



## Literature Review (Columbia Dual BA) | PIU44200

Year	Senior Sophister
ECTS Credits	30 (Capstone)
Contact Hours	TBC
Pre-requisite	None
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Professor John Divers
Contact Email	diversj@tcd.ie

### Module Learning Outcomes with embedded Graduate Attributes:

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- LO1.** Engage in independent and self-directed learning about a topic of philosophical interest.
- LO2.** Describe the major positions and arguments in current philosophical literature on a selected topic.
- LO3.** Compare, categorise and synthesise the major positions and arguments in current philosophical literature on a selected topic.
- LO4.** Independently evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of a variety of philosophical positions and arguments.
- LO5.** Express clearly and concisely the range of current positions and arguments on a selected topic and their relative strengths and weaknesses.

### Description of Capstone Project:

The literature review, which will serve as the TCD capstone for students in the TCD Columbia Dual BA programme in Philosophy, is intended to be preparatory to the Columbia thesis – an original philosophical research project that is 30-40 pages in length. Of course, the Columbia thesis is optional: Dual BA students are not required to write a Columbia thesis. Rather, if Dual BA students do choose to write a Columbia thesis, then the TCD capstone can serve as a preparatory document with respect to that. If Dual BA students choose not to write a Columbia thesis, then the TCD capstone literature review will be a standalone piece of work.

During the summer preceding the fourth year, students will be asked to select a general topic or question that can be pursued both in this literature review and, if they so choose, in the



Columbia thesis. Students may select any philosophical topic they choose, provided that suitable supervisors can be found at both TCD and Columbia. Students will be required by the first week of TCD semester 1 after their first year at Columbia to propose (in no more than two pages) a topic or possible topic for the Capstone. (If students fail to propose a topic by the required date, then they will be subject to a 5 mark penalty). A supervisor will then be assigned two weeks after that. There will then be an early meeting with the supervisor confirming the topic. Working largely independently, students will prepare a substantial reading list of recent philosophical literature on the chosen topic. (For projects in the history of philosophy, the reading list should also include the most important primary sources.) Students will then write a review of this literature, categorizing, comparing, and contrasting the various arguments and positions and assessing their strengths and weaknesses. Students are required to meet their Capstone supervisor at least once – on pain of a 5 mark penalty. The word-count for the Capstone will be 7,000-8,000 words. The TCD Capstone would be due in the last week of semester 1.

## Timeline

1. Initial proposal (up to 2 pages), including identification of suitable supervisors in TCD and Columbia, by Monday of Orientation week in TCD (08.09.2025)
2. TCD supervisor appointed within two weeks of receipt of proposal (i.e. by start of second week of semester 1 teaching).
3. Meeting with TCD supervisor to be arranged within one week of appointment (i.e. by start of third week of semester 1 teaching).
4. Submission of literature review 11.59pm (GMT) on the Friday of the (official) last week of semester 1 (05.12.2025).

## Teaching and Learning Methods (including details of supervision):

Supervision will be conducted remotely, by email and/or teleconference. While students are expected to work largely independently, supervisors will provide advice on selecting a suitable topic, finding appropriate sources for the reading list, and synthesising the results in an acceptable form. Supervisors will provide detailed feedback on the proposed reading list.

The total length should be 7,000–8,000 words, excluding bibliography. This may consist of one long piece of writing, similar to a published literature review (e.g., Analysis Reviews or Philosophy Compass) or philosophy encyclopedia article (e.g., Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Alternatively, the review may consist of several shorter pieces, each analysing and critiquing one family of positions and arguments on the topic. Other formats may be permitted by agreement between the student and the TCD supervisor. The literature review will be due during the last week of TCD semester 1.