

PIU11042— Topics in Philosophy II B (Columbia Dual BA)

Module Information	
Module Code	PIU11042
Module Title	Topics in Philosophy II B
Department	Philosophy
Year Group	Junior Freshman
Module Personnel	Dr. Ashley Shaw
Academic Year	2026-27
Credit Weighting	10 ECTS
Semester	2
Contact Hours	26 hours (22 hours of lectures; 4 hours of tutorials)

Module Content	
Module Description	This module has two components, each exploring a different topic in philosophy. Component 1: Philosophy of Emotion An ancient picture of our psychology contrasts rationality with emotion. Both are central to human life. To be rational involves (in part) being sensitive to reasons on which we reflect and deliberate. But what is it to have emotions like fear, anger, joy, guilt and so on? How do they relate to other states of mind like belief, pleasure, intention, or desire? What's the point of having various emotions? Do emotions inform us in some way about the world? Are emotions themselves rational or justified, and can they contribute to making certain actions rational? Or are emotions a distorting form of interference in an otherwise orderly psychology? We will examine a few philosophical theories of emotion, drawing where appropriate on work in cognitive science, to enrich our philosophical investigation. Confronting these questions about the nature of emotion, will also shed light on and force us to consider issues about the nature of rational agency. Component 2: Self-Knowledge Self-knowledge concerns the knowledge we have about ourselves. Since Descartes, it has been suggested that we

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	have a special kind of immediate knowledge of our own mental states. For example, to know whether one is in pain, one can simply attend to one's experiences. To know whether one believes it will rain tomorrow, one weighs up the evidence for the claim. But to know whether someone else is in pain, or if they believe it will rain tomorrow, we must rely on evidence, e.g. from what they say or do. Is this asymmetry genuine? If so, what explains it? This component examines some of the philosophical mysteries of self-knowledge.
Module Learning Aims	The aim of this module will be to introduce students to the main theories and arguments in two areas of philosophy, one on the philosophy of emotion and another on the relationship between the philosophy of mind and epistemology.
Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this module, students will be able to: describe and critically evaluate the relevant theories and arguments; develop philosophical arguments; carefully read and evaluate philosophical articles and texts; develop philosophical views about questions and topics in areas covered.
Indicative Reading / Resources	Component 1: Scarantino, Andrea and Ronald de Sousa, "Emotion", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2021 Edition). Component 2: Gertler, Brie, "Self-Knowledge", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

Assessment

Assessment Components	2 x coursework essays and 1 x exam.
Assessment Details	Two essays (one from each component) worth 25% each. Exam will involve answering two exam questions (one from each component) worth 25% each (50% total).

Additional Information

Prerequisites	None.
Co-requisites	None.



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