

JUNIOR SOPHISTER ESSAY TITLES
HILARY TERM 2014

SHP (Single Honor Philosophy Students)

Students are required to take a total of six modules, to be distributed over two terms. It is strongly recommended that they take three modules in the first 1st semester/Michaelmas Term and three modules in the second 2nd semester/Hilary Term.

Students are required to submit a total of twelve essays in the year, two for each of the six modules they are taking. There are four submission dates, two in each term. By each of these dates, students are required to submit one essay for each module they are currently taking.

TSM

Students are required to take a total of three modules with PI3007 Moral Philosophy a compulsory module taken over two terms/semesters. Thus, they will take one module + PI3007 Moral Philosophy in each of the terms. Students are required to submit a total of six essays in the year, two for each of the three modules they taking with one essay for PI3007 Moral Philosophy in each term. There are four submission dates, two in each term. By each of these dates, students are required to submit one essay for each module they are currently taking.

PHIL/POL & PPES.

Students are required to take a total of three modules, and at least one module in each term. Thus, they will take either one or two courses in the first 1st semester/Michaelmas Term and either one or two courses in the 2nd semester/Hilary Term. Students are required to submit a total of six essays in the year, two for each of the three modules they taking. There are four submission dates, two in each term. By each of these dates, students are required to submit one essay for each module they are currently taking.

Submission Dates

Hilary Term 14/2nd Semester

HT Week 8 Monday 3rd March'14: each student (SHP and TSM/PHIL.POL & PPES) submits **one essay for each course** taken in the second part of the year

HT Week 12 Monday 7th April'14: each student (SHP and TSM/PHIL.POL & PPES) submits **one essay for each course** taken in the second part of the year.

Essays must be submitted by 2.00 p.m. on the day specified In regard to late essays, extensions may be granted by agreement of the JS Convener (Prof. James Levine - jlevine@tcd.ie) which must be obtained before the regular date of submission, and may be granted only for medical or ad misericordiam reasons. Students are required to submit their essays via Turn-it-in with a hard copy handed into the Philosophy Department and stamped. Essays received up to seven days late will be marked with the deduction of ten marks. Essays received more than seven days late will receive no marks in the assessment unless accompanied by written prior extension granted by the JS Convener.

PI3003 Topics in Ancient Philosophy (Prof. Vasilis Politis)

As advised during his lectures.

PI3006: Topics in Analytic Philosophy (Prof Peter Simons)

1. Is truth correspondence?
2. Critically assess the minimalist theory of truth.
3. What are semantic paradoxes and how may they be avoided?
4. Critically assess Tarski's theory of truth and suggest how any shortcomings it may have might be overcome.
5. What is truth-making? Does a theory of truth benefit from invoking it?
6. Discuss the pros and cons of taking the primary truth-bearers to be abstract propositions.
7. Is truth absolute?
8. Critically discuss Künne's theory that for all x , x is true if and only if for some p , x is the proposition that p , and p .
9. Is Russell's theory of descriptions still fit for purpose?
10. Do we need sense as well as reference? Why (not)?
11. Is there direct reference? Why (not)?
12. Describe and assess Meinong's theory of non-existent objects.
13. How should the theory of meaning deal with indexical expressions?
14. Is Quine right that analyticity is a dubious notion?
15. Discuss the uses and ontological status of possible worlds.
16. Should we accept the Barcan formulas?
17. Can semantics be extensional? Should it be?
18. Discuss the semantic problems that arise in connection with reports about propositional attitudes, e.g. 'Tom believes that Napoleon was born in Sardinia'.
19. *Wild card. If you wish to write an essay on a topic other than these, discuss it with the lecturer and we may be able to accommodate your wish, or something close to it.*

PI3007: Moral Philosophy Hilary Term'14 (Prof. Antti Kauppinen)

1. **Discuss an argument for or against the moral permissibility of abortion.**
2. **Discuss an argument for or against the moral permissibility of euthanasia.**

Reading material available on Blackboard

Please note: Students registered for this module may select either of the above dates to submit their Hilary Term essay (i.e. 3rd March or 7th April)/

PI3013: Topics in Continental Philosophy (Prof Lilian Alweiss)

1. **What is logical psychologism and how does Husserl attempt to refute it? Discuss.**
2. **Husserl believes:**
 - a) **when we think, we necessarily think of something that lies *outside* of the mind;**
 - b) **we can think of things that exist and that do not exist.****Can Husserl coherently claim a&b namely, that when we think of things that do not exist, we are thinking of something extra-mental? Discuss**

3. 'If we follow a certain line of reasoning about our experience we are led to the conclusion that the object of experience is not part of the world ... However, if we are open to our experience, all we find is the world' Discuss.

Reading material available on Blackboard.

PI3016: Philosophy of Fiction (Paal Antonsen)

The essay titles here are suggestions. The reading material is available at Blackboard however, you are encouraged to find additional material to develop your own text.

Essay 1

Relative to a fiction we can talk of an associated fictional world or a set of such worlds. The contents of such worlds are richer than what the information found in the fiction itself provided – requiring them to be supplemented with some background information. How should fictional worlds be characterized and how do is the background information provided?

Essay 2

According to David Lewis, to account for fictional truth we should (i) take sentences uttered in fiction discourse as elliptical for sentences embedded by a fiction operator, and (ii) construct the fiction operator as a modal operator. Discuss whether (i) and/or (ii) should be abandoned.

Essay 3

The puzzle of fictional emotions is often characterized by three theses: (i) we have emotions concerning fictional characters; (ii) such emotions often presuppose belief in the existence of those fictional characters; (iii) we do not believe in the existence of those fictional characters. Prima facie, they cannot all be true. How should we resolve the puzzle?

Essay 4

In general we try to avoid situations that make us scared and situations that make us sad and cry. Quite regularly, though, we read stories, watch movies and play video games that we predict will have such – or similar – effects on us. How can those two observations be compatible?

Essay 5

It is a common view that engagement with fiction – at least the right kind of fiction– enhances our moral capacities. However, it is far from obvious that engaging with fiction make us behave morally better. In what sense, if any, does fiction make us better to handle moral issues?