed prior to each teaching block and by the end of the semester.

#### 2. CONTENT OVERVIEW:

This course critically examines key areas of religious communication including the coverage of religion by mass media, how religious communities interact with the media, and how mass media shape perceptions of religion. Particular emphasis will be placed upon the interaction between Christianity and media in both local and global contexts.

The two teaching blocks are organized as follows:

##### **Block 1** (1-4pm, 23-27 March)

Date	Topic
23 March	Introduction to theology, religion and media
24 March	Media, culture and communication
25 March	Mediating faith
26 March	Religion and the news media
27 March	Religious fundamentalism, violence and the media

**Block 2 (1-4pm, 25-29 May)**

Date	Topic
25 May	Religion and popular culture
26 May	Selling religion
27 May	Worship and preaching as religious communication
28 May	Faith, church and the Internet
29 May	Religious authority, new media and new directions

**3. METHODOLOGY:**

The emphasis will be on an interdisciplinary engagement between communications and media studies, and theology and religious studies. Students will be introduced to the religious-social shaping approach to technology (RSST) as a tool for analysing how communities negotiate new forms of media.

**4. ASSESSMENT TASKS AND DUE DATES:**

Assessment task	% of Final Grade	Word Count	Due Date
1. Course participation (incl. presentations)	10%		In class
2. Analysis of religious text	15%	1500	24 April
3. Essay: Mass media and religion	25%	2500	22 May
4. Essay: Media and religious community	50%	5000	30 June
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9000</b>	

**Assessment 1: Course participation (incl. presentations)****10% total grade****Date due: In class****Learning Outcomes: 1,2,4**

This course is based around classroom interaction with core themes, required and recommended reading, and other resources to support the interpretation, evaluation, and integration of those materials. Students are required to prepare for class and to enter into critical and constructive class participation. Students will also be required complete several worksheet tasks set by the lecturer in class and then present on those topics later in class.

*Criteria for assessment*

- Evidence of critical engagement with course topics
- Regular, active participation in class activities and discussions
- Engages in dialogue, responding to other student's comments
- Critically present on set topic(s).
- Discussion protocols observed

**Assessment 2: Analysis of religious text****15% total grade 1500 words****Due: 5pm, Friday 24 April****Learning Outcomes: 3, 4, 5**

Analyze either (a) a traditional church hymn or (b) a contemporary worship song using a format similar to the 'Production-Text-Audience' approach demonstrated by

Pete Ward in:

- Ward, Pete. *Participation and Mediation: A Practical Theology for the Liquid Church*. London: SCM Press, 2008: 81-91.

Your essay should include critical commentary on the production of the song, on the theology presented, and how the song has been received, appropriated, critiqued, and used in historical and/or contemporary settings.

Notes:

- You may not analyze the contemporary worship song 'Shine, Jesus, shine' referred to in Ward's chapter.
- The lyrics of the song or hymn are excluded from the word count.

*Criteria for assessment*

- Critical discussion of the background to and motivation for creation of the piece
- Critical theological commentary on piece
- Critical analysis of the reception of the piece
- Evidence and quality of research for analysis.
- Quality of written expression
- Accuracy in referencing and bibliography according to required style.

### **Assessment 3: Essay – Mass media and religion**

**25% total grade      2500 words      Due 5pm, Friday 22 May**  
**Learning Outcomes: 1,2,3,4,5**

Write an essay on the topic of how mass media shapes popular perceptions of religion.

*Criteria for assessment*

- Essay clearly addresses the set topic.
- Quality of critical analysis and discussion in essay
- Critical theological reflection on the impact of topic being discussed upon faith and life
- Evidence and quality of research for essay.
- Quality of written expression
- Accuracy in referencing and bibliography according to required style.

### **Assessment 4: Essay – Media and Religious Community**

**50% total grade      5000 words      Due 5pm, Friday 30 June**  
**Learning Outcomes: 1,2,3,4,5**

Write an essay answering the question: How should people and communities of faith, such as Christian churches, live in a world in which we are 'wrapped in media'?

Your essay should describe religion and media interaction in general, develop a theological core for engaging with media, and give examples of how this theological understanding might then be used to engage with one or more aspects of media (e.g. the internet and new media; mass media; news media; popular culture etc.) in relation to Christian communities.

*Criteria for assessment*

- Essay clearly addresses the set topic.
- Quality of critical analysis and discussion in essay
- Critical theological reflection on the impact of topic being discussed upon faith and life
- Evidence and quality of research for essay.
- Quality of written expression
- Accuracy in referencing and bibliography according to required style.

## 5. CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT:

See above

## 6. LEARNING HOURS:

Class time:	30 hours
Preliminary reading for classes:	30 hours
Analysis of Religious Text;	30 hours
Essay – Mass Media and Religion	70 hours
Essay – Media and Religious Community	<u>140 hours</u>
TOTAL:	300 hours

## 7. TEXTBOOKS:

The textbooks for this course are:

Campbell, Heidi A. *When Religion Meets New Media*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Hoover, Stewart M. *Religion in the Media Age*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Additional required and recommended reading will be made available in Moodle.

## 8. BIBLIOGRAPHY:

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