

College removes defamatory remarks about atheists from its module

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Atheist Ireland protests against teaching course containing anti-atheist propaganda

Hibernia College, the online teacher-training institution, has removed slides from its religion module for primary teachers at the request of Atheist Ireland who said that they contained "untrue statements about atheism and at least two defamatory allegations".

Last Friday Atheist Ireland's Michael Nugent and Jane Donnelly met vice-president for academic affairs and knowledge management, Dr Breakwell and Dr Siobhán Cahillane-McGovern of Hibernia College to discuss their concerns about the description of atheism in the religion module.

According to the module, which was prepared by retired professor of moral theology at Maynooth, Fr Vincent Twomey.: "Atheism seems to be fashionable in Ireland at present. It is seen as rational, progressive and compassionate. But above all, it is 'in', not to mention convenient since, as Dostoevsky said in 19th century Russia where it was likewise 'in', that if there is no God then anything can be justified."

It stated: "What bothers very few of its latter-day exponents is the fact that atheist humanism produced the worst horrors history has ever witnessed, namely Nazism, fascism and Marxism, the latter alone responsible for some 100 million lives, according to The Black Book written by French ex-Marxists. Atheism is not a benign force in history."

Dr Nicholas Breakwell said "Some offending slides identified by Atheist Ireland have been removed pending the annual review process" to which all courses at the college are subject.

He also said Atheist Ireland had been asked to prepare a module for the college "on atheism, what it believes and does not".

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