



DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

THIRD YEAR B.A.
STUDENT HANDBOOK

2021-2022

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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.

The Library

If you enjoy books and reading, the library is the place to be. Many students also use the library to study or simply to relax. Typically, you will use the library more actively as your studies advance and more research is required of you. A lot of material is available online, but a trip to the library is still worthwhile. You will find many books and journals there that have not been digitized. **Please note that there are still restrictions on library use due to Covid-19.** For details, go to the library website, www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library, where you will also find a helpful Welcome Booklet.

Did you know that there are, in fact, two university libraries in Maynooth? In addition to the new library—officially known as the John Paul II Library—the historic Russell Library at the heart of St Patrick's College houses 34,000 books, some as old as the sixteenth century. The Russell Library is definitely worth a visit, if only to see the beautiful architecture.

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. The elections are now organized by the Students' Union, which will contact students directly.

Questions and Concerns

The Staff-Student Committee is for general feedback. Questions and concerns about a particular module should first be brought to the attention of the lecturer who teaches the module. If this does not lead to a satisfactory resolution, advice may be available from the following people:

3rd Year B.A. co-ordinator: Prof. Philipp Rosemann (also head of department)

3rd Year B.Sc. (in Computational Thinking) co-ordinator: Dr Cyril McDonnell

3rd Year BA. (in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics) co-ordinator: Dr Susan Gottlöber

International Students co-ordinator: Dr Susan Gottlöber
Mature Students/Access advisor: Dr Amos Edelheit

Registration and Credits

Students register for credits—bureaucratically speaking, ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits—at the beginning of each semester online. One full-year of study at university require 60 credits. Students will therefore need 60 credits in Year Three to graduate. **All third-year B.A. modules in philosophy are worth 5 credits each.** Lectures for third-year students commence on Monday, September 20th, 2021.

Useful weblinks

Descriptors, learning outcomes, assessment methods, lecture times and venues for modules are found in the ‘courses’ section of the University website:

<http://apps.maynoothuniversity.ie/courses/?TARGET=CS&MODE=SEARCH>.

The general timetable for all modules is posted up on the departmental notice board, located in the corridor outside of the departmental office, room 10/11 in the Arts Building, and is also available via at <https://apps.maynoothuniversity.ie/timetable/>.

THIRD-YEAR PROGRAMMES IN PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy may be taken, with other Arts subjects at Maynooth University, in three combinations:

- (i) major-minor subject combination;
 - (ii) double major subject combination;
 - (iii) minor-major subject combination.
- (i) Students choosing philosophy as the **major** subject in the major-minor combination take philosophy modules worth **40 credits** (plus 20 credits for their minor subject), i.e., 8 philosophy modules (4 in each semester).
 - (ii) Students choosing philosophy as part of a **double major** combination take philosophy modules worth **30 credits** (plus 30 credits for their other major subject), i.e., 6 philosophy modules (3 in each semester).
 - (iii) Students choosing philosophy as a **minor subject** in the minor-major combination take philosophy modules worth **20 credits** (plus 40 credits for their major subject), i.e., philosophy 4 modules (2 in each semester).

There are **two compulsory philosophy modules** for third-year students:

- **PH354: Rationalists and Empiricists** (first semester)
- **PH355: From Modernism to Postmodernism** (second semester)
- All other modules are electives.

LIST OF PHILOSOPHY MODULES AVAILABLE TO THIRD-YEAR PHILOSOPHY STUDENTS

This is what you should see when looking for third-year philosophy modules on Course Finder on the MU website (the little globe indicates that the module is open to international students):

Module	Code	Credits	Semester	Compulsory
 <u>RATIONALISTS AND EMPIRICISTS: TOWARDS MODERN PHILOSOPHY</u>	PH354	5	1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 <u>INTRODUCTION TO LIFE PHILOSOPHY</u>	PH352	5	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <u>HEGEL-FEUERBACH-MARX AND THE CRITIQUE OF RELIGION</u>	PH353	5	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <u>PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION IN THE MODERN AGE</u>	PH356	5	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <u>FROM MODERNISM TO POSTMODERNISM</u>	PH355	5	2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
 <u>RENAISSANCE PHILOSOPHY. METHODS AND PRACTICES</u>	PH330	5	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <u>PHENOMENOLOGY AND CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY</u>	PH331A	5	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <u>TOPICS IN ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY</u>	PH334A	5	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>DISSERTATION</u>	PH316A	5	Year-Long	<input type="checkbox"/>

FIRST SEMESTER

COMPULSORY MODULE

PH354: RATIONALISTS AND EMPIRICISTS — Dr Amos Edelheit

This module aims to present, discuss, and criticize some of the main philosophical achievements of five canonical figures in early modern philosophy: René Descartes (1596–1650), Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677), George Berkeley (1685–1753), and David Hume (1711–1776), in the context of the new philosophical and scientific discourse of the 17th and 18th centuries. We shall examine their contributions to the formation of different aspects of modernity, on the one hand, and their critique of the ‘men of the schools’ (i.e., contemporary scholastic philosophers and their ‘traditional methods’), on the other hand.

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

Repeat Option: Supplemental continuous assessment is allowed. The mark for the mid-term essay carries over.

ELECTIVE MODULES

PH352: INTRODUCTION TO LIFE PHILOSOPHY — Dr Susan Gottlöber

During the late 19th and early 20th century German thinkers, artists, and writers reacted to what they saw as an overemphasis on rationalism, mechanistic worldviews, and the dominance of industrialisation by refocusing on what for them were key elements of life, and human life specifically: the (ecstatic) life experience, intuition, subjectivity, becoming and (self-) creation. This module will investigate some major ideas in this intellectual development that later became known as life philosophy (*Lebensphilosophie*). We will trace the movement from its philosophical beginnings with Nietzsche through its systematic unfolding with thinkers like Dilthey or Simmel and reflect on some of the major criticisms raised. We will finish with how its ideas lived on in major philosophical disciplines such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, and existentialism with special focus on 21st-century transhumanism.

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment, broken down as follows: reaction papers 10%, group project 30%, final essay 60%.

Repeat Option: Submission of a repeat final essay, 40% continuous assessment will be carried over.

**PH353: HEGEL-FEUERBACH-MARX AND THE CRITIQUE OF RELIGION —
Prof. Michael Dunne**

Marx's critique of religion is well known, as is the connection of his concept of alienation with the philosophies of Hegel and Feuerbach. However, through an examination of his famous *Theses on Feuerbach*, we will trace the link in both Marx's earlier and later writings with the Enlightenment critique of religion as exemplified in Voltaire and Kant. Conclusions will be drawn in relation to ongoing critical discussions in contemporary thought.

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment, broken down as follows: 10% for reaction papers, 30% for an article or chapter review, 60% for a final essay.

Repeat Option: Final essay (60%); the remaining 40% carry over.

**PH356: PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION IN THE MODERN AGE — Dr Cyril
McDonnell**

This module examines Kant's famous critique of transcendental arguments in metaphysics in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781; 1787) as background to some important new lines of thinking which it provoked in philosophy of religion in the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries:

- Hegel's account of the historical march of reason in the concept of Absolute Spirit;
- Kierkegaard's rejection of Hegel's rationality of divine immanence, in deference to a thinking about the reality of the absurd and the significance of individual faith in the Absolute Other (God), beyond the aesthetic and ethical spheres of human existence;
- Schleiermacher's reflections on the feeling of absolute dependence on the infinite, characteristic of religious self-consciousness in all religions;
- Levinas's critique of Heidegger's atheistic-amoral existential phenomenology of *Being and Time* (1927) and retrieval of the rationality of transcendence in the trace of the infinite in 'the face of the other' through service to one's fellow human being as manifested in ethical-religious experience;
- Desmond's reflections on *God and the Between* (2008), beyond Hegel and Kant, yet in concert with a philosophical faith in the createdness of all things out of nothing.

Assessment: Mid-term essay-assignment, c. 2,000 words: 20%; university-scheduled written examination (2 hours): 80%.

Repeat Option: University-scheduled written examination (2 hours) in the autumn: 100%.

SECOND SEMESTER

COMPULSORY MODULE

PH355: FROM MODERNISM TO POSTMODERNISM — Prof. Philipp Rosemann

This module introduces students to the main differences between modern and postmodern philosophy, which crystallize around the relationship of reason to history. While Kant and Hegel—modern philosophers—argued that reason drives history, postmodern thinkers like Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Foucault inverted the relationship. They thus questioned the autonomy of reason, which they regarded as being essentially linked to other forces: not only time and history, but also (e.g.) the Dionysian and, indeed, unreason.

Linking reason to time raises the spectre of relativism: there is no truth that transcends time. Metaphysics becomes the ‘history of Being’ (Heidegger) while ethics turns into a quest for individual authenticity and the rights of ever smaller groups with their irreducible perspectives. How to address this problem remains one of the main challenges of philosophy in the twenty-first century.

Readings include Kant, ‘What is Enlightenment?’; Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*; Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*; Heidegger, ‘The Question concerning Technology’; Foucault, preface to *History of Madness*; MacIntyre, chapters 19 and 20 from *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment, broken down as follows: 10% for tutorial attendance, 30% for a mid-term essay (c. 2,000 words), 60% for a final essay (c. 3,000 words).

Repeat Option: Final essay (60%). The marks for tutorial attendance and the mid-term essay carry over.

ELECTIVE MODULES

PH330: RENAISSANCE PHILOSOPHY. METHODS AND PRACTICES — Dr Amos Edelheit

This module examines different methods and practices in Renaissance Philosophy. It begins with a discussion of the methods and practices found in the late medieval philosophical schools in the fourteenth century as the immediate background of Renaissance philosophy. It then addresses some theories, methods, and practices of prominent thinkers between the mid-fourteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century, mainly in Italy (Francesco Petrarca, Coluccio Salutati, Leonardo Bruni, Lorenzo Valla, Giovanni Dominici, Georgios Gemistos Plethon, Antoninus of Florence, Marsilio Ficino, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Giorgio Benigno Salviati, Bernardo Torni, Desiderius Erasmus, Niccolò Machiavelli, Francesco Patrizi). It also deals with

- the significance of the relations between philosophy and theology, pagan antiquity and Christian teaching, man and God;

- various themes in moral psychology and political philosophy, as well as in the philosophy of language, science, and in metaphysics;
- and specific terms like Aristotelianism and Platonism during this period.

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment, broken down as follows: one essay-assignment of c. 2,000 words (40%), a second essay-assignment of c. 3,000 words (60%).

Repeat Option: One or both essay assignments may be resubmitted for the autumn.

PH331A: PHENOMENOLOGY AND CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY — Dr Mette Lebech

This module provides an introduction to phenomenology as a method and to Continental philosophy as a set of traditions originating with the phenomenological movement. Texts by Husserl, Reinach, Stein, de Beauvoir, Heidegger, and Levinas will be studied. Emphasis will be placed on phenomenology as a philosophical and academic practice with potential importance for all or most subjects. Tracing the history of the various traditions issuing from the criticism of the practice of phenomenology will enable us to reflect on the varieties or definitions of phenomenology and their relationship with each other. The central questions addressed will be:

1. Is phenomenology a method, a science, or a style of thinking?
2. Is the idea that intentionality is central to consciousness and can be analysed in its noetic and noematic components essential to phenomenology?
3. What role does eidetic analysis play for phenomenology?
4. What criticisms have been raised of phenomenology and what is their validity?

The Phenomenology Reader, ed. by Timothy Mooney and Dermot Moran (London and New York: Routledge, 2002) will be used as textbook.

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

Repeat Option: final essay assignment (c. 3,000 words) = 100%.

PH334A TOPICS IN ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY — Rev. Dr Simon Nolan

This module traces the development of twentieth-century analytic philosophy through studying the work of some of its major exponents. The focus will be on philosophy of language, thought and world. An emphasis of the module will be the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951) as found both in his early *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and in his later *Philosophical Investigations* (a work Wittgenstein was in the process of revising and editing during his time in Ireland). Other key thinkers to be studied will be Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, Rudolf Carnap, A. J. Ayer, Wilfrid Sellars, W. V. O. Quine, Saul Kripke, John Searle, and John McDowell. The module will also consider analytic approaches to philosophy of mind and the philosophy of artificial intelligence.

Assessment: 100% continuous assessment, broken down as follows: (1) minor essay assignment, 1,000 words (40%); (2) major essay assignment, 2,000 words (60%).

Repeat Option: Major essay assignment, 2,000 words (60%). The mark from the minor essay carries over.

YEAR-LONG

PH316A: DISSERTATION — Dr Cyril McDonnell

This module allows for supervised independent research on an approved topic in philosophy. Before beginning their research, students need to contact the module co-ordinator, who will provide initial advice both on the topic and on colleagues who may be willing to supervise it. (Students should also feel free to discuss their interests with lecturers directly, but approval from the co-ordinator should be sought.) The fruit of the module is a written dissertation of ca. 5,000 words, which should conform to the guidelines laid out in the *MHRA Style Guide*.

Assessment: 100% for a dissertation of ca. 5,000 words, to be submitted no later than the last day of lectures in the second semester.

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

THOMAS A. F. KELLY PRIZE

The Thomas A. F. Kelly Prize was established in memory of the late Professor Thomas Kelly (1957–2008), a beloved and larger-than-life philosopher and Renaissance man whose tenure as the Chair of Philosophy at Maynooth was much too short. He died at only fifty years of age.

The Thomas A. F. Kelly Annual Prize is awarded to the best student in Philosophy in Third Arts. It takes the form of a book token. The prize is conferred at the annual prize giving ceremony.

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) he or she should contact the international coordinator. The Philosophy Department's coordinator for international students is *Dr Susan Gottlöber*, who will be happy to advise.

Examination Procedures for Visiting International Students

There is no difference in how 'home' and visiting international students are assessed. This applies except in those cases for an international student who is attending Maynooth University only for the first semester. Any module that has a final written examination in January is replaced for these students by an essay-assignment due at the end of term in December (because these international student leave the country at Christmas).

NON-PHILOSOPHY STUDENTS WISHING TO TAKE A PHILOSOPHY MODULE

Non-philosophy students who wish to take a philosophy module are more than welcome. The first-year modules will not be more difficult for them than for philosophy students. Advanced second- or third-year modules may be a different matter. Before you enrol in such a module, it is wise to speak with the lecturer concerned or with the head of department.

ESSAY SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

The Department no longer accepts essays submitted in hard copy. Please submit all tutorial and final essays through Moodle. You need to observe the published deadline since Moodle will block late submissions. It is advisable not to try to submit an essay 5 minutes before the deadline. Give yourself time to deal with computer glitches to help your own nerves—and those of your lecturers as well.

If you need an extension, contact your lecturer stating the reasons for your request, via email at least a week before the submission due date. 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

It was always tempting for some students to ‘cheat’ on essays by lifting parts from a book or even enlisting a friend’s help. Needless to say, what this does is prevent the student from learning how to think and write. It is, in the end, up to each individual what to make of the educational opportunity that he or she is offered: put it to good use or waste it.

In the Internet age, plagiarism—as the presentation of another’s work as one’s own is called—has become so easy that many lecturers now ask students to submit their essays via Turnitin, which is a software that helps detect plagiarism. It ‘reads’ an essay against millions of sources (including even other student essays) in the database. It is therefore highly unlikely that anyone will get away with plagiarism. Please don’t attempt it. 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

Sometimes it is tricky to determine what is plagiarism and what is not. In the course of your studies in Maynooth, you have learnt how to cite sources correctly, so that it is always clear on whose words or ideas you are relying in developing your own thought.

Referencing and Bibliography

The Philosophy Department recommends students to follow the guidelines on referencing provided in the *Style Guide* of the Modern Humanities Research Association, which is available online at <http://www.mhra.org.uk/style>, and to use footnotes (rather than endnotes). Please consult this very useful guide—it contains helpful information on many points in addition to referencing, for example on punctuation, the use of abbreviations and exclamation marks, spelling, etc.

Here are some of the most important conventions from the *MHRA Style Guide*:

Footnotes:

List *books* by giving the author's full name, the title (book titles must be put *in italics*), with place and date of publication, as follows:

Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1990), p. 123.

List *chapters in edited collections* by giving the author's full name, the title of the article, the title of the collection and the editor/s, its place and date of publication, with page numbers (both the range of pages where the chapter is found, and the precise page(s) to which the reference is made); thus:

David Couzens Hoy, 'Heidegger and the Hermeneutic Turn', in *The Cambridge Guide to Heidegger*, ed. by Charles B. Guignon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 170–194 (p. 185).

List *articles in journals* by giving the author's full name, the title of the article (article titles must be put in single quotation marks), the title of the journal, its volume and year, with page numbers, as follows:

Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40 (1988), 519–531 (p. 526).

A Note on References to works by Plato, Aristotle, and to Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*:

There are many translations and editions of the works of Plato and Aristotle; so, in modern-day scholarship, 'Stephanus numbers' and 'Bekker numbers' are used respectively to identify the original texts of Plato and Aristotle, giving page number + a letter (which designates columns in Aristotle's case) + line numbers, e.g., Plato, *Apologia*, 39e4–40a5.

Since students do not read the Greek text, but a translation, it is of importance to give both details, for example:

Plato, *Apology*, 39d–41b, in *Plato: The Last Days of Socrates*, trans. by Hugh Tredennick (London: Penguin, 1969), pp. 45–76 (p. 75).

Aristotle, *De anima*, I, 402a 1–3, trans. by J. A. Smith, in *The Works of Aristotle*, ed. by W. D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon, 1931), III, p. 1.

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II-II, qu. 1, art. 4, ad 3.

MAYNOOTH WRITING CENTRE

The Maynooth University Writing Centre has been established by the Centre for Teaching and Learning to support student academic writing. It is located in room 001 (ground floor) of the School of Education Building, on the north campus.

The Maynooth University Writing Centre offers free, friendly, non-judgemental writing help to any student, undergraduate or postgraduate, regardless of course, degree, or level. The

support it offers is primarily through one-to-one appointments, where students can discuss their writing with peer/expert tutors. In addition, Writing Centre staff offer writing workshops, support writing groups, engage in discipline-specific work and research in academic writing and related fields.

Further information regarding the Centre's opening hours and specific services will be posted on the Centre's Moodle space. This can be accessed through the Maynooth University Moodle homepage. If you have any questions about the Writing Centre or if you wish to make an appointment, just email on: writingcentre@mu.ie.

FURTHER STUDY IN PHILOSOPHY?

If you have been 'bitten by the bug' and are drawn to studying philosophy further and deeper, why not find out what we have to offer at postgraduate level in our Department of Philosophy at Maynooth University? *Bon courage!*

- Students interested in the MA and PhD programmes in philosophy should contact the postgraduate coordinator, Dr Amos Edelheit.
- Students specifically interested in the MA in Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance Thought (a joint programme with the Department of Ancient Classics) should contact Dr Susan Gottlöber.
- Students interested in the MA in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (a joint programme with the Departments of Sociology, Finance and Accounting, and Economics) should contact Dr Susan Gottlöber.