Maynooth University
National University
of Ireland Maynooth

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

SECOND YEAR B.A.
STUDENT HANDBOOK

2021–2022

CONTENTS

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2nd Year B.A. Co-ordinator:	Dr Amos Edelheit

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International Students Co-ordinator: Dr Susan Gottlöber
Mature Students Advisor: Dr Amos Edelheit
B.Sc. Computational Thinking Subject
Co-ordinator: Dr Cyril McDonnell
B.A. PPE (Philosophy, Politics, and
Economics) Porgramme Co-ordinator: Dr Susan Gottlöber

SOME PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Notice Boards, Moodle, and Website

The Department's notice boards, Moodle, and the website are important methods of communicating with students. Important information (such as tutorial times and lists, changes in the timetable or in lecture times) will be posted there from time to time. Please consult these notice boards, Moodle, and the website regularly.

Student Emails

Likewise, please check your university email account regularly, as this is an important means of communication with the university. You will have received your personal student email account at registration.

Staff-Student Committee

Students from each year elect two representatives for this committee, whose purpose is to allow students to provide feedback to the Department about their educational experience. Concerns about a module that could not be resolved by speaking to the individual lecturer can be brought to this committee as well. The Department is represented by the Head of Department, Prof. Philipp Rosemann, by Dr Cyril McDonnell, and by Dr Amos Edelheit.

Registration and Credits

At the beginning of each semester, students register *online* for the modules they wish to take. Each module comes with a particular number of ECTS credits (ECTS = European Credit Transfer System). You need to make sure to accumulate enough credits to graduate. A normal academic year of full-time study over two semesters is worth 60 credits for undergraduates.

2BA Joint Honours students require 30 ECTS credits from Philosophy. 2BA Major Honours Philosophy Students require 40 ECTS from Philosophy Modules and 20 ETCS from a minor subject. 2BA Minor Students require 20 credits from Philosophy and 40 credits from their major subject.

There are also a number of Extended Essay-Assignment Module Electives available. They are marked with a code 'B' at the end. Students will be expected to engage in supervised guided research on an approved essay-assignment topic set by the module lecturer of the taught module. **Please note that these modules are not time-tabled and have the Taught Module as corequisits; they are only available to students who are taking philosophy as a major**.

Year One students of the B.Sc. in Computational Thinking are required to take the module **PH215A Logic** in the first semester and **PH215B Philosophy in the Digital Age** in the second semester. Year Two students of the B.Sc. in Computational Thinking Degree Programme are required take the modules **PH206 Epistemology** and **PH334A Topics in Analytic Philosophy** (for further details of this module, see our Third Year Student Handbook in Philosophy or 'course finder').

PPE students should consult the PPE handbook.

Lecture times and venues are found in the 'courses' section of the University website and on the departmental notice board.
For full information on Learning Outcomes, repeat options, which modules are available for your chosen degree etc. please visit the courses page of the University website.

Lectures commence on Monday, September 20th.

Tutorials

You should register for tutorials with the Administrative Officer of the Department (room no. 10/11 in the Arts Building). Ms. Gleeson has tutorial registration forms for you to pick up, complete, and return to the Department in the first week of term. Details of the tutorial groups and times will be posted on the Philosophy Department notice board, which is located in the corridor outside of the departmental office. Also, please check your modules on Moodle regularly and note that only some modules may have tutorials.

Tutorials commence in the third week of classes.

Programme Advisory Office

The Programme Advisory Office has been created to assist undergraduate students, including incoming first-year students, with programme-related decisions both before and after the registration period. If you have questions about your degree pathway (what degree programmes are available, what subjects can be combined, etc.), or if you are wondering how electives work, send them an email (programme.choices@mu.ie), give them a call (01 474 7428), or drop by their office (Rowan House, room 1.17).

PH201: Introduction to Greek Philosophy (Compulsory)
(Dr Amos Edelheit)

The aim of this module is to give a general introduction to the first philosophers of Western civilization, roughly between the 6th century BCE and the 1st century CE. We shall proceed chronologically, from the Presocratic thinkers and their discussions of nature, to the Sophists and their focus on human concerns, and then to Plato and Aristotle, ending with the Hellenistic philosophical schools: the Stoics, the Skeptics, and the Epicureans. We shall also proceed philosophically, emphasizing philosophical themes, problems, possible solutions, and methods arising in this period.

Assessment:
100% continuous assessment broken down as follows:
- 40% minor essay (c. 2,000 words)
- 60% final essay (c. 3,000 words)

Repeat Option: Repeat final essay. Continuous assessment mark carried forward to August session.

PH204: Medieval Philosophy (Compulsory)
(Prof. Michael W. Dunne)

This module begins with the thought of Augustine (d. 430) and concentrates on the most prominent representatives of the period up to c. 1350: Bonaventure, Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, Scotus and Ockham. We will also examine the golden age of Oxford thought in the 1330s: Richard FitzRalph, Adam Wodeham and Robert Holcot. Some mention will also be made of Irish thinkers of the Middle Ages.

Assessment

100% continuous assessment broken down as follows:
- 10% reaction papers
- 30% article or chapter review
- 60% final essay

Repeat Option: Repeat final essay. Continuous assessment mark carried forward.

PH206: Epistemology (Elective)
(Dr Simon Nolan)

This module examines a range of historical and contemporary views on the nature of human knowledge. It starts with Plato's classic discussion of the nature of knowledge in his dialogue,

Theaetetus. The module then examines the quest for certainty and scepticism in the modern period. It focuses on Descartes's rationalist formulation of the problem of knowledge in his Meditations and the empiricist responses of Locke and Hume. Analytic perspectives on the question of knowledge will be considered, especially the famous Gettier Problem which has given rise to the rival approaches of foundationalism and coherentism. The module will look at contemporary trends in epistemology, especially virtue epistemology and social epistemology. In trying to overcome the Gettier Problem, contemporary virtue epistemology emphasises that human knowing is linked to virtues of mind such as courage, carefulness, openness, and honesty. Emphasising the social dimension of human knowing, many philosophers today consider theory of knowledge has traditionally been too individualistic in outlook and seek to highlight the importance of social interaction, testimony, and culture.

Assessment

100% continuous assessment, broken down as follows:
- 40% minor essay (c. 1,000 words)
- 60% final essay (c. 2,000 words)

Repeat Option: Repeat final essay (c. 2,000 words). Continuous assessment mark carried forward.

PH215A: Introduction to Logic (Elective Stream/Elective)
(Dr Cyril McDonnell)

This module introduces students to the study of logic. In pursuit of this aim, this module examines both classical and modern logic, covering such topics as: the nature and scope of logic; truth and validity; the classification of terms and propositions; translating everyday language into standard logical form; patterns of immediate inference; the syllogism; hypothetical and disjunctive arguments; the basic methods and procedures of modern symbolic logic. Some attention at the end of the module will be devoted to informal logical fallacies (e.g., ad hominem, appeal to pity, begging the question, false cause, equivocation).

Assessment

30% continuous assessment (attendance and logical exercises in class)
70% final written exam (120 min)

Repeat Option: Written exam (120 min.)

PH216: Studying Women Philosophers (Elective)
(Dr Mette Lebech)

This module will examine the thought of some women philosophers from classical times to today, for example Diotima of Mantinea (c. 450 BC), Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179), Heloise

(1100?-1164), Anna Maria van Shurman (1607-1678), Elisabeth of Bohemia (1617-1680), Anne Conway (1631-1679), Damaris Cudworth Mashham (1658-1708), Émilie du Châtelet (1706-1749), Catharine Macaulay (1731-1791), Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), Harriet Taylor Mill (1807-1858), Jane Addams (1860-1935), Hannah Arendt (1906-1975), Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986), and Elisabeth Anscombe (1919-2001). Their philosophy will be examined in the light of that of their male contemporaries and the historical context, and an attempt will be made to assess their contribution as women and as philosophers to the development of philosophical thought. Reflection on women's roles and the significance of these for cultural development will accompany the reading of the texts. Karen Warren (ed.): An Unconventional History of Western Philosophy: Conversations Between Men and Women Philosophers (Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008) will be used as a textbook.

Assessment

100% continuous assessment, broken down as follows:
- 40% Essay (c. 1,000 words).
- 60% Essay (c. 2,000 words).

Repeat Option: 100% continuous assessment, broken down as follows:
- 40% Essay (c. 1,000 words).
- 60% Essay (c. 2,000 words).

SECOND SEMESTER

PH202: Moral Philosophy in a Globalised Society (Compulsory)
(Dr Mette Lebech)

This module introduces a distinction between ethics and morals, which it explores in order to shed light on the moral problems encountered with globalization, in particular immigration, which brings the globalized world home to us. It defines ethics as 'what we think it is appropriate to do', and sets out to investigate the various elements of this definition by examining action-theory (what it is to do something), value-theory (what it is to consider something appropriate) and political- or community theory (who 'we' are). Authors studied include Thomas Aquinas, Hannah Arendt, Jürgen Habermas and Edith Stein. The aim is to discuss how moral philosophy, defined as concerned with what is right or good, can help us address the problems associated with creating a common world for contemporary, pluralist societies.

Assessment:
100% continuous assessment broken down as follows:
- 15 % 3 x 500 word assignments
- 25% midterm essay assignment (c. 1,500 words)
- 60% final essay (c. 2,000)

Repeat Option: Repeat final essay. Continuous assessment mark carried forward.

PH205: Unique Animals? Anthroplogical Concepts in Philosophy (Compulsory)
(Dr Susan Gottlöber)

This module introduces students to the study of the human being in philosophy with special focus on the twentieth century and some important developments in the twentieth first century. Using different thinkers as 'case studies' it examines some major philosophical responses to the question 'What is a human being?' in relation to other animals (Max Scheler), the role of meaning (Ernst Cassirer), its own existence and freedom (Albert Camus), the role of history and social context for our self-understanding with special focus on the questions of gender and ethnicity (Simone de Beauvoir, bell hooks, Achille Mbembe, Franz Fanon), the transhumanist movement (Michael Hauskeller) and AI (John Searle). Our focus will be on the questions as to whether there is anything unique about the human way of existing, the role of our 'biological make-up', if it still make sense to have a universalising approach in the face of diversity and on-going discrimination, and the potential for and challenges to human existence through technological development.

Assessment

100% continuous assessment broken down as follows:
- 10% reaction papers
- 10% peer review
- 20% article or chapter review (ca. 800-1,000 words)
- 60% final essay (ca. 2,000 words)

Repeat Option: Repeat final essay (ca. 2,000 words). Continuous assessment mark carried forward.

PH215B: Philosophies of the Digital Age (Elective Stream/ Elective)
(Dr Brandt Dainow)

The rise of technologies fusing the physical, digital and biological worlds in ways never seen before is having a profound impact on our contemporary life and society. This module evaluates philosophical positions surrounding the digital age into which we are moving. It will cover four main topics: (1.) Philosophies of digital technology, treating some of the main philosophical perspectives on the relationship between digital technologies, people and society, addressing such concepts as: the 'fourth industrial revolution', technological determinism, technology as a socio-technical system, and the nature of the interaction between humans and digital technology. (2.) Philosophies of law and justice, dealing with the connection between state positive law, natural moral law theory and the difficulties of regulating online activities. (3.) Freedom, privacy and surveillance in the digital age and how we balance the needs of the individual against the needs of society in digital environments and the concept of 'algorithmic justice'. (4.) Are we making a better world? Many technologists believe their technology can create a perfect society, while transhumanists hope to liberate us from our 'meat-machine' bodies. We will consider visions of the near future, the concept of progress and the transhumanist movement.

Assessment

100% continuous assessment, broken down as follows:
- Two essays (c. 2,000 words each), 50% each

Repeat Option: Two essays (c. 2,000 words each), 50% each

GC216: Philosophy of Love and Friendship in Ancient World (Elective)
(Dr William Desmond Jr)

From Helen of Troy to Augustine of Carthage, love and friendship were central to ancient life and thought. After a targeted selection of mythical narratives about the divinity and power of eros, we focus first on Plato's Symposium and Phaedrus, where poetic and rhetorical praise of eros leads on to many-sided reflections on sexuality, creativity, knowledge, the soul's immortality and destiny. We turn then to various theories of friendship, in Plato's Lysis, the Cynics, Epicurus, Cicero, Seneca, but most of all Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics where philia becomes both the culmination of the individual life and a transition to the communal life of the polis. In the final weeks, we glance at the New Testament and St Augustine's Confessions, with their introduction of a seemingly new conception of love that has been central to Christian culture ever since— divine agape.
Assessment

100% continuous assessment: 2 compulsory written assignments.

- Repeat Option: The written assignments to be resubmitted prior to the beginning of the Supplemental Examination period. New titles for these assignments may be found on the Departmental webpage.

Please note that due to the on-going Covid-19 situation there may be changes in terms of attendance policies, assignments, tutorials etc. Please consult with the lecturer in question if you have any questions pay particular attention to notifications from the Department, on Moodle etc.

EXAMINATIONS MARKING SYSTEM

Letter Grade	Descriptive Heading	%	Class
A++	answer that could not be bettered	100	I
A+	exceptional answer displaying unexpected insight	90	I
A	undoubtedly first class, flawless answer, demonstrating originality	80	I
A-	almost flawless answer demonstrating some originality	70	I
B+	extremely high competence, perhaps displaying limited originality or technical flaws or minor errors	68	II-1
B	fundamentally correct and demonstrating overall competence	65	II-1
B-	competent performance, substantially correct answer but possibly containing minor flaws or omissions	60	II-1
C+	awarded on the basis of the answer being somewhat better than a C but below a B-	58	II-2
C	basically correct answer with minor errors or one major error/omission	55	II-2
C-	awarded on the basis of the answer being somewhat below a C but better than a D+	50	II-2
D+	no more than adequate answer	48	III
D	adequate answer with serious errors or omissions	45	P
D-	lowest passing grade, barely deserving to pass	40	P
E+	The answer is inadequate and does not deserve to pass.	38	F
E	The answer fails to address the question properly but displays some knowledge of the material.	35	F
E-	Answer fails to address the question.	30	F
F+	little relevant or correct material but some evidence of engagement with question	20	F
F	very little relevant or correct material	10	F
F-	totally irrelevant answer	0	F

PRIZES AND AWARDS

The *Coffey Memorial Prize* is given to the student with the highest overall mark in philosophy in 2$^{\text{nd}}$ Arts. The recipient will be conferred with the Award at the Annual Prize Giving Ceremony.

The *James McEvoy Award* is given to the student with the highest mark in the module on Medieval Philosophy. The recipient will be conferred with the Award at the Annual Prize Giving Ceremony.

STUDYING ABROAD

Spending some time abroad can be an invaluable part of one's education. Living in another country teaches us to view our own culture in a new light, allowing us to understand both its weaknesses and its strengths. Language is not just a means of communication; it opens up a world.

Fortunately, all students at Maynooth University have the opportunity to study abroad as part of their degree. Students travel abroad in their third year of study, returning to complete their final year in Maynooth before graduating. All students are invited to apply for study-abroad opportunities *early in their second year*. The entire third year is spent abroad, so that a three-year B.A. degree turns into a four-year B.A. International degree. In other words, one gains an additional year of study.

But there are certain conditions. Thus, all students wishing to study abroad must successfully pass their first- and second-year modules. Furthermore, since one applies to study abroad early in the second year, it is important to do well in one's first-year modules. This is because our partner universities will judge applications based on first-year results. Finally, students wishing to study abroad in non-EU destinations must pass all of their modules in the summer. It is not possible to go to a non-EU country and sit the autumn repeat examinations.

Students interested in studying abroad should contact Dr Amos Edelheit.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students who wish to study philosophy at Maynooth University are free to attend most of the modules offered by the Department during the semester or year of their visit. There may be certain restrictions imposed by the student's home institution.

International students select the modules in which they wish to enrol online, just like everyone else. The international coordinator of the Department approves (or, in rare cases, does not approve) these choices. After arriving here, if a student needs to change a module (because of a timetabling conflict, for example) they should contact the international coordinator. The Philosophy Department's coordinator for international students is Dr Susan Gottlöber.

Examination Procedures for Visiting International Students

There is no difference in how 'home' and visiting international students are assessed. This applies except if in the first semester, a module has a final written examination in January. In its place, international students (who presumably leave the country at Christmas) will do an essay assignment set by the module lecturer.

NON-PHILOSOPHY STUDENTS WISHING TO TAKE A PHILOSOPHY MODULE

Non-philosophy students who wish to take a philosophy module are more than welcome. Before you enrol in a module, it may be useful to speak with the lecturer concerned or with the Head of Department.

ESSAY SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

The Department does not accept essays submitted in hard copy. Please submit all tutorial and final essays through Moodle and note that you need to observe the published deadline.

For the final essay of each module, late submissions will not be accepted at all, unless you have obtained an extension from the module lecturer. Submit requests for an extension, stating the reasons for your request, via email before the submission due date, to the lecturer teaching the module. Include supporting documentation, such as a medical certificate. The lecturer will let you know his or her decision. Please note that extensions cannot be granted beyond the end of the relevant examination period.

A Note on Plagiarism

In the Internet age, plagiarism—as the presentation of another's work as one's own is called—has become so easy that many universities, including Maynooth, now ask students to submit their essays via Turnitin, which is a software that helps detect similarity. It 'reads' an essay against millions of sources (including even other student essays) in the database. Cases of plagiarism are automatically referred to the Head of Department, who will proceed according to the University's published policy, which is available at this link:
https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/MU%20Policy%20on%20Plagiarism%20Updated%20July%202019_0.pdf

GUIDELINES ON REFERENCING AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Referencing your sources in academic essay-writing is essential. There are several referencing styles in existence, such as for instance: the APA (American Psychological Association), MLA (Modern Language Association), Chicago/ Turabian, MHRA (Modern Humanities Research Association) style and the Author-Date system (often referred to as the 'Harvard' system of referencing). The Author/ Date system of referencing, however, is not very suitable for essays in philosophy.

The Philosophy Department recommends students to follow the guidelines on referencing provided in the *Modern Humanities Research Association: Style Book*, [*MHRA Style Guide*] which is available on line at http://www.mhra.org.uk/style., and to use footnotes (rather than endnotes).

MAYNOOTH WRITING CENTRE

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/centre-teaching-and-learning/writing-centre

The Maynooth University Writing Centre has been established by the Centre for Teaching and Learning to support student academic writing.

The Writing Centre is located in Room 001 (Ground Floor) School of Education Building, on the North Campus.