Option Modules for the MA in Philosophy 2017/18

Students on the MA in Philosophy must choose two option modules which are taken over the Autumn and Spring Terms as follows:

**Course Structure for Full-time Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term 1</strong></td>
<td>PHI00020M Topics in Theoretical Philosophy (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00019M Topics in Practical Philosophy (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00023M Dissemination Practice (10 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Term 2</strong></td>
<td>PHI00008M Postgraduate Research Skills (10 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00008M Postgraduate Research Skills (10 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00017M Dissertation (Writing-up) (60 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Term 3</strong></td>
<td>PHI00022M Dissertation Preparation (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00022M Dissertation Preparation (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00017M Dissertation (Writing-up) (60 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td>PHI00022M Dissertation Preparation (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00022M Dissertation Preparation (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00017M Dissertation (Writing-up) (60 credits)</td>
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**Course Structure for Part-time Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Term 3 (Summer) and Summer Vacation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term 1</strong></td>
<td>PHI00020M Topics in Theoretical Philosophy (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00019M Topics in Practical Philosophy (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00013M Project Essay (20 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Term 2</strong></td>
<td>PHI00008M Postgraduate Research Skills (10 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00019M Topics in Practical Philosophy (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00017M Dissertation (Writing-up) (60 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Term 3</strong></td>
<td>PHI00022M Dissertation Preparation (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00022M Dissertation Preparation (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00017M Dissertation (Writing-up) (60 credits)</td>
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<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td>PHI00022M Dissertation Preparation (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00022M Dissertation Preparation (20 credits)</td>
<td>PHI00017M Dissertation (Writing-up) (60 credits)</td>
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**Term 4 Autumn**  PHI00013M Project Essay (20 credits)

**Term 5 Spring**  PHI00022M Dissertation Preparation (20 credits)

**Term 6 Summer**  PHI00023M Dissemination Practice (10 credits)

**Summer Vacation**  PHI00017M Dissertation (Writing up) (60 credits)
***Please note that the list of available option modules below may change before the programme begins***

**Autumn Term Option Modules**

- PHI00037M Consciousness
- PHI00030M Language and Mind
- PHI00053M Personal Identity
- PHI00049M Philosophy of Art from Hume to Tolstoy
- PHI00027M Philosophy of Christianity
- PHI00013M Project Essay
- PHI00054M Suffering and the Good Life

**Spring Term Option Modules**

- PHI00055M Analytic Aesthetics
- PHI00032M Foundations of Maths
- PHI00039M German Idealism
- PHI00043M Philosophy of the Emotions
- PHI00013M Project Essay
- PHI00052M Value and the Meaning of Life
- PHI00056M Wittgenstein and Philosophy

**Assessment for all option modules is by one essay of 4,000 words**

**Brief Descriptions**

**PHI00055M Analytic Aesthetics**

The aim of the module is to offer a critical study of selected topics from recent analytical aesthetics. The module will not merely survey these topics but provide an opportunity for students to reflect on them philosophically and develop their own considered responses to them. Students will be introduced to some of the issues taken up by analytic philosophers in aesthetics. Indicative topics: definitions of art, the ontology of art, aesthetic qualities, the values of art, the relation of truth and art, the nature of photographic and pictorial representation, fiction and emotion, and the aesthetics of nature.

**Key Texts will include:**


**PHI00037M Consciousness**

This module will look into the following issues:

1. Physicalism: reductive and non-reductive
2. Knowledge argument against physicalism
3. The explanatory gap between mind and brain
4. Modal arguments against physicalism
5. The role that ignorance and/or our cognitive limitations play in giving rise to the problem of phenomenal consciousness
6. Eliminativism about consciousness
7. Functionalism and Qualia
8. Higher Order Thought and Availability for Higher Order Thought theories of consciousness
9. Reflexive accounts of consciousness
10. Representationalism and Externalism about phenomenal properties
11. Self-Consciousness
Key Texts include:

- Tim Crane (2001), *Elements of Mind*, Oxford University Press

PHI00032M Foundations of Maths

This module will explore some key issues in the philosophy of mathematics, including the foundations of mathematics. Students will develop an understanding of the mathematical and philosophical context (particularly the so-called ‘crisis’ in foundations of mathematics) that led to the development of the three foundationalist programmes (logicism, intuitionism, and formalism) at the start of the 20th century. The three foundationalist programmes will be evaluated in the light of formal results such as Russell’s paradox and Gödel’s incompleteness theorems. The module will consider contemporary debates over Platonism and anti-Platonism in mathematics, particularly in the light of Benacerraf’s epistemological challenge (to Platonism) and the challenge raised (for anti-Platonism) by the indispensability of mathematics in science.

Key Texts will include:

- Stewart Shapiro, *Thinking about Mathematics* (OUP, 2000)

PHI00039M German Idealism

This module will consider the moral, legal, and political philosophy of German idealists such as Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel and will consider the relevance of their philosophy for debates in contemporary moral, legal, and political philosophy.

Key Texts will include:

- Hegel, G. W. F. *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.)

PHI00030M Language and Mind

This module will examine topics that sit at the intersection of Philosophy of Mind and Language. We will be focussing on what account is to be given of a speaker’s ability to understand a language and to look at such topics as truth (and theories of truth), reference, and sense.

Key Texts include:

- Donald Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*
- Michael Dummett, *The Seas of Language*
- John McDowell, *Meaning, Knowledge, and Reality*
PHI00053M Personal Identity

This module will investigate a number of standard positions and arguments relating to personal identity in particular, and, as it bears upon that, to identity in general. The module will address questions about: a) the identity conditions for people; b) what it is for people to come into, continue in, and go out of existence; and, most conspicuously; c) specific questions about our own survival.

Key Texts include:


PHI00049M Philosophy of Art from Hume to Tolstoy

This module will critically examine central themes in 18th and 19th century aesthetic theory and will provide an understanding of how an aesthetic theory can depend on, and itself help to invigorate, an overall metaphysical theory.

Among the topics to be discussed will be:

1. Whether beauty is more properly an object of contemplation or feeling
2. The nature of artistic genius
3. The status of the work of art
4. The aesthetic point of view, and its alleged differences from the practical and theoretical points of view.

Key Texts will include:

- Francis Hutcheson Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty, including 'Preface' (to both Inquiries)
- David Hume Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary
- Thomas Reid Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind, Essay V Chap VII
- Immanuel Kant The Critique of Judgement, Part I. (Critique of Aesthetic Judgement)
- G W F Hegel Lectures on Fine Art (especially his ‘Introduction’)  
- Arthur Schopenhauer The World as Will and Representation, Vol I, Bk III and Vol II, Chaps XXIX-XXXIX
- Leo Tolstoy What is Art?

PHI00027M Philosophy of Christianity

This module will apply contemporary, analytic philosophy to theology in order to (i) explicate theological doctrines, (ii) identify the philosophical problems those doctrines give rise to, (iii) identify solutions to those problems, and (iv) evaluate those solutions.

Key Texts will include:

- Oliver Crisp (ed), A Reader in Contemporary Philosophical Theology (New York: Continuum, 2009).

PHI00043M Philosophy of the Emotions

In this module students will gain a good understanding of contemporary debates and positions in the Philosophy of Emotions, and they will develop their own views on the issues at hand. They present the views they encounter in the literature as well as their own views in a clear and concise manner, both orally and in written work. By the end of the module, students will be able to display an in-depth and systematic understanding of the three main definitional theories of emotions which are defended in the contemporary philosophical literature on the emotions – namely feeling theories, judgement theories and perceptual theories.
Key Texts will include:


**PHI00013M Project Essay**

This module is designed to enable students with specialised interests to pursue independently a topic of their own choosing. Students taking this module propose an independent study topic. The proposal will be considered by the Board of Studies. If it is successful, the student will be assigned a suitable member of staff who will supervise the project.

**PHI00054M Suffering and the Good Life**

This module examines the nature of suffering and how it might promote human flourishing in the context of Eleonore Stump’s Thomist approach to solving the problem of evil. The first part of the module addresses the conditions of human flourishing: freedom, love, and personal union. The module then turns to human suffering, starting with the problem of alienation, where the sufferer becomes psychologically fragmented, thereby preventing them from leading the good life. To resolve this problem, we consider how the experience of suffering, such as experiencing disease and natural disaster, can prompt psychological integration, thereby making the good life possible again. To assess this model, we consider two challenges to it, namely, the problem of Hell and the eternal destiny of infants. We conclude by exploring the beatific vision, the consummation of the good life.

Key Texts will include:

- Aquinas, Summa Theologicae
- Eleonore Stump, Aquinas, new ed. (New York: Routledge, 2005)

**PHI00052M Value and Meaning of Life**

This module will explore some key issues concerning value, and the different kinds of value, in particular as this relates to human and non-human life. We will ask, what makes a life worth living/worth saving? The module will also consider, especially in connection with human life, notions of well-being, happiness, meaning, and to investigate the relations between these.

Key Texts will include:

- Ronald Dworkin *Life’s Dominion* Knopf 1993 (just some parts of this)
- Susan Wolf *Meaning in Life and Why it Matters* Princeton UP 2012

**PHI00056M Wittgenstein and Philosophy**

The aims of the module are to enable students to develop:

(i) A critical understanding of Wittgenstein’s major philosophical writings – especially *Tractatus, Philosophical Investigations*, and *On Certainty*.
(ii) An appreciation of the significance of Wittgenstein’s contribution to philosophy during the 20th century, especially to the development of analytic philosophy.

Key Texts will include:

- Ludwig Wittgenstein *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*
- Ludwig Wittgenstein *Philosophical Investigations*
- Ludwig Wittgenstein *On Certainty*