

Welcome back to the Department.

We hope you will enjoy your studies in the coming session. A number of developments have occurred in recent months, and this newsletter outlines the major changes in terms of how they will affect students. Please keep the newsletter for future reference.

– Dr Heather Walton (HOD)

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- DSC are not charging dues for the first semester.
- Introduction of Turnitin across Department
- Prof Hazlett has kindly agreed to stay on to teach Hons & Masters courses.
- On study leave this semester: Prof Jasper, Prof Siddiqui & Dr Sherwood

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- New Policy for Submission of work
- Turnitin
- Moodle
- IT Surgeries
- Updated Dept. Contacts
- Office hours

Hello, Goodbye & Haste Ye' Back

A warm welcome to A.K.M. Adam, Darlene Bird and Richard King

Dr Adam (also known as AKMA) joins the department's Biblical Studies team this month from the USA. Having studied at Bowdoin College, Yale

Divinity School and Duke University, he became a biblical scholar and worked at a number of prestigious institutions, including Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Duke Divinity School. He has published on New Testament Theology, Postmodern Biblical Interpretation, New Testament Greek, and Homiletics. He is an ordained priest in the Episcopal tradition, and is interested in teaching students about the joys and challenges of reading and preaching from the Bible in the postmodern world.

Dr Bird undertook her PhD research here and then went on to work in the Subject Centre for Philosophical and Religious Studies at the University of Leeds. She returned to Scotland to take up a position at Queen Margaret's University in Edinburgh. She has published both in the area of religious studies and in literature and theology. She will be the Honours adviser in the Department. Good to have you back Darlene!

Professor King has been appointed as Professor of Religious Studies, and will arrive in Glasgow in January. He is currently Professor of Religion and Culture at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, having moved there from the Religion Department at Derby University. He studied at Hull and then Lancaster. His research interests are primarily in Eastern religious and philosophical traditions, including Advaita Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhist thought, and he also works on poststructural and postcolonial approaches to the study of religion. He has also published on theory and method in the study of religion.

Goodbye Paul Holloway & Alastair Hunter

Dr Holloway left in August to return to the USA as Associate Professor of New Testament at Sewanee School of Theology, Tennessee.

After more than 20 years with the TRS, Dr Alastair Hunter retired in June. He is spending his first year of retirement as President of the University and College Union, the trade union for academic and related workers.

We will miss them, we wish them well for the future, and we hope they'll come back for the occasional visit.

Congratulations Yvonne Sherwood

Dr Sherwood has won a research grant to allow her to take some time off teaching and pursue her research into Religion and Secularity. She will continue to be involved in some departmental activities, but unfortunately will not be teaching on the Bibs1A course or Old Testament/Tanakh Honours courses this year. Her teaching load will be covered by Sarah Nicholson and a new lecturer (TBC). We look forward to hearing about her work as it progresses.

New Policy on Coursework Deadlines

Our policy on late submission of coursework has been interpreted somewhat patchily in recent times. This led to student (and staff) dissatisfaction, since late coursework disrupts the marking process and leads to delays in returning marked essays to students. The University has now issued suggested guidelines to Departments intended to overcome the problems caused by late submissions and the Department will be acting in accordance with these in future.

Two major changes have been made. One is departmental: deadlines for Level 1 and 2 coursework have been brought significantly forward to enable coursework to be returned to students prior to the examination period. The dates for semester 1 are shown in the table below.

Biblical Studies 1A: Old Testament/Tanakh	Dr. Nicholson	1 essay	Mon 9 Nov
World Religions 1A	Dr. Ridgeon	1 essay	Tues 10 Nov
Christianity 1A: Church History	Prof. Hazlett	1 essay	Tues 17 Nov
Bibs 2B: NT Text (Greek)	Dr. Adam	Greek - 1 essay	Wed 11 Nov
Bibs 2B: NT Text (English)	Dr. Adam	English: 2 essays	Essay 1 - Mon 2 Nov Essay 2 - Fri 20 Nov
Christianity 2A: Church in Scotland - no exam	Dr. Gay	Essays x 2; Project x 1	Essay 1 - 23 Oct. Essay 2 - 20 Nov. Project - 14 Dec.
WR2B: Buddhism	Dr. Drew	1 essay	Mon 16 Nov

(coursework submission continued from front.)

The second change relates to late submissions. All coursework must be submitted in hardcopy and via Turnitin (see below) on the deadline unless there is a very good reason (such as illness) why it cannot be. If coursework cannot be submitted on time, the student must apply for an extension to Dr Adam using the form provided from the office. If he is not available please take the form to Dr Gay or Dr Bird. If coursework is submitted late without good reason and without an extension, the following penalties automatically apply:

1 day late	2 points deducted from mark
2 days late	4 points deducted
3 days late	6 points deducted
4 days late	8 points deducted
5 days late	10 points deducted
6 days late or more	essay graded H

(Saturdays and Sundays don't count.)

This policy will be strictly enforced. It is therefore extremely important to ensure that coursework is submitted on time. See the undergraduate general handbook for further details.

Turnitin

All Higher Education Institutions are facing increasing problems with plagiarism and students are also becoming anxious that they may have unintentionally used inappropriate referencing when no offence was intended. To deal with these problems Glasgow University has decided to use a computer application called Turnitin and our Department is participating in the first stage of rolling out this programme throughout the Campus.

From now on you must submit all course work via Turnitin as well as depositing 2 hard copies in the office. You will be able to submit one trial version of your work and receive feedback before final submission so that you will feel secure everything is OK. We think that although the idea of submitting work electronically can sound rather daunting Turnitin will have positive benefits for students in helping you to develop referencing and bibliographical skills. We are aware, however, that a number of our students may not have encountered Turnitin unless they have used it in another department in the university. Accordingly, we are arranging an introductory presentation on Turnitin for all students who wish to attend, and will follow it up with regular informal IT surgeries in the department.

We would like make the transition to submission via Turnitin as painless as possible, and we recognise that some of our students are anxious about computers. So please do make every effort to attend the presentation on the 13th October or one of the IT surgeries, ideally in plenty of time for your first essay!

Full details of how to use Turnitin can also be found on the Departmental Web Site.

A Big Thank You!

We are very grateful for all the helpful and positive feedback we received last year from our students. This enabled us to score highly in the Guardian, Independent and Times University Guides and secure good results in the National Student Survey. We value our very good relationships with our students and want to work even harder to meet your needs. Please use your class reps and the Divinity Students Council to give us your ideas and suggestions for improvements.

Office Hours

In order to be able to give students a more dedicated service we have introduced office hours for the Department office. The office will now be open for enquiries from **10-12 & 2-4**.

We would kindly ask that students try to avoid visiting the office outside these hours unless it is an emergency.

IT surgeries / Help Desk

These have already been mentioned under Turnitin and Moodle. You may attend any of the surgeries, but you **MUST** have your university username and password. This is the same username and password you will use for University email. The surgeries are run by departmental staff, not by IT experts, and will cover basic introductions to Turnitin and Moodle. Students who need more complex IT help or support will need to contact the IT department.

IT surgeries will take place in the Department (No. 4 The Square) at the following times:

Tuesday 13 Oct	1-2pm
Thursday 15 Oct	12-1pm
Tuesday 20 Oct	1-2pm
Tuesday 27 Oct	1-2pm
Monday 2 Nov	2-3pm
Monday 9 Nov	2-3pm
Thursday 12 Nov	12-1pm

If you are unable to make these sessions but feel like you do need IT support please contact Meg MacDonald.

Moodle

Moodle is "like Facebook for your studies": a computer-based virtual classroom where you can contact tutors and other students in your course, download handouts, read news on class events, and so on. All the Level 1 and 2 courses in the department now have Moodle support, and a number of the Honours courses have them, with further Honours courses developing Moodles this session.

It is to your advantage to use the Moodles for your courses, and in fact it is likely that your lecturers will expect you to do so. Some of you may have used Moodle (or Blackboard, or WebCT) elsewhere; others of you will find yourselves on something of a learning curve. The IT surgeries in the department will provide an opportunity to learn how to get the most out of Moodle, so do come along and find out more.

Who to Contact When!

If you are having personal problems that are affecting your studies please speak to your advisor. If you experience problems with the way your course is being run please speak to Sarah Nicholson (level 1 and 2), Rose Drew (Honours) or Ward Blanton (Taught Masters). If you would rather speak to another student contact your course representation (contact list on Undergraduate notice board).

If you need an essay extension contact AKM Adam. If you have difficulty with Turnitin or Moodle contact Meg MacDonald and for all other matters ask in the office.

The Divinity Students Council (DSC) is there to support all students who study subjects taught by the School of Theology and Religious Studies. Throughout the year, they host events to help students and staff to meet and socialise outside the lecture room. Whether it is a compliment, complaint or query, the DSC will do its utmost to help students throughout their academic career at the University of Glasgow. For more info, contact the DSC at dsc@arts.gla.ac.uk.

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