

**SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION
& HISTORY OF SCIENCE**

FACULTY OF ARTS



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

PHIL1222

PPE First year seminar

Module leader: Dr Ben Davies

2017-18

Room No: Botany House 2.05
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Level: 1

Semester Taught: 2

Credits: 20

Module Aims & Objectives:

Aims

The main objective of this module is for students to develop basic skills in philosophy through engagement with classic and contemporary philosophical texts.

Objectives

Students will gain familiarity with classic and contemporary philosophical texts, develop critical reading skills, learn how to reconstruct arguments, learn how to criticize arguments, develop the ability to charitably interpret texts, and learn basic writing for philosophy.

Teaching Methods:

There will be 22 seminars, 2 each week, and each meeting for 90 minutes. You are expected to spend the reading week working on coursework and meeting with each other to discuss material.

You can view all of your lecture and seminar times and locations on your personal timetable, which can be accessed via the Student Portal. **You should check your timetable regularly throughout the term in case of any location changes.**

Required Materials:

All materials will be available on the VLE.

Attendance:

Attendance at lectures and seminars for this module is compulsory. Please see the **School Undergraduate Handbook** (available in the VLE) for full details of School regulations on attendance

Private Study:

This is a 20 credit level 1 module with a total allocation of 200 study hours. In addition to the timetabled teaching hours, you are expected to spend approximately 12 hours/week in private study. Set aside 10 hours/week for studying and taking notes on the readings, and 2 hours/week composing and posting to the online forum. Expect to spend approximately 12 additional hours working on each essay.

You should pace the progress of your study, by starting independent library searching and reading *early* in the semester. Even if the lecture relevant to your choice of essay title has yet to be delivered, make sure that you have begun your research early, in order to ensure that you are not short of books later on, when library resources are in peak demand.

Assessment:

Assessment is by:

- 3 1500-word Essays
- 10 Posts on the Online Forum

Each component of assessment in this module must be attempted. If you do not attempt one of the components you will be required to resit the component in order to pass the module. The resit method for the individual components of this module will be by essay. The online portion will be resit as a 750 word essay.

Please see the **School Undergraduate Handbook** (available in the VLE) for full details of School assessment procedures including essay presentation and submission, word limits, deadlines, extension requests, examinations and resits. Guidelines on referencing and plagiarism can also be found in the Handbook.

Essay Titles

You are not allowed to submit the same work twice. You must ensure that your essay does not overlap extensively with work submitted for your dissertation, or for other modules within your subject or in related subjects.

Essay titles will be posted in a separate document on the VLE.

Discussion posts

Your discussion posts will be in response to specific questions about each week's reading. The questions are available on the syllabus, underneath the main reading.

Some questions are focused on interpreting a specific argument. Others are more general; but your answer *should still make some reference to the core reading*.

Deadlines

Discussion posts must be submitted *before the start of the relevant seminar*.

The essay deadlines are as follows:

Essay 1: Monday 5th March

Essay 2: Monday 16th April

Essay 3: Monday 28th May

Word Limit

The word limit for the essays is 1500 words.

The discussion forum posts have no word limit, although they should be around 50 words long.

There is no fixed penalty for exceeding word limits, but work will not be read beyond the point at which the word count was exceeded, and the work will be marked accordingly. You should note that this may mean that your work will be marked as though it lacked a conclusion.

Each component of assessment in this module must be attempted. If you do not attempt one of the components you will be required to re-sit the component in order to pass the module.

Feedback Arrangements:

You will receive feedback on your assessments within three weeks.

Feedback will be provided on the VLE.

Module Outline:

Week 1 – Reading a philosophical text (Jan 22-26)

Reading: <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html>

Set piece: Peter Singer (1989) 'All animals are equal': Available at <http://spot.colorado.edu/~heathwoo/phil1200,Spr07/singer.pdf>

We will spend session one reconstructing the argument, and assessing its validity. We will then spend session two considering possible responses to it. *Please come to the first session with a clear idea of what Singer is trying to argue, and having given some thought to how we might formally reconstruct it.*

Week 2 - How to be good: Utilitarianism. (Jan 29-Feb 2)

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* Chapters 2, 4 and 5.

Discussion question: How, according to Mill, do we know which pleasures are 'higher'? Is this a convincing argument?

Additional reading: Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, (2001) Mill's "Proof" of the Principle of Utility: A More than Half-Hearted Defense, *Social Philosophy and Policy* 18(2): 330-360

Week 3 – How to be good: Kantianism. (Feb 5-9)

Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*: excerpt available on Minerva, but there are many online versions.

You may find Jonathan Bennett's 'translation' to modern language useful. Please remember, though, that this is only one person's interpretation, and is not a replacement for the original text. If you quote Bennett's version, quote it as Bennett, not Kant.

<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/kant1785.pdf>

Discussion question: Why does Kant think that only actions done from the 'good will' have full moral value?

Additional reading: Marcia Baron, 'On the alleged repugnance of acting from duty'. *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 81, No. 4 (Apr., 1984), pp. 197-220

Week 4 – Liberty and equality (Feb 12-16)

Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* Part II, Chapter 7 ('Distributive Justice') Section I.

Discussion question: Is Nozick right to say that 'liberty upsets patterns'?

Additional reading: Jonathan Wolff, 'Political Philosophy and the Real World of the Welfare State' *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 32(4): 360-372

Week 5 – Liberty and equality (Feb 19-23)

Jennifer McKittrick, (2006) 'Liberty, Gender and the Family' in Tibor R. Machan (ed.), *Liberty and Justice*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press. pp. 83-103

Discussion question: In a society like ours, does full respect for liberty mean disadvantaging women and children?

Additional reading: G.A. Cohen, 'Robert Nozick and Wilt Chamberlain: How patterns preserve liberty' *Erkenntnis* 11: 5-23

Week 6 – The Value of Democracy (Feb 26-Mar 2)

Please note that there are two compulsory readings for this week. Both are short, and accessible.

Annabelle Lever, Compulsory Voting: A Critical Perspective *British Journal of Political Science* 40: 897-915

Caleb Crain, 'The Case Against Democracy' *The New Yorker*, November 2016

Available at <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/11/07/the-case-against-democracy>

Discussion question: Should voting be compulsory?

Week 7 – Participation in Democracy (Mar 5-9)

Philip Cook 'Against a Minimum Voting Age' *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 16 (3):439-458

Discussion question: If children are not allowed to vote, does that mean that adults should only be allowed to vote if they pass certain tests?

Additional reading: Jason Brennan, 'Polluting the Polls: When Citizens should not vote' *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 87(4): 535-549

Week 8 – Multiculturalism and tolerance (Mar 12-16)

Kok-Chor Tan (Forthcoming) 'The Contours of Toleration: A relational account' in Manuel Knoll & Stephen Snyder (eds.), *New Perspectives on Distributive Justice*. (Available on Minerva)

Discussion question: Does the appeal to relational morality solve the problem of toleration?

Additional reading:

Erin Kelly and Lionel McPherson (2001) 'On tolerating the unreasonable' *Journal of Political Philosophy* 9(1): 38–55.

BREAK Mar 17-Apr 15

Week 9 – Multiculturalism and tolerance (Apr 16-20)

Susan Okin, 'Feminism and Multiculturalism: Some tensions' *Ethics* 108(4): 661-684

Discussion question: Is Okin right to say that feminism must take precedence over multiculturalism?

Additional reading: Chandran Kukathas, (2001) 'Is feminism bad for multiculturalism?' *Public Affairs Quarterly* 15(2): 83-98. Available on Minerva.

Week 10 – Political Obligation (Apr 23-27)

Hanna Pitkin, (1965) 'Obligation and Consent – I' *The American Political Science Review* 59(4): 990-999, **and**

(1966) 'Obligation and Consent – II', *The American Political Science Review*, 60(1): 39-52. **Read from Section III (starts on p.45).**

Discussion question: 'We should obey the law because we consented to do so'. Discuss.

Additional reading: Bhiku Parekh, (1993) 'A Misconceived Discourse on Political Obligation' *Political Studies* 41: 236-251

Week 11 – Disobedience (Apr 30-May 4)

Nelson Mandela, (1964) Statement in the Rivonia Trial (excerpts). Available on Minerva.

and

Candice Delmas (2014) 'Political Resistance: A Matter of Fairness'.

Discussion question: What limits does Mandela claim were placed on the ANC's political violence? Are these reasonable?

Resources & Reading List:

Use the bibliography contained in this course document to assist in your reading for this module and, particularly, for your assessment preparation. It is not a comprehensive list, and certainly not a substitute for your own independent research amongst the library holdings and online journals. You will find the following books to be particularly useful. These are *not* titles that you should feel under pressure to read. You can do well in this module without reading any of these texts:

General books

Utilitarianism

Peter Singer *Practical Ethics: 2nd Edition*

John Skorupski, *John Stuart Mill*

Bernard Williams and J.J.C. Smart, *Utilitarianism: For and Against*

Kant

Jens Timmerman, *Kant's Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals: A Commentary*

Marcia Baron, *Kantian Ethics Almost Without Apology*

Justice and Freedom

Will Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*.

Robert Goodin and Philip Pettit, *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*

Democracy

Tom Christiano, *The Rule of the Many: Fundamental Issues in Democratic Theory*

Tom Christiano, *Philosophy and Democracy*

Multiculturalism, feminism

Susan Okin *Justice, Gender, and the Family*

Anthony Appiah *The Ethics of Identity*

Will Kymlicka, *The Rights of Minority Cultures*

Political Obligation

Margaret Gilbert, *A Theory of Political Obligation*

Robert Paul Wolff, *In Defence of Anarchism*

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*

Other useful sources:

Online

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, available at plato.stanford.edu

The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, available at iep.utm.edu

Philosophy Bites <http://www.philosophybites.com/>

These resources are useful for two reasons: they give an excellent overview of particular topics, written by experts; and they offer reading lists for further research. Your essays should not rely on them excessively, however. In addition, you should not use more general encyclopedias (particularly Wikipedia!). These are fine for casual reading, but are not as rigorously edited, are not written by experts, and are typically for the very general reader, which is not you.

In addition, you may wish to look at the online repository, PhilPapers (philpapers.org). This lists a vast array of readings on all topics in philosophy. Exercise caution here, too. Not everything is relevant to your essay, and I do not expect you to engage far beyond the core and additional readings. This is more for your own understanding and/or interest.

Getting Help:

Office hours and other one to one support are for the purpose of supporting your learning, not recapping class content. Staff will not be able to provide one to one support with material already covered in class (such as lecture or tutorial content, revision advice, or example assessments) if you were absent without reason. If you are declined help because of absence, but you have ongoing reasons for absence, you should contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Ensure all absences are explained using the Absence Request system on the Portal, and remember that the Pastoral Support Officer, Jonny Ackroyd, is available to provide support for students with ongoing issues regarding attendance.

Key Documents

Please ensure that you read and familiarize yourself with the following important documents, all available in the VLE:

- **School of Philosophy, Religion & History of Science Undergraduate Student Handbook**
- **School Code of Practice on Assessment**

Module Leader

If you have queries not covered in the above key documents or in this Module Handbook, please contact the Module Leader during their office hours or by email.

Student Staff Forum

You should always contact the Module Leader in the first instance about any problems which arise in relation to a module. Any unresolved concerns about a module can be directed to the Course Representative with responsibility for the module. Course Representatives are students who have successfully applied sit on the Student Staff Forum (SSF), to represent a particular programme, and a group of modules, and relay module level concerns to the SSF. Concerns about your programme of

study or the School in general can also be directed to the relevant Course Representative. You can find out who your Course Representatives are, and how to contact them, by checking the Portal under the 'My Studies' tab in the top left of the screen.

If you are interested in becoming a Course Representative in the next academic year, please look out for details of the application process which will be publicized towards the end of Semester 2. The School values student input very highly.

Recording of Teaching Sessions:

As part of your study on this module lectures will be recorded by the University. This recording is being conducted in accordance with the University's Policy on Audio or Video Recording for Educational Purposes.

(see http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/documents/0Audio_Visual_Policy_2014.pdf).

Please read the Policy for further background information relating to your rights. The purpose of the recording is to support your study at the University. It will be accessible by students enrolled on the module through the University VLE.

In accordance with the University's Policy on Intellectual Property Rights (see http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/documents/ipr_policy.pdf) in general where staff or students make a recording, all rights in that recording (including rights in the sounds made) will belong to the University. The University seeks to respect student and staff rights to be acknowledged as authors and performers. Otherwise, to the extent allowed under the general law, any individual interests in the recordings are waived, allowing the University to act in effect as a custodian, to maximise educational objectives in the general interest of all. If you have any concerns relating to the recording please contact the individual leading the educational activity, or the module leader. If you wish to opt-out of being recorded or wish to request that your contribution be edited please contact the individual leading the activity or the module leader in advance of the session (for opt-outs) or immediately after the session (for requests for edits). Please note that you may not opt out of recordings which form part of the assessment process on the module.

You may not record the above activities yourself without obtaining the consent of the individual leading the activity, unless you have permission from Disabled Students' Assessment and Support.