



PHIL703

Foundations of Research in Modern European Philosophy

S1 External 2018

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Michael Olson

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Hearing Hub, 2nd floor

By appointment

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This course introduces students to a central question or theme in modern European philosophy by returning to some of the pivotal writings of that tradition. This might take the form of an examination of what 'transcendental' philosophy is through a reading of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, for example, or an analysis of the meaning of freedom through a reading of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Specific topics and readings vary by year.

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:

Acquire a coherent and advanced knowledge Descartes' philosophy.

Clearly and coherently articulate philosophical arguments in scholarly and conversational media.

Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments.

Apply acquired knowledge and skills in the context of philosophical scholarship.

Work in cooperation with others to analyse, communicate, criticise, and develop seminal ideas in the history of philosophy.

General Assessment Information

Late Submission Penalty

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Research essay	60%	No	Week 13
Short Papers	30%	No	throughout semester
Discussion and Participation	10%	No	throughout semester

Research essay

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **60%**

The major assessment for the unit is a 4000-word research essay that addresses the theme of the seminar. Students will determine the topic of their own essays in consultation with the instructor.

Assessment criteria are outlined on the rubric provided on ilearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Short Papers

Due: **throughout semester**

Weighting: **30%**

During the course of the semester, students will write short papers (approximately 500 words each) that will serve as the basis for seminar discussion in that week. These papers should summarise the most important arguments of the week's reading. In addition to the summary, students should raise at least two discussion questions.

The schedule of individual deadlines will be worked out in the first week of the seminar.

Assessment criteria include the accuracy and completeness of the paper's engagement with the relevant material and the quality of the discussion questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Work in cooperation with others to analyse, communicate, criticise, and develop seminal ideas in the history of philosophy.

Discussion and Participation

Due: **throughout semester**

Weighting: **10%**

Active preparation for and participation in in-person or online discussion.

The criteria by which this assessment is evaluated include both the quality (insight, concision, comprehension) and quantity of student participation.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Acquire a coherent and advanced knowledge Descartes' philosophy.
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments.
- Apply acquired knowledge and skills in the context of philosophical scholarship.
- Work in cooperation with others to analyse, communicate, criticise, and develop seminal ideas in the history of philosophy.

Delivery and Resources

The seminar will meet fortnightly with ongoing discussion of the material online in between meetings. Students will accordingly require regular access to iLearn.

Unit Schedule

Week 1: Preliminaries

Meditations on First Philosophy, Dedicatory letter to the Sorbonne, Preface to the Reader, and Synopsis of the following six Meditations, CSM 3-11 (AT VII 1-16).

Week 2: *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641)

Meditations 1-3, CSM 12-36 (AT VII 17-52)

Objections and Replies

Fifth Objections and Replies, CSM 180-185, 243-246 (AT VII 257-265, 350-355)

First Objections and Replies, CSM 67-69, 78-80 (AT VII 93-95, 108-112)

Fourth Objections and Replies, CSM 146-150, 162-172 (AT VII 208-214, 231-247)

Fifth Objections and Replies, CSM 202-214, 251-254 (AT VII 291-307, 364-369)

Sixth Objections and Replies, CSM 278, 285-286 (AT VII 413, 422-424)

Additional reading:

- Janet Broughton, "The Method of Doubt," in *The Rationalists: Critical Essays on Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz*, ed. Derk Pereboom (Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), 1-18.
- David Owens, "Descartes's Use of Doubt," in *A Companion to Descartes*, eds. Janet Broughton and John Carriero (Blackwell, 2008), 164-178.
- Charles Larmore, "Descartes and Skepticism," in *Blackwell Guide to Descartes' Meditations*, ed. Stephen Gaukroger (Blackwell, 2006), 17-29.
- John Cottingham, "Cartesian dualism: theology, metaphysics, and science," in *The Cambridge Companion to Descartes*, ed. John Cottingham (Cambridge UP, 1992), 236-257.
- Jean-Marie Beyssade, "The Idea of God and Proofs of His Existence," *Cambridge Companion to Descartes*, 174-199.
- John Cottingham, "The Role of God in Descartes's Philosophy," in *Companion to Descartes*, 288- 301.

Week 4: Meditations on First Philosophy

Meditations 4-6, CSM 49-62 (AT VII 53-90)

Correspondence with Marin Mersenne, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, eds. and trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, Dugald Murdoch, and Anthony Kenny (Cambridge University Press, 1991), 20-26 (AT I 135-154). (Descartes to Marin Mersenne, 15 April, 1630, Descartes to Mersenne, 6 May, 1630, and Descartes to Mersenne, 27 May, 1630).

Objections and Replies

Second Objections and Replies, CSM 89-90, 100-101 (AT VII 125-126, 140-141)

Second Objections and Replies, CSM 91, 106-109 (AT VII 127, 149-154)

Additional Reading:

- Deborah Brown, "Descartes on True and False Ideas," in *Companion to Descartes*, 196-215.
- Olli Koistinen, "The Fifth Meditation: externality and true and immutable natures," in *The Cambridge Companion to Descartes' Meditations*, ed. David Cunniff (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 223-239.

- Gary Hatfield, “The Cartesian Circle,” in *Blackwell Guide*, 122-141.
- Julie Klein, “Descartes’s Critique of the Atheist Geometer,” *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 38 (2000), 429-445.
- Deborah Brown, “The Sixth Meditation: Descartes and the embodied self,” in *Cambridge Companion to Descartes’ Meditations*, 240-257.
- Allison Simmons, “Descartes on the Cognitive Structure of Sensory Experience,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, vol. 67 (2003), 549-579.

Week 6: *Treatise on Man* (1649; published 1664)

René Descartes, *The World and Other Writings*, trans. and ed. Stephen Gaukroger (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 99-119, 139-169 (AT XI 119-138, 163-202).

Additional Reading:

- Gary Hatfield, “Descartes’ physiology and its relation to his psychology,” *Cambridge Companion to Descartes*, 335-370.
- Stephen Gaukroger, *Descartes’ System of Natural Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), “Principia, Part V: Living Things” and “Principia, Part VI: Man,” 180-246.

Week 8: Correspondence with Princess Elisabeth (1643, 1645)

Lisa Shapiro (ed. and trans.), *The Correspondence between Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia and René Descartes* (University of Chicago Press, 2007), 61-73, 91-122 (AT III 660-695, IV 1-3, 263-324).

Additional Reading:

- Renée Jeffery, “The origins of modern emotions: Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia and the embodied mind,” *History of European Ideas*, vol. 43, no. 6 (2017), 547-559.
- Daniel Garber, “Understanding Interaction: What Descartes Should have Told Elisabeth,” in *Descartes Embodied: Reading Cartesian Philosophy through Cartesian Science* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 168-188.

Week 10 *Passions of the Soul* (1649)

Passions of the Soul, Parts I and II, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, eds. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch (Cambridge University Press, 1984), vol. 1, 326-382 (AT XI 322-442).

Additional Reading:

- Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, “Descartes on thinking with the body,” *Cambridge Companion to Descartes*, 371-392.
- Denis Kambouchner, “Descartes on the Power of the Soul: A Reconsideration,” in *Descartes and Cartesianism: Essays in Honour of Desmond Clarke*, eds. Stephen

Gaukroger and Catherine Wilson (Oxford University Press, 2017), 177-188.

- Sean Greenberg, "Descartes on the Passions. Function, Representation, and Motivation," *Noûs*, vol. 41, no. 4 (2007), 714-734.
- Hasana Sharp, "Hate's Body: Danger and the Flesh in Descartes' Passions of the Soul," *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 4 (2011), 355-372.

Week 12 Passions of the Soul *Passions of the Soul*, Part III, in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol. 1, 383-404 (AT XI 443-488).

Additional Reading:

- Shoshana Brassfield, "Never Let the Passions Be Your Guide: Descartes on the Role of the Passions," *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, vol. 20, no. 3 (2012), 459-477.
- John Sutton, "Controlling the passions: passion, memory, and moral physiology of self in seventeenth-century neurophilosophy," in *The Soft Underbelly of Reason: The Passions in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Stephen Gaukroger (Routledge, 1998), 115-146.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway \(https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/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.

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) 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

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

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

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Acquire a coherent and advanced knowledge Descartes' philosophy.
- Clearly and coherently articulate philosophical arguments in scholarly and conversational media.
- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments.
- Apply acquired knowledge and skills in the context of philosophical scholarship.

Assessment tasks

- Research essay
- Discussion and Participation

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments.
- Apply acquired knowledge and skills in the context of philosophical scholarship.

Assessment tasks

- Research essay
- Short Papers
- Discussion and Participation

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Clearly and coherently articulate philosophical arguments in scholarly and conversational media.

- Analyse and critically evaluate philosophical arguments.
- Apply acquired knowledge and skills in the context of philosophical scholarship.

Assessment tasks

- Research essay
- Short Papers
- Discussion and Participation

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Clearly and coherently articulate philosophical arguments in scholarly and conversational media.
- Work in cooperation with others to analyse, communicate, criticise, and develop seminal ideas in the history of philosophy.

Assessment tasks

- Research essay
- Short Papers
- Discussion and Participation

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Work in cooperation with others to analyse, communicate, criticise, and develop seminal ideas in the history of philosophy.