PHILOSOPHY

ST MARY’S UNIVERSITY TWICKENHAM

2018/2019 SEMESTER 1/FALL

MODULES FOR STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS

IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. Possible module combinations making up a full course load are:

   - 3 x 20 credit modules = 60 credits in total
   - 4 x 20 credit modules = 80 credits in total

   *Note that a UK student normally takes 3 x 20 credit modules in a semester*

   We recommend that you check what the practice at your home institution is of converting UK credits into US credits.

2. A timetable in order to ensure that clashes are avoided will be available in due course.

3. The list provided here may be subject to change or availability. The information and detailed course descriptions included in this document were extracted from the most recently updated validation documents. However, minor changes may be operated by the module convenors, which do not justify a full revaluation.
Key Texts of Antiquity

Code: PHL4014
Level: 4

The aim of this module is to introduce students to some key texts from the period of Antiquity. These texts were written or inspired by thinkers (philosophers, historians, theologians) whose lives, beliefs and ideas have shaped and continue to shape the cultural matrix of the West. Their import may be at times unconscious today, like a largely submerged iceberg of collective common sense. This module will seek to make more explicit such influence and thereby explore the possibilities of creative freedom which the texts create for our lives as we seek to build today on the platform they have left us.

Being and Action

Code: PHL4018
Level: 4

The aim of this module is to introduce students to the central concepts of human beings and human action, i.e. to philosophical anthropology and ethics. It asks what is -according to Immanuel Kant- the central question of philosophy: What is a human being?

Reason, Evidence, Argument

Code: PHL4019
Level: 4

The prime aim of this module is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to do philosophy at an academic level. The first part concentrates on the nature of argument, and includes an introduction to formal logic. The second part concentrates on philosophical reading and writing skills.
Philosophy and Gender

Code: PHL5004
Level: 5

Module Convenor: Y J Erden

Everyone has a gender. It might be one you’re born with, it might tally with your sex, it might be disputed. But whether it’s the gender you’re given at birth, the gender you identify with, or the gender you challenge, there is always gender. So why is gender normally associated with women? Why is there a “fem” in feminism? And what does this have to do with philosophy? These are questions we’ll consider in this module, alongside questions about history, psychology, politics, and the role of theory. Within this will be deconstruction of the creation of philosophy, including narratives of its history. We’ll start by asking why feminism is sometimes called the F-word, and end by asking where we go next.

Assessment:
Written philosophical dialogue of 2000 words (60%)
Seen exam of 1 hour (40%)
Formative: Written outline of dialogue / presentation of dialogue

Philosophy and Literature

Code: PHL5008
Level: 5

Convenors: H M Altorf and A Simmons
This module is taught to both students of literature and students of philosophy. It aims to study the various relationships between philosophy and literature. We will start by considering the different ways in which philosophy and literature can be thought to interact, taking particular texts to focus our attention, We will then proceed to consider some important themes in this debate, such as Evil, and the Absurd. Our approach is to start each topic with a literary text, The reason for our approach will be explained in the first classes, and it will also be compared to other possible approaches.

Assessment:
Essay of 3000 words (80%)
Presentation (20%)
Philosophy Reading Module

Code: PHL5014

Level: 5

Module Convenor: H M Altorf

This module offers students an opportunity for in-depth study of an important modern or contemporary philosopher. The central text for the class this year is Hannah Arendt’s Eichmann in Jerusalem (1963/1965). This is a classic. Even though this book was published more than 50 years ago, you will find that it is still very relevant today (even though this statement is fiercely debated). The book addresses a number of moral, political and philosophical issues. It asks questions about responsibility and about evil, it questions what it is to judge and who can judge, what it is to witness, but it is also a defence of the power of imagination and of storytelling and it wonders what it means to share the world with very different others.

Assessment:
Presentation/Leading Discussion (20%)
Seminar contribution (20%)
Review of 2500 words (60%)

Wittgenstein

Code: PHL5016

Level: 5

Module Convenor: Yasemin J Erden

Ludwig Wittgenstein is a central figure in early Twentieth Century philosophy, but he is also one of the more elusive. Despite this, reading Wittgenstein’s work promises a fascinating glimpse into one of the most influential thinkers of our recent history, and the topics about which he wrote stretch from logic and language, to aesthetics, psychology, and the ridiculousness of certain philosophers. This module will introduce you to some of his reflections on these topics, as well as to his sometimes unusual approach to philosophy. You will learn about his history and context, beliefs and ideas, and the impact that he continues to have on modern analytical and continental philosophy, as well as more broadly within art, literature, plays, film, but also in computer science, and pedagogical theory. By the end of the course you should have a more comprehensive understanding of a complex and influential thinker, who once refused to deny the existence of a rhinoceros in his (soon to be) supervisor’s office.
Assessment:
Group dialogue of 3000-4000 words (3/4 students) (40%)
Group presentation (20%)
Textual analysis of 1500 words (40%)

Philosophy and Gender

Code: PHL6004
Level: 6
Module Convenor: Y J Erden

Everyone has a gender. It might be one you’re born with, it might tally with your sex, it might be disputed. But whether it’s the gender you’re given at birth, the gender you identify with, or the gender you challenge, there is always gender. So why is gender normally associated with women? Why is there a “fem” in feminism? And what does this have to do with philosophy? These are questions we’ll consider in this module, alongside questions about history, psychology, politics, and the role of theory. Within this will be deconstruction of the creation of philosophy, including narratives of its history. We’ll start by asking why feminism is sometimes called the F-word, and end by asking where we go next.

Assessment:
Written philosophical dialogue of 3000 words (60%)
Seen exam of 1 hour (40%)
Formative: Written outline of dialogue / presentation of dialogue

Philosophy and Literature

Code: PHL6009
Level: 6
Convenors: H M Altorf and A Simmons

This module is taught to both students of literature and students of philosophy. It aims to study the various relationships between philosophy and literature. We will start by considering the different ways in which philosophy and literature can be thought to interact, taking particular texts to focus our attention, We will then proceed to consider some important themes in this debate, such as Evil, and the Absurd. Our approach is to start each topic with a literary text, The reason for our approach will be explained in the first classes, and it will also be compared to other possible approaches.
Assessment:
Essay of 3500 words (80%)
Presentation (20%)

Philosophy Reading Module

Code: PHL6014
Level: 6
Module Convenor: H M Altorf

This module offers students an opportunity for in-depth study of an important modern or contemporary philosopher. The central text for the class this year is Hannah Arendt’s Eichmann in Jerusalem (1963/1965). This is a classic. Even though this book was published more than 50 years ago, you will find that it is still very relevant today (even though this statement is fiercely debated). The book addresses a number of moral, political and philosophical issues. It asks questions about responsibility and about evil, it questions what it is to judge and who can judge, what it is to witness, but it is also a defence of the power of imagination and of storytelling and it wonders what it means to share the world with very different others.

Assessment:
Presentation/Leading Discussion (20%)
Seminar contribution (20%)
Review of 3000 words (60%)

Wittgenstein

Code: PHL6016
Level: 6
Module Convenor: Yasemin J Erden

Ludwig Wittgenstein is a central figure in early Twentieth Century philosophy, but he is also one of the more elusive. Despite this, reading Wittgenstein’s work promises a fascinating glimpse into one of the most influential thinkers of our recent history, and the topics about which he wrote stretch from logic and language, to aesthetics, psychology, and the ridiculousness of certain philosophers.

This module will introduce you to some of his reflections on these topics, as well as to his sometimes unusual approach to philosophy. You will learn about his history and context, beliefs and ideas, and the impact that he continues to have on modern analytical and continental philosophy, as well as more broadly within art, literature, plays, film, but also in computer science, and pedagogical theory.

By the end of the course you should have a more comprehensive understanding of a complex and
influential thinker, who once refused to deny the existence of a rhinoceros in his (soon to be) supervisor’s office.

Assessment:
Group dialogue of 3000-4000 words (3/4 students) (40%)
Group presentation (20%)
Textual analysis of 2000 words (40%)