

PH9GX-30 Philosophies of the Future

23/24

Department

Philosophy

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Tobias Keiling

Credit value

30

Module duration

9 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The future is an important and recurring topic of modern philosophy, and of 20th century Continental philosophy in particular. The philosophical questions range from the metaphysics of time and history to ethical questions regarding the future existence of humankind.

Module aims

The module offers an advanced introduction to different ways in which the metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical status of future times have been discussed in 20th century Continental philosophy.

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.

The metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical significance of future times is discussed in quite different contexts. One major distinction in this regard is between discussions that situate the future with regard to accounts of time and temporality and those that discuss it in the context of the philosophy of history: is the future mainly a temporal or a historical category? Is it to be understood through the three dimensions of lived time (past, present, future) or through notions of historical

change (such as progress, renewal, eschatology, or utopia).

Another set of question concerns the relation of the past and the present to the future. Is the future mainly a continuation of what came before? Or does it potentially differ so radically from what has been as to be marked by utter indeterminacy? What does it mean to think of the future as constitutively "open"?

A third set of questions concerns our knowledge of the future. Philosophical accounts of future times are typically non-predictive. Rather than predict what the future will be like, they reflect on the conditions, limits, and forms of our knowledge of the future. But what are these? And is there a particular form of knowledge or intentionality characteristic of our access to the future?

We will discuss these and other questions with the help of some of the most important philosophers of 20th century Continental philosophy, such as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Jacques Derrida.

Learning outcomes

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

- have a sound and scholarly understanding of the different problems associated with a philosophical account of future times
- be able to understand and apply key concepts from the works studied in oral and written work
- be able to discuss important themes and problems in the different accounts introduced
- know about current research questions regarding the authors studied and problems in the philosophy of future times

Indicative reading list

Excerpts from

- Husserl's "Lectures on the Phenomenology of Time-Consciousness" and his so-called "Kaizo-essays";
- Heidegger's "Being and Time" and "Contributions to Philosophy";
- Derrida's "Politics of Friendship" and "Rogues";
- Jonas' "The Imperative of Responsibility";
as well as other, smaller texts.

Research element

The module integrates research in two complementary ways:

- the module will address different interpretations and open questions in exegetical and historical research on the authors studied;
- the metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical meaning of future times is a relevant and important but arguably understudied topic of current philosophical research, particularly in the continental tradition.

Subject specific skills

Close textual reading skills.
Advanced reasoning skills.
Fluency in essay writing.

Transferable skills

Strong presentation skills, verbally and in writing.
Skills in logical and analytical reasoning.
Skills in creative thinking and critical evaluation of ideas and arguments.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	18 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	8 sessions of 1 hour (3%)
Private study	274 hours (91%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Private study and essay preparation

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time
5000 word essay	100%	

Feedback on assessment

Students will have their essays returned with written comments. Students can share or discuss a one-page plan for each essay and will receive either verbal or written comments (as preferred).

Availability

Courses

This module is Core option list A for:

- Year 1 of TPHA-V7P2 Postgraduate Taught Continental Philosophy

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of TPHA-V7PM Postgraduate Taught Philosophy
- TPHA-V7PN Postgraduate Taught Philosophy and the Arts
 - Year 1 of V7PN Philosophy and the Arts
 - Year 2 of V7PN Philosophy and the Arts

This module is Option list E for:

- Year 1 of TPHA-V7PM Postgraduate Taught Philosophy