

## Immortality and eternity: different conceptions of the afterlife

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<b>Start date</b>	26 June 2020	<b>End date</b>	2 July 2020
<b>Venue</b>	Virtual Classroom		
<b>Tutor</b>	Dr Alex Carter	<b>Course code</b>	1920NRR052

**Director of ISP and LL** Sarah Ormrod

**For further information on this course, please contact the Lifelong Learning team** Zara Kuckelhaus, Fleur Kerrecoe  
[shortcourses@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:shortcourses@ice.cam.ac.uk) or 01223 764637

**To book** See: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk) or telephone 01223 746262

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### Tutor biography

Alex is Academic Director for Philosophy and Interdisciplinary Studies at the Institute of Continuing Education. He is also Bye-Fellow for Study Skills at Fitzwilliam College. Alex was awarded his PhD in Philosophy by the University of Essex in 2015; his thesis explores some of the surprising aspects of Wittgenstein's views concerning freedom and fatalism. Before this, Alex studied Philosophy at the University of Wales, Swansea and the University of Bristol.

## **Course programme**

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These interactive online sessions will start at 5.00pm each day for 7 days beginning on Friday 26 June. Each session will last approximately one hour (often with additional time for questions and discussion)

### **Friday 26 June 2020 5 pm**

Session 1:       **Introduction and outline**

### **Saturday 27 June 2020 5 pm**

Session 2:       **Bergson on time: a methodology for revising ideas**

### **Sunday 28 June 2020 5 pm**

Session 3:       **What answers come from having more life?**

### **Monday 29 June 2020 5 pm**

Session 4:       **Life seen *Sub Specie Aeternitatis***

### **Tuesday 30 June 5 pm**

Session 5:       **What answers come from thinking of life as eternal?**

### **Wednesday 1 July 2020 5 pm**

Session 6:       **Is an “eternal life” strictly a religious idea?**

### **Thursday 2 July 2020 5 pm**

Session 7:       **Ethics or religion? And what is the difference?**

## Course syllabus

### Aims:

The main aim of the course is to rigorously assess contemporary religious and philosophical conceptions of the afterlife in order to establish what ethical significance they have.

### Content:

The course focuses on a specific question, namely “What answers come from having *more* life?” In seeking to answer this question, however, we shall explore a range of philosophical topics: from existentialism to the metaphysics of time.

Particular attention will be paid to Ludwig Wittgenstein’s philosophy of religion which offers a refreshing alternative to dogmatic forms of both theism *and* atheism.

### Presentation of the course:

The course comprises formal lectures incorporating interactive presentations and discussion sessions wherein students will be invited to reflect, comment and pass judgement on the ideas contained within the lectures. At select points throughout the course participants will be asked explicitly to contribute their views with the goal of directing future research. At the culmination of each session, handouts will be distributed to facilitate independent reading on the topics covered.

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### Reading and resources list

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Listed below are texts that might be of interest should you wish to supplement your learning on the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Robert L. Arrington, Mark Addis	<i>Wittgenstein and Philosophy of Religion</i>	Psychology Press, 2004
Henri Bergson	<i>Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness</i>	Martino Fine Books, 2015
Giles Deleuze	<i>Bergsonism</i>	Zone Books, 1988
A. G. N. Flew	<i>There Is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind</i>	HarperOne, 2008
Olli Koistinen	<i>The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza's Ethics</i>	Cambridge University Press 2009 (See below re discount)
Norman Malcolm, Peter Winch	<i>Wittgenstein: A Religious Point Of View?</i>	Routledge, 2002
Friedrich Nietzsche	<i>The Gay Science: With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs</i>	Cambridge University Press 2001 (See below re discount)
Friedrich Nietzsche	<i>Nietzsche: The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols: And Other Writings*</i>  *particularly <i>Ecce Homo</i> .	Cambridge University Press 2011 (See below re discount)
D. Z. Phillips	<i>Death &amp; Immortality</i>	Macmillan, 1970  (Out of print and rare)

Weblinks

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/philosophy-religion/#WittPhilReli>

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## **Additional information**

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### **Venue**

Online using 'zoom'. A link to the course will be made available via email, and any queries should be emailed to [shortcourses@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:shortcourses@ice.cam.ac.uk).

All sessions will be recorded and made available to students shortly after the course has finished with access to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The lectures will be online using a secure version of Zoom, and you will get an email before the lecture with the meeting invitation, URL, and password. If you are new to Zoom, there will be a separate guide for how to set it up.

**Note** Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

*Information correct as of:* 22 June 2020