



# PHL 132

## Philosophy, Morality and Society

S1 Day 2015

*Dept of Philosophy*

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

### Unit convenor and teaching staff

#### Convenor

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W6A 736

By appointment

#### Convenor

Andrew Dunstall

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### Credit points

3

### Prerequisites

### Corequisites

### Co-badged status

### Unit description

This unit provides an introduction to major topics in ethics, moral theory and contemporary political philosophy. The first section, Ethics and the Good Life, focuses on the nature of happiness. Is pleasure essential to happiness? Or does the pursuit of pleasure harm our chances of lasting fulfilment? Must we be virtuous in order to be happy? What is the relationship between happiness and duty? The second section, Foundations of Morality, explores the sources of morality and the objectivity of moral judgment. Is morality based ultimately in self-interest? What is the relationship between morality and religion? Are there moral principles that everyone is bound by reason to recognise? Or is the validity of moral standards relative to specific societies and cultures? In the third section, Contemporary Problems of Justice, we turn to questions of applied political philosophy, focusing on questions such as: What principles should govern the distribution of economic and social resources within a society? What are the obligations of wealthy nations to those less fortunate, including immigrants and refugees? And what issues of justice are raised by climate change?

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Understand the nature of happiness using concepts drawn from ancient philosophy at an elementary level

Understand how some key modern philosophers have sought to establish the foundations of morality at an elementary level

Understand some elements of contemporary theories of justice at an elementary level

Evaluate, in an elementary way, contemporary social issues that concern happiness, goodness, or justice, using philosophical ideas and methods.

Be able to summarise and explain a philosophical text and its key features at an elementary level

Be capable of reflecting critically on philosophical theories and arguments at an elementary level

Be able to express and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour, in a logical, structured argument, at an elementary level

Experience in engaging constructively and respectfully with the views of others, even if you disagree with them

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#">Task 1</a>	30%	Friday of Weeks 4, 9 & 12
<a href="#">Task 2</a>	40%	Tues. 9 June
<a href="#">Task 3</a>	15%	Weeks 3-12
<a href="#">Task 4</a>	15%	Weeks 2-11

### Task 1

Due: **Friday of Weeks 4, 9 & 12**

Weighting: **30%**

Three Reflections, one drawn from each part of the unit. Length: 1500 words (3 x 500 words). This assessment is *formative* (it develops your abilities) and is graded on a pass or fail basis.

Complete all three and gain 30 marks.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the nature of happiness using concepts drawn from ancient philosophy at an elementary level
- Be able to summarise and explain a philosophical text and its key features at an elementary level
- Be capable of reflecting critically on philosophical theories and arguments at an elementary level

## Task 2

Due: **Tues. 9 June**

Weighting: **40%**

A critical discussion of a set question from parts 2 or 3 of the unit. Here you show us the critical questioning and philosophical knowledge you've learned over the unit. Essay questions will be circulated after the mid semester break. Length: 1500 words.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand how some key modern philosophers have sought to establish the foundations of morality at an elementary level
- Understand some elements of contemporary theories of justice at an elementary level
- Evaluate, in an elementary way, contemporary social issues that concern happiness, goodness, or justice, using philosophical ideas and methods.
- Be able to summarise and explain a philosophical text and its key features at an elementary level
- Be able to express and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour, in a logical, structured argument, at an elementary level

## Task 3

Due: **Weeks 3-12**

Weighting: **15%**

A weekly online quiz, beginning in week 3, on the topics covered for that week. There are 10 quizzes in total. Note: Each individual quiz is only available for 2 weeks, from the date of the relevant lecture.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the nature of happiness using concepts drawn from ancient philosophy at an elementary level
- Understand some elements of contemporary theories of justice at an elementary level
- Evaluate, in an elementary way, contemporary social issues that concern happiness, goodness, or justice, using philosophical ideas and methods.

## Task 4

Due: **Weeks 2-11**

Weighting: **15%**

Participation in tutorial discussions and exercises (for internal students), or online in iLearn discussion boards (for external students). There are 10 tutorials, running from week 2 to week 11.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the nature of happiness using concepts drawn from ancient philosophy at an elementary level
- Understand how some key modern philosophers have sought to establish the foundations of morality at an elementary level
- Understand some elements of contemporary theories of justice at an elementary level
- Evaluate, in an elementary way, contemporary social issues that concern happiness, goodness, or justice, using philosophical ideas and methods.
- Be capable of reflecting critically on philosophical theories and arguments at an elementary level
- Be able to express and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour, in a logical, structured argument, at an elementary level
- Experience in engaging constructively and respectfully with the views of others, even if you disagree with them

## Delivery and Resources

### Required readings:

All *required readings* are in the Unit Reader which will be available from the Co-op Bookshop. You are responsible for obtaining access to the readings.

A guide to studying philosophy is *recommended* (but not essential) for those interested in pursuing philosophy in-depth, and will be available in the library and the Co-op Bookshop:

- *Doing Philosophy: A Practical Guide for Students*, 2nd ed. by Clare Saunders et al. (Bloomsbury 2013)

## Interactive Lectures

In lectures, you will do more than listen and take notes. The lectures are organized in two-hour blocks. In the first hour, lecturers will introduce the fundamental ideas, questions and arguments related to the weekly issues, working with the key texts gathered in the Reader. In the second hour, you will engage in a series of interactive exercises -- responding to questions, problem solving, and short tasks -- to extend your understanding and personal reflection on these issues. So make sure you come along and don't miss out!

The tutorials will provide the opportunity to further explore the content but also to work on the different types of skills involved in good philosophical reflection.

## Technologies used:

This unit has an online presence in iLearn where activities are set and subject material distributed. Students will require access to reliable broadband and a computer. Some assessments are conducted through this site, and written tasks will be submitted there using Turnitin, a plagiarism scanning program.

## Contacting the convenor:

All email inquiries should be directed to the following email address: [phl132@mq.edu.au](mailto:phl132@mq.edu.au)

## What has changed since last delivery:

The Reflective Journal has changed to a formative assessment.

# Unit Schedule

## Schedule – PHL132 Philosophy, Morality, Society – Semester 1, 2015

This year we will introduce philosophy under three big ideas: Living a life of *happiness*, justifying what *goodness* is, and some burning issues for *justice*.

The lecture and tutorial topics are dealt with in the same week. Both lectures and tutorials are interactive, so don't miss out! You should read the weekly reading before the lecture.

Lecturers: JPD: Jean-Philippe Deranty      AD: Andrew Dunstall      PF: Paul Formosa

### Week

### Topic

### Tasks

1. So, what is moral philosophy? (JPD) (What made Darth Vader become a good guy?)	No tutorials
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**Part 1: Happiness** (JPD)

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 2. "The good life is the life of pleasure" – Epicurean ethics | Tutorials begin      |
| 3. Living according to nature – Stoic ethics                  | Weekly quizzes begin |
| 4. Happiness and character – Aristotelian ethics              | First reflection due |

**Part 2: Goodness** (JPD (wk 5) & AD)

- 5. "If there is no God, is everything permitted?" – morality and religion
- 6. Egoism and self-interest – Plato and *The Hunger Games*

*Holidays – April 6-17*

- 7. The challenge of multiculturalism – diversity, respect and moral relativism
  - 8. The greatest good for the greatest number – Utilitarianism
  - 9. The moral law is universal! – Kant's challenge
- Second reflection due

**Part 3: Justice** (PF)

- 10. Justice and inequality – is global poverty justifiable?
  - 11. Immigration and refugees – can we keep them out?
  - 12. Climate change and justice – who should pay to fix it?
  - 13: Looking ahead – where are you going now?
- Final tutorial  
Final reflection due  
Essay due

**Philosophical skills – Tutorials**

We will also be introducing and honing philosophical skills in tutorials. They will be linked to each part of the course.

Weeks 2-4: Learning the ropes – fundamental skills in philosophy

Weeks 5-9: Making solid arguments – the art of giving reasons

Weeks 10-12: Putting it all together – making your writing do the talking

## Learning and Teaching Activities

### Kickstart

Two weeks prior to Semester start, an introductory part of the unit, called Kickstart will be available. This is to help you become accustomed to the unit, and begin your study with the best start possible.

### Interactive Lectures

We ask you to prepare before lectures, and come prepared to participate. Conversation and activity in lectures helps you to acquire the most from the experience.

## Tutorials aligned with Learning Outcomes

Tutorials are designed to help you consolidate topics and refine the abilities described in the learning outcomes. You will be given guidance on weekly preparation. Small group discussion, philosophical exercises, and assessment preparation will all be treated.

## iLearn

iLearn is your guide to action. You can keep track of where the unit is up to, and the preparation you need to do. It is also a portal to numerous activities that help you learn philosophy: quizzes, discussions, assessment preparation, and your reflective journal.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)

Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Submission of Assessments

All assessment pieces are to be submitted via the unit's iLearn site. Written assessment pieces will be run through the *Turn It In* software which detects unoriginal work.

## Extensions and Disruption to Studies

## Extensions and Penalties



All work must be submitted on time unless an extension has been granted. Requests for extensions must be made in writing BEFORE the due date and will only be considered on serious grounds. Extensions will not be given unless good reasons and appropriate evidence (e.g., medical certificates, counsellor's letters) are presented at the earliest opportunity. Please note that work due concurrently in other subjects is NOT an exceptional circumstance and does not constitute a legitimate reason for an extension.

If the assessment is submitted after the due date and an extension has not been granted then the assessment will have 10% deducted from the student's grade for that task for each week or part of a week the assessment is late. For example, if the work was graded as 70/100 and was handed in 2 days late, the work would receive a mark of 63/100, a deduction of 70% (7 marks) for the part-week. Weekends, but not public holidays, count in the calculation of late penalties.

To obtain an extension of less than 3 days, you should email the unit convenor at PHL132@mq.edu.au. To obtain an extension of 3 days or more, you must submit a Disruption to Studies application. See below for details on how to do that.

### **Disruption to Studies Policy**

The University classifies a disruption as **serious and unavoidable** if it:

- could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by the student; and
- was beyond the student's control; and
- caused substantial disruption to the student's capacity for effective study and/or completion of required work; and
- occurred during an event critical study period and was at least three (3) consecutive days duration, and / or
- prevented completion of a final examination.

Students with a pre-existing disability/health condition or prolonged adverse circumstances may be eligible for ongoing assistance and support. Such support is governed by other policies and may be sought and coordinated through [Campus Wellbeing and Support Services](#).

### **How to submit a Disruption to Studies Notification?**

**NOTIFICATION** The Disruption to Studies Notification must be completed and submitted online through [www.ask.mq.edu.au](http://www.ask.mq.edu.au) within five (5) working days of the commencement of the disruption.

### **Applying for Special Consideration**

1. Log in at [ask.mq](http://ask.mq.edu.au)
2. Click 'Special Consideration' from the 'Submit' menu on the left
3. Fill in the required fields as prompted. Once you have completed filling out the information, please click on 'Submit'.

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

### Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Evaluate, in an elementary way, contemporary social issues that concern happiness, goodness, or justice, using philosophical ideas and methods.
- Be capable of reflecting critically on philosophical theories and arguments at an elementary level

## Assessment task

- Task 1

## Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Evaluate, in an elementary way, contemporary social issues that concern happiness, goodness, or justice, using philosophical ideas and methods.
- Be able to express and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour, in a logical, structured argument, at an elementary level

## Assessment task

- Task 4

## Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcome

- Experience in engaging constructively and respectfully with the views of others, even if you disagree with them

## Assessment task

- Task 4

## Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able

to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Understand the nature of happiness using concepts drawn from ancient philosophy at an elementary level
- Understand how some key modern philosophers have sought to establish the foundations of morality at an elementary level
- Understand some elements of contemporary theories of justice at an elementary level

## **Assessment tasks**

- Task 1
- Task 2
- Task 3
- Task 4

## **Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking**

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Understand the nature of happiness using concepts drawn from ancient philosophy at an elementary level
- Understand how some key modern philosophers have sought to establish the foundations of morality at an elementary level
- Understand some elements of contemporary theories of justice at an elementary level
- Be able to summarise and explain a philosophical text and its key features at an elementary level
- Be capable of reflecting critically on philosophical theories and arguments at an elementary level
- Be able to express and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour, in a logical, structured argument, at an elementary level

## Assessment tasks

- Task 1
- Task 2

## Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Understand the nature of happiness using concepts drawn from ancient philosophy at an elementary level
- Understand how some key modern philosophers have sought to establish the foundations of morality at an elementary level
- Understand some elements of contemporary theories of justice at an elementary level
- Evaluate, in an elementary way, contemporary social issues that concern happiness, goodness, or justice, using philosophical ideas and methods.
- Be able to summarise and explain a philosophical text and its key features at an elementary level
- Be capable of reflecting critically on philosophical theories and arguments at an elementary level

### Assessment task

- Task 2

## Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Be able to summarise and explain a philosophical text and its key features at an elementary level

- Be capable of reflecting critically on philosophical theories and arguments at an elementary level
- Be able to express and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour, in a logical, structured argument, at an elementary level
- Experience in engaging constructively and respectfully with the views of others, even if you disagree with them

## **Assessment tasks**

- Task 1
- Task 2
- Task 4

## **Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens**

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcomes**

- Understand some elements of contemporary theories of justice at an elementary level
- Evaluate, in an elementary way, contemporary social issues that concern happiness, goodness, or justice, using philosophical ideas and methods.
- Be able to express and defend your own ideas with clarity and rigour, in a logical, structured argument, at an elementary level
- Experience in engaging constructively and respectfully with the views of others, even if you disagree with them

## **Assessment task**

- Task 4

## **Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible**

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## **Learning outcome**

- Experience in engaging constructively and respectfully with the views of others, even if you disagree with them

## **Assessment task**

- Task 4