1 Course Name, Level, Number of Credits
Christian-Muslim Relations: diatribe, discourse and dialogue [SCQF Level 10, 20 Credits)

2 Rationale (including name and code of course, if replacing a course)
There is currently no course in the divinity school which is focused exclusively on Christian-Muslim relations. How Islam and Christianity have approached each other theologically, often centring on the figures of Jesus Christ and Muhammad, is one of the most absorbing ways of understanding the challenge of inter religious relations or Christian-Muslim polemics. Furthermore, ‘pluralism’ however one understands it, demands a critical engagement with the history of theological reflection in both traditions. This course focuses not so much on a historical or political overview but on the variety of theological themes and approaches which occupied Christians who wrote about Islam and Muslims who wrote on Christianity. The course will begin by looking at the earliest views of Eastern Christians who saw Islam mainly as a Christian heresy to medieval polemics in Latin Christianity and Muslim refutation of Christian creeds. The postcolonial encounters between the two faiths saw the emergence of different approaches which resulted for the most part to a gradual shift towards dialogue. Since 9/11 there has been a new impetus to dialogue on both sides despite the rise of various fundamentalisms and evangelical ideologies. The course will conclude by using Building Bridges (Lambeth Palace) as a current model of academic dialogue between Christians and Muslims.

3 Organisation of Teaching,
Course Manager: Dr Anthony Allison
Semester: September 2014
Contact hours: Two hours per week (lecture and seminar presentation/discussion)

5 Student Cohort (including any quotas)
Undergraduate students in the Schools of Divinity, SLLC and generally from within Arts and Humanities disciplines.

6 Prerequisites
Preferably but not essential some knowledge of Islam and Christianity at levels 1 or 2.

7 Content of the Course
The content of the course will be largely based on the Routledge Reader in Christian-Muslim Relations (2012). Students are strongly advised to purchase a copy of this book. The Reader has 21 articles/book chapters covering a range of views, primary and secondary sources, polemical, poetical and dialogical; this book will be a set text for the course. A selection of the chapters will form set readings for each week and students will be required to carry out some research into the historical context of each piece for each selection where appropriate. The Reader has a substantial introduction by me and there is currently no similar work available. Most of the themes below are taken from the reader.

Assessment
Class essay (2,500 words) 40%, Seminar 10%, Exam, 50%.
Details of seminars and formal assessment will be given in class.
Week 1 – Christians and Christianity in the Qur’an
Introduction to course
Select passages from Qur’an and Qur’anic commentaries dealing with ‘Christians.’

Week 2 – Eastern Christianity and the heresy of Islam

Week 3 – Christian responses to Muslim polemics

Week 4 – Early Muslim refutation of Christianity

Week 5 – Female figures in Christianity and Islam

Week 6 – Aquinas and Islam
*Guest Lecturer: Dr Harm Goris, Tilber University*

Week 7 – Christian approaches and colonialism

Week 8 – Jesus in contemporary Muslim discourse
Mahmoud Ayoub, ‘Toward an Islamic Christology II, The Death of Jesus, Reality or Delusion,’ The Muslim World 70:2, 1980, pp.91-121.

Week 9 – Two dialogical models
Week 10 – Post 9/11 Discourse

Week 11 – ‘Building Bridges’ as a model for Christian-Muslim dialogue
Student led discussion on the relevance of such dialogue. All relevant material is currently available on Berkley Centre, Georgetown University’s website.

Bibliography
Course Reader – This will contain bulk of course material

Very useful overview of Jesus in Christian-Muslim relations

Background Reading:
Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics 2:1, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957, 447-448.
Clinton Bennett, Understanding Christian-Muslim Relations, Continuum, 2008.


John V. Tolan, Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages, Gainsville, Florida: University Press of Florida.

