

Nottingham Trent University

Module Specification

	Basic module information	
1	Module Title:	The Basic Problems of Philosophy
2	Module Code:	PHIL10111
3	Credit Points:	40
4	Duration:	Year Long
5	School:	Arts and Humanities
6	Campus:	Clifton
7	Date this version first approved to run:	September 2012

8 Pre, post and co-requisites:

These are modules that you must have studied previously in order to take this module, or modules that you must study simultaneously or in a subsequent academic session

Pre, Co, Post Module Code Module Title

9 Courses containing the module

<u>Level</u>	<u>Core/Option</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Course Title</u>
		FT	HUMA008	BA (H) Communication & Society and Philosophy
		FT	HUMA016	BA (H) English and Philosophy
		FT	HUMA023	BA (H) European Studies and Philosophy
		FT	HUMA028	BA (H) Film & TV and Philosophy
		FT	HUMA033	BA (H) Global Studies and Philosophy
		FT	HUMA038	BA (H) History and Philosophy
		FT	HUMA042	BA (H) Linguistics and Philosophy
		FT	HUMA045	BA (H) Philosophy and International Relations
		SW	MODL014	BA (H) French and Philosophy
		SW	MODL027	BA (H) German and Philosophy
		SW	MODL039	BA (H) Italian and Philosophy
		SW	MODL058	BA (H) Spanish and Philosophy

10 Overview and aims

This module will examine some of the fundamental questions that have defined philosophy as an academic discipline and have made it particularly relevant to other areas of inquiry in the Humanities. Particular emphasis will be given to debates surrounding the nature of rationality and critical thinking; the rhetorical power of language and the ethical and political issues surrounding its use as a tool of persuasion; the uses of scepticism and the question of whether there are limits to what we can know; the philosophy and politics of freedom; the ethics of animal rights, the environmental crisis and cloning; the nature and wider human significance of time; the nature of beauty as well as the question of how we relate to modern technology.

Overall, the module will aim to foster a questioning attitude towards contemporary life and to develop an awareness of how philosophical issues lie at the heart of some of the most important intellectual, ethical and political controversies of our times. At the end of the module, you should appreciate the way in which philosophy can improve our understanding of ourselves and the wider world in which we live.

11 **Module content**

This module introduces a range of themes and issues, many of which have defined the canons of both classical and modern philosophy. Issues will be chosen according to the interests of staff as well as their significance for the modules likely to be available at levels 2 and 3.

Issues to be chosen from amongst:

- The nature, origins and purpose of philosophy.
- Creative and critical thinking – basic logic and methods of criticism and argumentation
- The philosophy of rhetoric and its relationship to politics
- Irrationality and superstition
- Practical ethics
- Philosophy and its relationship to everyday life
- Aesthetics, beauty and the philosophical significance of taste
- Philosophy of science
- Philosophy of mind and artificial intelligence
- Philosophical theories of ethics
- Feminism
- Technology and its ethical, epistemological and ontological impacts.
- The philosophy of time and its relationship to ethics

- Theories of justice and ethics
- Ethical and Political Philosophy

12 Indicative reading

Bryan, F. (2005) 'Scepticism Comes Alive' Oxford: Clarendon Press

Baggini, J. and Fosl, P.S. (2010) 'The Philosopher's Toolkit': A Compendium of Philosophical Concepts' Oxford: Blackwell

Carter, M. (2007) 'Minds and Computers: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence' Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

Kernohan, A., (2012) 'Environmental Ethics: An Interactive Introduction' Peterborough: Broadview Press.

Singer, P. (2011) 'Practical Ethics' New York: Cambridge University Press

Weston, A. (2010) 'A Rulebook for Arguments' Indianapolis: Hackett

13 Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of the module

Knowledge and understanding. After studying this module you should be able to:

- Understand the importance of the techniques of philosophical reasoning and analysis
- Describe opposing philosophical positions and offer reasons why one position is more persuasive/important than others in the field
- Show a basic understanding of the key arguments in the history of modern western philosophy
- Analyse some of the central theories in contemporary logic, metaphysics, epistemology and the philosophy of mind
- Apply doctrines from the history of philosophy in order make sense of contemporary philosophical debates

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the relevance of philosophical ideas and forms of questioning for everyday life
Skills, qualities and attributes. After studying this module you should be able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceive of how to construct a cogent argument in relation to philosophical debates and organise a complex body of information into meaningful prose • Show an awareness of how generalisations can be supported or weakened by detailed discussion • Understand the basic sense and significance of philosophical terminology and demonstrate a basic familiarity with the key assumptions underlying contemporary philosophical debates • Engage in debate about philosophical issues without recourse to insult or susceptibility to take offence and collaborate with others in intellectual tasks • Recognise the contemporary significance of philosophical problems and the arguments for and against their solution
Evaluate, in outline, the success of standard arguments

14	Teaching and learning <i>Range of modes of direct contact</i> This indicates the range of direct contact teaching and learning methods used on this module, e.g. lectures, seminars
	Teaching and learning methods will normally consist of weekly two hour lectures accompanied by a one hour seminar. Total contact hours: 78
	<i>Range of other learning methods</i> This indicates the range of other teaching and learning methods used on this module, e.g. directed reading, research
	Alongside the standard package of lecture / seminar sessions, you will be invited to participate in a number of more independent learning exercises. For example, you may be asked to read chapters and sections from books and articles, and use this as the basis for preparing for seminars as well as the final essay. Reading is an essential learning activity for this module

15 Assessment methods

This indicates the type and weighting of assessment elements in the module

<u>Element number</u>	<u>Weighting</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Description</u>
-----------------------	------------------	-------------	--------------------

1	100%	Coursework	Essay
---	------	------------	-------

Diagnostic/formative assessment

This indicates if there are any assessments that do not contribute directly to the final module mark

You will be offered opportunities to submit and discuss an essay outline, which will help you develop a feasible approach to the necessary research for the essay as well to improve the structure and content of the writing. You will also have the opportunity to receive formative feedback on a weekly basis based on seminars.

Participation and engagement in seminar work and workshops on a group and an individual basis.

Further information on assessment

This section provides further information on the module's assessment where appropriate

The assessment for this module consists of :

- 2,000 word essay (100%)

Document management

16	Module Title:	The Basic Problems of Philosophy	
17	Module Code:	PHIL10111	
18	Subject (JACS) Code	V500	
19	Cost Centre	141	
20	School:	AAH	
21	Academic Team	ECM	
22	Campus	2 (Clifton)	
23	Other institutions providing teaching	<i>Please complete in box 23 a-d - if applicable</i>	
		Institution	%
23a	Other UK Higher Education or Further Education Institution- Please name		
	Percentage not taught by NTU		

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 23b | Other public organisation in the UK- Percentage not taught by NTU |
| 23c | Other private organisation in the UK - Percentage not taught by NTU |
| 23d | Any other Non-UK organisation - Percentage not taught by NTU |
| 24 | Date this version was formally approved by SASQC/DAG: |