



Topics in Philosophy IA | PIU11011

Year	Junior Freshman
ECTS Credits	10
Contact Hours	22 Lectures, 5 Tutorials
Pre-requisite	None
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Dr Rachel Handley
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Module Outline:

There are two components to this module, both are taught by Dr Handley. The first component is on Well-Being. The second component is on Moral Thinking.

Component 1: Well-Being

Lives can go well or poorly for their subjects. What makes this so? In this module, we will examine the main answers philosophers have given to this question.

The course begins by looking at what it might mean for experiences to be pleasurable or painful to their subjects. Next, we'll turn to what role (if any) the pleasurableness or painfulness of life contributes to how well that life goes for its subject.

Well-Being is about what makes life go well. For a plant's life to go well it needs enough sunlight and water, a good temperature etc. We are interested in what makes life go well (or worse) for human beings.

Component 2: Moral Thinking

What is it to think morally rather than practically? This module will introduce students to different ways of thinking about moral philosophy. We will explore what moral thinking is by looking at various forms of ethical theory. From feminist ethics to moral scepticism, we will ask what moral values are, and which values are crucial to moral thinking.

Some of the questions we'll explore in this module are:

- What is moral thinking?
- How important is trust?
- Should we be sceptical about moral theory?
- What are our obligations to other people?
- Is there a link between psychological breakdown and wicked actions?



Assessment:

Essay

1 essay for each component. Each essay is worth 25%.

Each essay is 1500 words max.

Exam

2 exam questions, answer 1 question for each component.

Worth 50%.

Recommended Reading List:

A general helpful resource for this course is the Stanford Encyclopaedia entry on Well-being. You should read this at least once during the course. This can be found online here:

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/well-being/>

An extensive and detailed reading list will be made available at the start of the module. But among the essential readings for the early weeks of the course will be:

- Plato – Crito <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/crito.html>
- Chris Heathwood – The Reduction of Sensory Pleasure to Desire
<https://philpapers.org/rec/HEATRO>
- Stanford Encyclopaedia Entry on Pleasure, particularly sections 2 and 3.
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pleasure/>