

PH381-15 Philosophy of the Emotions

21/22

Department

Philosophy

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Keith Ansell-Pearson

Credit value

15

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

To introduce students to some core topics and issues in the philosophy of the emotions and with reference to the history of philosophy. The module will begin by discussing the nature and importance of the emotions and the relation between the emotions and allied notions such as the passions and the feelings. Key figures to be looked at include: Stoics such as Seneca, Spinoza, Hume, Nietzsche, Bergson, William James, Heidegger, and Sartre.

Module aims

Key topics to be examined include: the relation between reason and the emotions or passions; the therapy of the emotions/ passions; the difference between sad passions and joyful passions; the physiology and psychology of the emotions; different theories of the emotions; and the nature of creative emotion. Particular emotions to be studied include: anger, jealousy, sympathy and compassion; and anxiety.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Programme of the Main Lecture Topics (with two lectures per week on each key topic):

Week 1: Introduction to the Emotions & the Passions in the History of Philosophy; What is an Emotion?

Week 2: The Ancients on the Emotions: Aristotle and the Stoics, including Seneca on Anger

Week 3: Spinoza's Therapy of the Passions: Cultivating Joyful Passions

Week 4: Hume on the Passions and on the Relation between the Passions and Reason

Week 5: Rousseau and the Emotions: An Education in Pity

Reading Week

Week 7: Schopenhauer and Nietzsche on the Sympathetic Affects and Compassion

Week 8: Bergson on Creative Emotion

Week 9: Jealousy: Proust and Hacker

Week 10: Heidegger on Moods: Fear, Anxiety, and Boredom

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Students will have cultivated a scholarly and sophisticated understanding of key topics and issues in the philosophy of the emotions, and with reference to several key figures and contributions in the history of philosophy;
- they will have developed an appreciation of different and competing theories of the emotions and be able to assess their relative merits and demerits;
- they will also have cultivated the need to develop fresh and independent readings of the materials the module focuses attention on.

Indicative reading list

Primary Material

Seneca, Anger, Mercy, and Revenge (University of Chicago Press).

Descartes, The Passions of the Soul (Hackett).

Spinoza, Ethics (Penguin), books three and four.

Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature (Oxford University Press), book two.

Rousseau, Emile (Penguin).

Nietzsche, Dawn: Thoughts on the Presumptions of Morality (Stanford University Press), book two.

Bergson, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion (University of Notre Dame Press), chapter one.

William James, What is an Emotion? (Createspace Independent Publishing).

Heidegger, Being and Time (Basil Blackwell).

A sample of Key Secondary Literature:

Martha Nussbaum, Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions (Cambridge UP, 2003).

John M. Cooper, Reason and Emotion: Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory (Princeton University Press, 1998).

Peter Goldie, The Emotions: A Philosophical Exploration (Clarendon Press, 2002).

Peter Goldie (ed.), The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion (Oxford UP, 2012).

Alix Cohen & Robert Stern (eds.), *Thinking about the Emotions: A Philosophical History* (Oxford UP, 2017).

Robert C. Solomon, *The Passions: Emotions and the Meaning of Life* (Hackett, 1993).

P. M. S. Hacker, *The Passions: A Study of Human Nature* (Wiley Blackwell, 2017).

Elizabeth S. Radcliffe, *Hume, Passion, and Action* (Oxford UP, 2017).

Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy* (Oxford UP, 2000).

Aurelia Armstrong, 'The Passions, Power, and Practical Philosophy: Spinoza and Nietzsche contra the Stoics', *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 44: 1, 2013.

Subject specific skills

- should be able to discuss clearly in speech and in writing the issues raised by their close reading and critical analysis of the set texts and materials. They should be able to engage with these texts in a way that demonstrates relevant and appropriate philosophical and scholarly skills. The students should also be able to critically evaluate the relevant secondary literature.
- be able to analyse and critically evaluate the key ideas and arguments presented in the primary texts and materials, and come to an independent assessment of their merits with the aid of relevant secondary literature. The students should have an appreciation of how key figures in the history of philosophy have shaped our understanding of the emotions and developed different insights into the nature of the emotions and the passions.

Transferable skills

- Students should have a sound and incisive understanding and knowledge of several key topics and issues in the philosophy of the emotions, and an informed appreciation of how ancient and modern philosophers have made seminal contributions to our understanding of the emotions, including developing a therapy of the emotions and the passions. Students should also be able to offer relevant support for and critical responses to the arguments and views set out in the texts and materials examined during the module.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	18 sessions of 1 hour (69%)
Seminars	8 sessions of 1 hour (31%)
Total	26 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Assessed Exercise 1 (500 words)	10%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Assessed Exercise 2 (500 words)	10%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Essay (2500 words) 2500 word essay	80%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			

Feedback on assessment

Students will have their exercises and essays returned with comments.

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- UHIA-V1V8 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)
 - Year 3 of V1V8 History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)
 - Year 4 of V1V8 History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad and a term in Venice)
- Year 3 of UHIA-V1V7 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 4 of UPHA-VL79 BA in Philosophy with Psychology (with Intercalated year)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 4 of UPHA-VQ73 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature with Intercalated Year

This module is Option list C for:

- Year 3 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- Year 4 of UHIA-V1V6 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad)

This module is Option list E for:

- Year 2 of UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law