



PHL 238

Existential Questions

S1 External 2018

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer

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Contact via 98506773

Hearing Hub

tba

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

(12cp at 100 level or above) or admission to GDipArts

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit studies key philosophical questions (the meaning of life and death, freedom and responsibility, politics and history) from the perspective of existentialist philosophy. The unit is organised around the most important texts in this tradition. In particular, we investigate the way in which existentialist thinkers explored philosophical questions through literature.

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:

An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in existentialist philosophy.

A good understanding of the history and significance of existentialism within the history of philosophy.

A good understanding of the relevance of existentialist approaches in broader social, cultural and political debates.

An ability to apply philosophical theories and concepts to other areas of social and cultural practice.

To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms for written expression.

General Assessment Information

Late Assessment 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
Online Quiz	30%	No	Week 13
Take-Home Exam	50%	No	15/06/18
Online Participation	20%	No	Throughout Semester

Online Quiz

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **30%**

10 weekly quizzes, each worth 3 marks, for a total of 30 marks throughout the semester. The quizzes will run every week, from week 3 to week 12. The deadline for ALL quizzes is the end of week 13.

The aim of the quizzes is to test your understanding of the key texts, main concepts and arguments studied every week. Most quizzes will take the form of multiple-choice questions. There might be one or two short-answer quizzes. A quiz should take a maximum of 30 minutes to do but 2 hours will be allocated.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Take-Home Exam

Due: **15/06/18**

Weighting: **50%**

The take-home exam will consist of 5 questions, each 400-500 words, covering the content studied throughout the unit. The questions will be handed out at the end of Week 12.

The marking criteria for this task are: correct understanding of key concepts and arguments; ability to identify relevant philosophical issues; quality of expression. A rubric will be available on the unit's iLearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- A good understanding of the history and significance of existentialism within the history of philosophy.
- An ability to apply philosophical theories and concepts to other areas of social and cultural practice.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms for written expression.

Online Participation

Due: **Throughout Semester**

Weighting: **20%**

Online participation will be ongoing throughout the semester but the marking period will match the tutorials, i.e. it will start in **Week 2** and run until **Week 12**.

The online participation mark consists of:

- Participation: 1 mark per week for participation in the online forum (max. 10 marks)
- Active Engagement: 1 mark per tutorial for active engagement (making useful contributions) in online discussions (max. 10 marks)

A marking rubric detailing the components of active engagement will be made available on the unit's iLearn.

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- A good understanding of the history and significance of existentialism within the history of philosophy.
- A good understanding of the relevance of existentialist approaches in broader social, cultural and political debates.
- An ability to apply philosophical theories and concepts to other areas of social and cultural practice.

Delivery and Resources

This unit uses an ilearn website and Echo360 lecture recordings (<https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/MQ/>). The website contains links to the reading material, lecture notes, iletecture recordings, and other learning materials. Students will therefore require access to a computer and a good internet connection in order to access all the material, and participate in the unit effectively.

PHL238 will be delivered using a combination of lectures (live and pre-recorded) and tutorial work. Lectures are organised around key texts in which fundamental concepts and arguments are introduced and explained. The weekly quizzes are designed to practise the various skills required in philosophical writing. They will be scaffolded to help students in the preparation of the final exam. External students will conduct these workshops online via iLearn.

Lecture Times

Monday 9-11am 12, Second Way - 229 Tutorial Rm

Tutorial Times

Monday 12-1pm, 4 Western Rd - 312 Tutorial Rm

Monday 1-2pm, 4 Western Rd - 302 Tutorial Rm

Monday 2-3pm, 4 Western Rd - 320 Tutorial Rm

Weekly tutorials **will begin in WEEK 2** and will continue until **Week 12** (no tutorial in Week 6 which is a public holiday).

Unit Schedule

Week 1	Introduction to PHL 238: what is existentialism?
	“There is only one serious philosophical problem”: authentic existence, the question at the root of all philosophical inquiries
Week 2	The Absurd – Camus’ challenge Key text: Camus, <i>The Myth of Sisyphus</i> , chapter 1.
Week 3-4	Boredom, Death and Care – Heidegger’s challenge Key text: extracts from <i>Being and Time</i> , <i>What is Metaphysics?</i>
Week 5	The Power of Nothingness – Sartre’s Challenge Key text: extract from <i>Existentialism is a Humanism</i>

Week 6	The Authentic Body: Merleau-Ponty's challenge Key text: Merleau-Ponty, extracts from <i>The Phenomenology of Perception</i>
Week 7	The Authentic Self and the Other Key texts: Heidegger, "The They" (from <i>Being and Time</i>); Sartre's "being-for-other" (from <i>Being and Nothingness</i> and <i>No Exit</i>); Merleau-Ponty's co-presence (from <i>Phenomenology of Perception</i>)
	"What ought I to do"? Morality, Politics and Art as existential tasks
Week 8	Nature versus History – Camus' response to the Absurd Key texts: Camus, extracts from <i>The Rebel</i> , <i>Nuptials at Tipasa</i> , <i>The Outsider</i> .
Week 9	De Beauvoir and Feminist Existentialism Key texts: De Beauvoir, <i>Ethics of Ambiguity</i> , chapter 1; extracts from <i>The Second Sex</i> .
Week 10	Black existentialism Key texts: Sartre, <i>Black Orpheus</i> ; Frantz Fanon, extracts from <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i> ; Lewis Gordon, extracts from <i>Existence in Black</i>
Week 11	Arendt: politics as authentic life Key text: Hannah Arendt, extracts from <i>The Human Condition</i>
Week 12	Existentialist aesthetics Key texts: Merleau-Ponty, extracts from <i>Eye and Mind</i> ; Sartre, <i>What is Literature?</i> ; Heidegger, <i>The Origin of the Work of Art</i> .

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

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

- An ability to apply philosophical theories and concepts to other areas of social and cultural practice.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms for written expression.

Assessment task

- Online Participation

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 outcome

- An ability to apply philosophical theories and concepts to other areas of social and cultural practice.

Assessment task

- Online Participation

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

- A good understanding of the history and significance of existentialism within the history of philosophy.

Assessment tasks

- Take-Home Exam
- Online Participation

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

- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in existentialist philosophy.
- A good understanding of the history and significance of existentialism within the history of philosophy.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Take-Home Exam

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

- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in existentialist philosophy.
- A good understanding of the history and significance of existentialism within the history

of philosophy.

- A good understanding of the relevance of existentialist approaches in broader social, cultural and political debates.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms for written expression.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Take-Home Exam
- Online Participation

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

- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in existentialist philosophy.
- A good understanding of the history and significance of existentialism within the history of philosophy.
- A good understanding of the relevance of existentialist approaches in broader social, cultural and political debates.
- An ability to apply philosophical theories and concepts to other areas of social and cultural practice.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms for written expression.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Take-Home Exam

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

- An ability to apply philosophical theories and concepts to other areas of social and cultural practice.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms for written expression.

Assessment tasks

- Take-Home Exam
- Online Participation

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

- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in existentialist philosophy.
- A good understanding of the history and significance of existentialism within the history of philosophy.
- An ability to apply philosophical theories and concepts to other areas of social and cultural practice.

Assessment task

- Online Participation

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 outcomes

- A good understanding of the history and significance of existentialism within the history of philosophy.
- An ability to apply philosophical theories and concepts to other areas of social and cultural practice.

Assessment task

- Online Participation

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
21/05/2018	Late assessment policy updated.