PHIX383
Philosophy Capstone Unit
S1 OUA 2017
Dept of Philosophy

Contents

General Information 2
Learning Outcomes 2
General Assessment Information 3
Assessment Tasks 3
Delivery and Resources 6
Unit Schedule 6
Policies and Procedures 12
Graduate Capabilities 14

Disclaimer
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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor and Tutor
Jane Johnson
jane.johnson@mq.edu.au

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit provides students with the opportunity to integrate knowledge acquired in their study of philosophy, to reflect on the development of their skills, and to focus on how their study of philosophy equips them for the next step in their careers. We review the philosophy graduate attributes: the knowledge, skills, methods and values developed in the course of the philosophy degree. With a focus on what these skills and values mean in practice, we examine a range of texts that both illustrate the diversity of philosophical approaches and represent the ‘state of the art’ in the field. By applying critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative skills to these texts, as well as philosophical values of intellectual humility and openness to the force of the better argument, students will learn what it is like to engage in live philosophical debate. We also look at the values cultivated through the study of philosophy and we consider how the skills and values acquired through the degree can be taken forward into further study, work, and applied in other areas of life. All enrolment queries should be directed to Open Universities Australia (OUA): see www.open.edu.au

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates/

Learning Outcomes

1. Identification of the distinctive attributes acquired and developed in the course of the philosophy degree.
2. Understanding of the diversity of philosophical approaches and traditions as exemplified in the different approaches and methods for doing and writing philosophy.
3. Enhanced reasoning and critical thinking skills.
4. Enhanced imaginative, creative and reflective abilities.
5. Enhanced ability to demonstrate precision of thought and expression in the analysis and
formulation of complex and controversial problems, verbally and in writing.

6. Applied understanding of the philosophical values of intellectual openness, humility, and honesty in recognising the force of conclusions reached by a careful assessment of arguments.

**General Assessment Information**

Written assignments are to be submitted through Turnitin, and will be marked and returned via Grademark. For information about these tools, see:

[http://www.mq.edu.au/iLearn/student_info/assignments.htm](http://www.mq.edu.au/iLearn/student_info/assignments.htm)

**There is no need for a coversheet** - the iLearn assignment submission (Turnitin) involves declaring your details and honesty in submitting your work. Please note, we do not accept submission by email attachment.

See the "Policies and Procedures" section below for more detail about relevant policies.

**Assessment Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Hurdle</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text analyses</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Midnight, Sundays Wks 5, 8, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Portfolio Blog</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ongoing, due Sunday Wk 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Midnight, Friday Wk 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Text analyses**

Due: **Midnight, Sundays Wks 5, 8, 11**

Weighting: **30%**

The text analyses are a series of short (500 word) writing exercises. There are three text analyses due throughout the Study Period. Each text analysis covers one of the three sections of the unit and is worth 10 marks each. Together, the text analyses are worth 30 marks.

This task will be assessed by the following criteria: content, structure, critical analysis and written expression. A detailed rubric for this task will be supplied on iLearn.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Identification of the distinctive attributes acquired and developed in the course of the philosophy degree.
- Understanding of the diversity of philosophical approaches and traditions as exemplified
in the different approaches and methods for doing and writing philosophy.

- Enhanced reasoning and critical thinking skills.
- Enhanced imaginative, creative and reflective abilities.
- Enhanced ability to demonstrate precision of thought and expression in the analysis and formulation of complex and controversial problems, verbally and in writing.

Reflective Portfolio Blog

Due: **Ongoing, due Sunday Wk 12**
Weighting: **20%**

The reflective portfolio blog is designed to encourage you to reflect each week on

1. the knowledge acquired through the study of philosophy,
2. skills developed through the program of study,
3. philosophical values, and
4. different philosophical approaches and methodologies.

You are expected to make at least one entry in your reflective portfolio blog for each week of content in a timely fashion (by the end of the next week). Your entry or entries should include, but are not limited to, creative and critical personal reflections on the unit content of that week, as well as broader reflections on philosophy and philosophical methodologies. All blog entries up to the due date will together constitute the reflective portfolio and will receive an overall grade out of 20. Your blog posts can only be seen by you and the unit convenor/tutor.

This task will be assessed using the following criteria: content, structure, creativity, reflective insights, critical analysis and written expression. A detailed rubric for this task will be supplied on iLearn.

You will be assessed on blog posts covering weeks 2-11, and the blog must be finalised by Sunday of week 12.

**Submission:** blog through iLearn. For information on how to blog in iLearn see: [http://mq.edu.au/iLearn/student_info/activities.htm#blog](http://mq.edu.au/iLearn/student_info/activities.htm#blog)

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Identification of the distinctive attributes acquired and developed in the course of the philosophy degree.
- Understanding of the diversity of philosophical approaches and traditions as exemplified in the different approaches and methods for doing and writing philosophy.
- Enhanced reasoning and critical thinking skills.
- Enhanced imaginative, creative and reflective abilities.
• Enhanced ability to demonstrate precision of thought and expression in the analysis and formulation of complex and controversial problems, verbally and in writing.
• Applied understanding of the philosophical values of intellectual openness, humility, and honesty in recognising the force of conclusions reached by a careful assessment of arguments.

Participation
Due: Ongoing
Weighting: 10%

Discussion is a vital part of learning in philosophy. Students will discuss unit material via the discussion forum.

This task will be assessed by the following criteria: quality of your posts and their timeliness (you should post within a week of the topic). Quality is not just measured by the philosophical content of your posts, but by your willingness to engage in discussion with your peers.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:
• Understanding of the diversity of philosophical approaches and traditions as exemplified in the different approaches and methods for doing and writing philosophy.
• Enhanced reasoning and critical thinking skills.
• Enhanced imaginative, creative and reflective abilities.
• Enhanced ability to demonstrate precision of thought and expression in the analysis and formulation of complex and controversial problems, verbally and in writing.
• Applied understanding of the philosophical values of intellectual openness, humility, and honesty in recognising the force of conclusions reached by a careful assessment of arguments.

Essay
Due: Midnight, Friday Wk 13
Weighting: 40%

The essay (2500 words) is designed to extend your understanding of a specific topic or issue and to test your ability to engage with that topic in depth. Essay writing tests your ability to synthesise material from a range of readings and to express, analyse and structure key ideas and arguments clearly, logically and systematically. It also tests your ability to develop your own view, and to argue for that view in a cogent and sustained way. You will be expected to undertake research beyond the required readings and to incorporate that further research into your essay.

This task will be assessed by the following criteria: content, structure, argument and critical analysis, written expression and referencing. A detailed rubric for this task will be supplied on

https://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/79689/unit_guide/print
This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Understanding of the diversity of philosophical approaches and traditions as exemplified in the different approaches and methods for doing and writing philosophy.
- Enhanced reasoning and critical thinking skills.
- Enhanced imaginative, creative and reflective abilities.
- Enhanced ability to demonstrate precision of thought and expression in the analysis and formulation of complex and controversial problems, verbally and in writing.
- Applied understanding of the philosophical values of intellectual openness, humility, and honesty in recognising the force of conclusions reached by a careful assessment of arguments.

## Delivery and Resources

### REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR MATERIALS

All the weekly readings for the unit will be made available through iLearn.

Additional readings will be suggested in iLearn.

### TECHNOLOGY USED AND REQUIRED

Online units can be accessed at: http://ilearn.mq.edu.au

The unit uses the following technology: iLearn

## Unit Schedule
## Week 1

### Introduction: What is a Capstone Unit?

- What is a capstone unit?
- An overview of the 3 streams in the Department of Philosophy at Macquarie University – Mind, Metaphysics and Meaning; Social Philosophy and Continental Philosophy; Ethics and Applied Ethics.
- Our focus in this unit is on the methodologies and philosophical self-understandings across these three streams. How is philosophy done? What is the culture of philosophy?
- Unit outline.

### Required Reading:

- No reading

### Further Reading:


## Week 2

### The Analytical vs. Continental divide.

- Much of contemporary philosophy is determined by the analytical vs. continental divide. What is this divide? What is the history of the divide?
- What are the ‘essentialist’ and ‘deflationary’ responses to the divide?
- What is the on-going relevance of the divide today and into the future?

### Required Reading and Listening:

- 'In our time' with Melvyn Bragg, 'Podcast, Analytic-Continental Philosophy Split', 10 Nov 11, with Stephen Mulhall of New College, Beatrice Han-Pile, Hans Johann-Glock. Available from: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/series/iot/all](http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/series/iot/all)

### Further Reading:

### Week 3  Ethics And Applied Ethics Stream  
**Methods in Moral Philosophy: The Case of Evil**

- What methods are used in contemporary moral philosophy?
- This question will be explored through the prism of a particular topic: moral evil. How do we develop and test a moral theory, such as a theory of evil?

**Required Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


### Week 4  Ethics and Cognitive Science.

- What is the relationship between ethics and science? In particular, how do findings in cognitive science and social psychology impact on our ethical theorising? What are some of the problems that can arise when we try to draw ethical conclusions from scientific findings?

**Required Reading:**


**Further Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Methods in Political Philosophy: Ideal Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What methods are used in contemporary political philosophy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How does the method of transcendental institutionalism compare with realization focused comparison?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Required Reading:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Further Reading</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Social Philosophy and Continental Philosophy Stream</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Classical German Philosophy and Its Contemporary Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the contemporary relevance of classical German philosophy and of Hegel in particular? How does philosophy's history impact on its present form?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Required Reading:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Further Reading</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Contemporary Critical Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>What is contemporary critical theory and what methods does it employ? The place of philosophy in the society and politics of its time. Does philosophy's place in its society and time impact on its methods?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Required Reading:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Further Reading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Week 8  
**Analytical and Continental Aesthetics**

- How do the analytic and continental philosophical traditions approach aesthetics? What are the differences and similarities in terms of methods?

- **Required Reading:**

- **Further Reading**

### Week 9  
**Mind, Metaphysics and Meaning Stream**

**Conceptual Analysis and philosophical method**

- What is conceptual analysis and what roles does it play in analytic philosophical methodology?
- What are some of the problems and limitations of this approach? What are some of the advantages?

- **Required Reading:**

- **Further Reading:**
Week 10  Science, Naturalism and Philosophy
- What is the relationship between philosophy and science? What is naturalism? How does naturalism impact on how we understand philosophy’s methods?

- Required Reading:

- Further Reading:

Week 11  Experimental Philosophy
- What is experimental philosophy? What are the aims and methods of experimental philosophy? What is the philosophical significance of experimental philosophy?

- Required Reading:

- Further Reading:

Week 12  A Philosophical Education – Conclusion.
- What is the value and purpose of a philosophical education? What is the value and use of different philosophical methods? What is the role of philosophy in academia, the university and society more generally?

- What use can be made of a philosophical education? E.g. Masters of Research (MRes), PhDs, other career options, etc.

- Required Reading:
o  No reading.
Policies and Procedures

Late Submission - applies unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the unit guide

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.

Extension Request

Special Consideration Policy and Procedure

The University recognises that students may experience events or conditions that adversely affect their academic performance. If you experience serious and unavoidable difficulties at exam time or when assessment tasks are due, you can consider applying for Special Consideration.

You need to show that the circumstances:

1. were serious, unexpected and unavoidable
2. were beyond your control
3. caused substantial disruption to your academic work
4. substantially interfered with your otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements
5. lasted at least three consecutive days or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date.

If you feel that your studies have been impacted submit an application as follows:

1. Visit Ask MQ and use your OneID to log in
2. Fill in your relevant details
3. Attach supporting documents by clicking 'Add a reply', click 'Browse' and navigating to the files you want to attach, then click 'Submit Form' to send your notification and supporting documents
4. Please keep copies of your original documents, as they may be requested in the
future as part of the assessment process

Outcome

Once your submission is assessed, an appropriate outcome will be organised.

OUA Specific Policies and Procedures

Withdrawal from a unit after the census date

You can withdraw from your subjects prior to the census date (last day to withdraw). If you successfully withdraw before the census date, you won’t need to apply for Special Circumstances. If you find yourself unable to withdraw from your subjects before the census date - you might be able to apply for Special Circumstances. If you’re eligible, we can refund your fees and overturn your fail grade.

If you’re studying Single Subjects using FEE-HELP or paying up front, you can apply online.

If you’re studying a degree using HECS-HELP, you’ll need to apply directly to Macquarie University.

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:


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
Graduate Capabilities

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

• Understanding of the diversity of philosophical approaches and traditions as exemplified in the different approaches and methods for doing and writing philosophy.
Enhanced ability to demonstrate precision of thought and expression in the analysis and formulation of complex and controversial problems, verbally and in writing.

Assessment tasks
- Text analyses
- Reflective Portfolio Blog
- Participation
- Essay

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
- Identification of the distinctive attributes acquired and developed in the course of the philosophy degree.
- Enhanced imaginative, creative and reflective abilities.

Assessment tasks
- Text analyses
- Reflective Portfolio Blog
- Participation
- Essay

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
- Enhanced ability to demonstrate precision of thought and expression in the analysis and formulation of complex and controversial problems, verbally and in writing.
- Applied understanding of the philosophical values of intellectual openness, humility, and honesty in recognising the force of conclusions reached by a careful assessment of
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 outcome

• Applied understanding of the philosophical values of intellectual openness, humility, and honesty in recognising the force of conclusions reached by a careful assessment of arguments.

Assessment tasks

• Text analyses
• Reflective Portfolio Blog

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 outcomes

• Identification of the distinctive attributes acquired and developed in the course of the philosophy degree.
• Enhanced ability to demonstrate precision of thought and expression in the analysis and formulation of complex and controversial problems, verbally and in writing.
Assessment tasks

- Text analyses
- Reflective Portfolio Blog
- Participation
- Essay

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

- Enhanced ability to demonstrate precision of thought and expression in the analysis and formulation of complex and controversial problems, verbally and in writing.
- Applied understanding of the philosophical values of intellectual openness, humility, and honesty in recognising the force of conclusions reached by a careful assessment of arguments.

Assessment tasks

- Text analyses
- Reflective Portfolio Blog
- Participation
- Essay

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

- Identification of the distinctive attributes acquired and developed in the course of the
philosophy degree.
- Understanding of the diversity of philosophical approaches and traditions as exemplified in the different approaches and methods for doing and writing philosophy.
- Applied understanding of the philosophical values of intellectual openness, humility, and honesty in recognising the force of conclusions reached by a careful assessment of arguments.

**Assessment tasks**

- Text analyses
- Reflective Portfolio Blog
- Participation
- Essay

**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**

- Identification of the distinctive attributes acquired and developed in the course of the philosophy degree.
- Understanding of the diversity of philosophical approaches and traditions as exemplified in the different approaches and methods for doing and writing philosophy.
- Enhanced reasoning and critical thinking skills.
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**Assessment tasks**

- Text analyses
- Reflective Portfolio Blog
- Participation
- Essay