

# PH145-15 Plato and Descartes

**23/24**

**Department**

Philosophy

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 1

**Module leader**

Johannes Roessler

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

---

## Description

### Introductory description

PH145 - Plato and Descartes

The module introduces students to the ideas, arguments, and themes of two classic texts from the History of Philosophy: Plato's Republic and Descartes' Meditations on First Philosophy.

### Module aims

The main module aim is to introduce students to the ideas, arguments, and themes of two classic texts from the History of Philosophy: Plato's Republic and Descartes' Meditations on First Philosophy. The method is to do this by interactive lectures and seminars. Seminars involve guided close reading and analysis of the primary texts and discussions of issues raised by the texts.

### 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.

#### Lecture Schedule

Week 1. Lectures 1 & 2 on Plato's Republic

Week 2. Lectures 3 & 4 on Plato's Republic

Week 3. Lectures 5 & 6 on Plato's Republic

Week 4. Lectures 7 & 8 on Plato's Republic

Week 5. Lectures 1 & 2 on Descartes' Meditations

Week 6. No lectures

Week 7. Lectures 3 & 4 on Descartes' Meditations

Week 8. Lectures 5 & 6 on Descartes' Meditations

Week 9. Lectures 7 & 8 on Descartes' Meditations

Week 10. Lectures 9 & 10 on Descartes' Meditations

## **Learning outcomes**

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

- Students should have the ability to understand philosophical issues and arguments that figure in the background to contemporary work.
- Students should have the ability to critically engage with philosophical ideas and arguments.
- Students should have the ability to articulate philosophical issues and arguments
- Students should have the ability to communicate information (verbally and in written form) to people both expert and non-expert in the field
- Students should have the ability to analyse, evaluate, critique and apply complex information gathered from reading, reflection, reasoning or communication
- Students should have the ability to effectively manage schedules and deadlines.

## **Indicative reading list**

Plato's Republic

Primary Texts: Plato, Republic. Translated with an introduction by C.D.C. Reeve. Indianapolis, Hackett. Plato, Republic. Translated by Tom Griffith. Introduction by G.R.F. Ferrari. Cambridge, C. U. P. Recommended secondary texts: Pappas, N. 2015. Routledge Philosophical Guidebook to Plato's Republic. London, Routledge. Annas, J. 1981. An Introduction to Plato's Republic. Oxford, O.U.P. Kraut, R. 1992. The Cambridge Companion to Plato. Cambridge, C.U.P. Ferrari, G.R.F. 2007. The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic. Cambridge, C.U.P. Santos, G. 2006. The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic. Oxford, Blackwell. White, N. P. 1979. A Companion to Plato's Republic. Indianapolis, Hackett. Descartes' Meditations on First Philosophy Primary Text: Descartes, Meditations (with selections from the Objections and Replies). Translated with an introduction by John Cottingham. Cambridge, C.U.P. Recommended secondary texts: Hatfield, G. 2014. Routledge Philosophical Guidebook to Descartes' Meditations. (2nd ed.) London, Routledge. Cottingham, J. 1986. Descartes. Oxford, Blackwell. Cottingham, J.(ed.) 1998. Descartes: Oxford Readings in Philosophy. Oxford, O.U.P. Williams, B. 1978. Descartes: The Project of Pure Enquiry. Harmondsworth, Penguin. Wilson, M.D. 1976. Descartes: The Arguments of the Philosophers. London, Routledge.

## Subject specific skills

- (i) The ability to understand philosophical issues and arguments that figure in the background to contemporary work.
- (ii) The ability to critically engage with philosophical ideas and arguments;
- (iii) The ability to articulate philosophical issues and arguments;
- (iv) The ability to read historical philosophical texts, including an ability to understand and explain technical philosophical vocabulary from these historical texts, an awareness of debates about the historical context of these texts, and of debates about interpretation of certain key terms.

## Transferable skills

- (i) The ability to communicate information (verbally and in written form) to people both expert and non-expert in the field.
  - (ii) The ability to analyse, evaluate, critique and apply complex information gathered from reading, reflection, reasoning or communication.
  - (iii) The ability to effectively manage schedules and deadlines.
- 

## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	18 sessions of 1 hour (12%)
Seminars	8 sessions of 1 hour (5%)
Private study	124 hours (83%)
Total	150 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 A4

	Weighting	Study time
1750 word essay 2	50%	
1750 word essay on Descartes		
1750 word essay 1	50%	
1750 word essay on Plato		

## Feedback on assessment

Detailed written feedback will be provided on the two summative essays, including advice on how to improve written work.

---

## Availability

### Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-VL78 BA in Philosophy with Psychology
- Year 1 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
- UPHA-V700 Undergraduate Philosophy
  - Year 1 of V700 Philosophy
  - Year 1 of V700 Philosophy

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy

This module is Option list B for:

- UMAA-GV17 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 1 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 1 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 1 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy

This module is Option list C for:

- UMAA-GV17 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 1 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 1 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
  - Year 1 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy