

Nottingham Trent University

Module Specification

	Basic module information	
1	Module Title:	The Philosophy of Time
2	Module Code:	PHIL20709
3	Credit Points:	20
4	Duration:	Semester- Long
5	School:	Arts and Humanities
6	Campus:	Clifton
7	Date this version first approved to run:	Jan 2015

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

<u>Pre, Co, Post</u>	<u>Module Code</u>	<u>Module Title</u>
Pre	PHIL101	The Basic Problems of Philosophy
CO	PHIL201	Contemporary Philosophy

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
		FT	EURX001	European Exchange (First Half Year)
		FT	EURX002	European Exchange (Second Half Year)

FT	EURX003	European Exchange (Full Year)
FT	INTX001	International Exchange (First Half Year)
FT	INTX002	International Exchange (Second Half Year)
FT	INTX003	International Exchange (Full Year)

10 Overview and aims

What is the nature of time? Does it flow, as it appears to? Or is this just an illusion? Do the past and future exist? If so, are they just as real as the present? Is the future open in a way that the past is not? If not, does this mean that our futures are predetermined? Is time travel possible? Or does it give rise to insoluble paradoxes? How is it possible for something to persist identically over time whilst undergoing changes? What explains the apparent fact that time has a direction?

Contemporary philosophers of time tackle all of these questions, and more. This module aims to provide students with an up to date overview of cutting-edge philosophical research on these questions, and by placing it in its historical context provides them with everything they need to understand the answers that have been given to them, and to formulate their own views.

11 Module content

The module will begin with a discussion of the history of the philosophy of time, covering figures from the ancient history (e.g. Parmenides, Aristotle, Augustine), and the modern history (e.g. Newton, Leibniz, Kant). Then John McTaggart's famous 1908 argument for the unreality of time will be discussed, which will lead into a consideration of two opposed contemporary theories of time's flow (the A-Theory and the B-theory) and three opposed ontological positions regarding the existence of the past, present, and future (presentism, eternalism and the growing block theory). This will give the theoretical basis to consider further topics in the philosophy of time, including the topic of whether the future is open, how things persist over time whilst remaining identical, and whether time travel is metaphysically possible. The module will conclude by considering how results in modern-day physics (e.g. special relativity, quantum gravity) bear on the debates covered in the earlier parts of the module.

12 Indicative reading

Anscombe, G. E. M. (1956) 'Aristotle and the Sea Battle' *Mind* 65 (257):1-15.

Broad, C. D. (1933). *Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy, Vol. 1.* (Cambridge: CUP)

Coope, U. (2005) *Time for Aristotle: Physics Iv.10-14* (Oxford: OUP)

Dainton, B. (2010) *Time and Space* (Durham: Acumen)

Dummett, M. (1964) 'Bringing About the Past' *Philosophical Review* 73 (3):338-359

Hawley, K. (2001) *How Things Persist* (Oxford: OUP)

Lewis, D. (1976) 'The Paradoxes of Time Travel' *American Philosophical Quarterly* 13 (2):145-152

Sider, T. (2001) *Four-Dimensionalism: An Ontology of Persistence and Time* (Oxford: OUP)

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 core debates that preoccupy contemporary philosophers of time
- Critically evaluate arguments for and against differing views taken in modern philosophy of time
- Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the key arguments relating to issues in the philosophy of time
- Understand the semantic and metaphysical concepts that underlie the debates in the philosophy of time

Skills, qualities and attributes. After studying this module you should be able to:

- Assess the significance of various positions taken by historical and contemporary philosophers of time
- Confidently apply the semantic and metaphysical concepts underlying the debates in the philosophy of time
- Evaluate, in detail, the success of arguments in contemporary metaphysics

14 Teaching and learning

Range of modes of direct contact

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:

39

Range of other learning methods

This indicates the range of other teaching and learning methods used on this module, e.g. directed reading, research
<p>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</p> <p>Total non-contact hours: 161</p>

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% Essay 1 Summative End of Semester Essay
Diagnostic/formative assessment	
This indicates if there are any assessments that do not contribute directly to the final module mark	
<p>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.</p> <p>Participation and engagement in seminar work and workshops on a group and an individual basis.</p>	
Further information on assessment	
The assessment for this module consists of :	
1x 3,000	

Document management	
16	Module Title: The Philosophy of Time
17	Module Code: PHIL20709

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>										
		<table> <tr> <th>Institution</th> <th>%</th> </tr> <tr> <td>23a Other UK Higher Education or Further Education Institution- Please name Percentage not taught by NTU</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>23b Other public organisation in the UK- Percentage not taught by NTU</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>23c Other private organisation in the UK - Percentage not taught by NTU</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>23d Any other Non-UK organisation - Percentage not taught by NTU</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	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	
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24	Date this version was formally approved by SASQC/DAG:											