

## Metaphysics | PIU44043

Year	Senior Sophister
ECTS Credits	5
Contact Hours	22 (11 x 2-hour seminars)
Pre-requisite	None
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Professor John Divers
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### Module Outline:

The metaphysical concern with being, at its most general, naturally includes questions of what there is and how things are. But what of the modal questions? What things could there have been? How might things have been? Are there some matters that must be so? Modal realists hold that modality is real: a full account of the world includes modal facts. Modal antirealists reject that view: whatever our modal thought is doing it is not representing modal features of reality. Against some historical background, we investigate the debate between modal realists and their opponents as it has developed over the last 100 years, from the time of logical positivism to the present day. The central narrative will be built around the modal antirealist, Quine, and responses to his work.

### Assessment:

1 x Essay (end of module) 50%: 1 x Examination (end of module) 50%.

### Recommended Reading List:

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

- Quine, W.V.O (1948). On What There Is. Review of Metaphysics 2, pp.21-38.  
Reprinted in From a Logical Point of View. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1-19.
- Quine, W.V.O (1951). Two Dogmas of Empiricism, Philosophical Review 60.  
Reprinted in From a Logical point of View, Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press (1953, 20-46)