

PH212-15 Applied Ethics

24/25

Department

Philosophy

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Heather Widdows

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

Multiple

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

In this module we address key ethical issues, issues where people disagree and there is no fixed consensus.

- Is it wrong to sell parts of people?
- Is it ok to keep pets?
- When do robots have rights?
- Is there a right to die? Is there a duty to help someone die?
- Is consent enough to make sex ethical? What counts as consent?

As individuals we have to make decisions about what we think is ok, and what to do. As a society we have to collectively determine what practices are ok. What practices do we tolerate, or even encourage, and what practices do we prohibit with public sanction and laws.

This module will give you a chance to think about and explore these complex problems.

Module aims

To introduce students to a set of central topics, thinkers, cases and evidence in applied ethics. To provide students with the skills to make an argument which engages with philosophical theory and uses cases and evidence to justify or critique theory.

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.

Illustrative syllabus

Week 1: Introduction: Good action and effective policy

Week 2: Selling people and their parts

Week 3: Helping people die

Week 4: Animals and persons

Week 5: Ableism and disability

Week 6: READING WEEK

Week 7: Designing people

Week 8: Sex and desire

Week 9: Robots and their rights

Week 10: Porn and the pornification of culture

Learning outcomes

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

- Subject knowledge and understanding: Students should be able to understand and differentiate positions on central issues in applied ethics, and offer relevant support for, and criticisms of, these views from cases studies and empirical evidence.
- Key skills: students should be able to communicate clearly and substantively in speech and in writing on the questions addressed in the module.
- Cognitive skills: students should be able to identify the most important claims within readings, understand the structure of arguments, test views for strengths and weaknesses, make pertinent use of case studies and empirical evidence to explain and test theories..
- Subject-specific skills: students should be able to pursue and organize philosophical research using a range of sources (print and electronic media, real world case studies and empirical evidence), and show the ability to engage independently in ethical debate.

Indicative reading list

There is no main text for the module. Instead, the module will be based on a list of selected readings. Useful companions and collections include:

- Frey, R. G. and Wellman, C. H. (eds.) A Companion to Applied Ethics (Blackwell, 2003).
- LaFollette, H. (ed.) Ethics in Practice (Blackwell 2002).
- Singer, P. (ed.) A Companion to Ethics (Blackwell, 1991).
- Wellman, C. H. and Cohen, A. (eds.) Contemporary Debates in Applied Ethics (Blackwell 2005).
- Skorupski, J. (ed.) The Routledge Companion to Ethics (Routledge, 2010).

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

1. Understanding key topics and arguments in applied ethics.
2. Comprehensive understanding across a range of views, showing engagement with topics, rather than single papers.
3. Being able to defend or critique an ethical position in applied ethics, using material from key philosophical theories and thinkers, supported with real world cases and empirical evidence.

Transferable skills

1. Understanding and synthesising of complex material quickly and succinctly.
 2. Using empirical cases and evidence to illustrate positions.
 3. Being able to articulate key points in discussion.
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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 2 hours (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 DA

	Weighting	Study time
Participation and engagement	10%	
Students will be assessed for their participation and engagement in seminars in order to foster particular skills, for example, pertinent oral intervention, and to provide preparation and feedback for the final exam assessment.		

Online Examination	90%
~Platforms - AEP	

- Online examination: No Answerbook required

Assessment group R

	Weighting	Study time
Online Examination	100%	
~Platforms - AEP		

- Online examination: No Answerbook required

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided throughout the module, for example:

1. By seminar tutors to groups and individuals in seminars.
2. By the lecturer in lectures; each lecture has 3 or 4 discussion points with feedback, that complement the discussion questions of the seminar.
3. In feedback hours, held weekly in term time by seminar tutors and the lecturer.
4. Written feedback on exams.

[Past exam papers for PH212](#)

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

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

This module is Core optional for:

- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
 - Year 2 of V7MR Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major)
 - Year 2 of V7MP Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite)
 - Year 2 of V7MP Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite)
 - Year 2 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
 - Year 2 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
 - Year 2 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)

This module is Optional for:

- UPHA-VL78 BA in Philosophy with Psychology
 - Year 2 of VL78 Philosophy with Psychology
 - Year 3 of VL78 Philosophy with Psychology
- Year 4 of UPHA-VL79 BA in Philosophy with Psychology (with Intercalated year)
- UHIA-V1V5 Undergraduate History and Philosophy
 - Year 2 of V1V5 History and Philosophy
 - Year 3 of V1V5 History and Philosophy
- Year 4 of UHIA-V1V6 Undergraduate History and Philosophy (with Year Abroad)
- UMAA-GV17 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy
 - Year 2 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
 - Year 2 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
 - Year 2 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
 - Year 3 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
 - Year 3 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
 - Year 3 of GV17 Mathematics and Philosophy
- UMAA-GV18 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Intercalated Year
 - Year 4 of GV18 Mathematics and Philosophy with Intercalated Year
 - Year 4 of GV18 Mathematics and Philosophy with Intercalated Year
- UMAA-GV19 Undergraduate Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations
 - Year 2 of GV19 Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations
 - Year 3 of GV19 Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations
 - Year 4 of GV19 Mathematics and Philosophy with Specialism in Logic and Foundations
- UPHA-V700 Undergraduate Philosophy
 - Year 2 of V700 Philosophy
 - Year 2 of V700 Philosophy
 - Year 3 of V700 Philosophy
 - Year 3 of V700 Philosophy
- Year 4 of UPHA-V701 Undergraduate Philosophy (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of UPHA-V702 Undergraduate Philosophy (with Work Placement)
- UIPA-V5L8 Undergraduate Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
 - Year 2 of V5L8 Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
 - Year 2 of V5L8 Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
 - Year 3 of V5L8 Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
 - Year 3 of V5L8 Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 4 of UIPA-V5L9 Undergraduate Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development (with

Intercalated Year)

- UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature
 - Year 2 of VQ72 Philosophy and Literature
 - Year 3 of VQ72 Philosophy and Literature
- Year 4 of UPHA-VQ74 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature (with Work Placement)
- Year 4 of UPHA-VQ73 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of UPHA-VL80 Undergraduate Philosophy with Psychology (with Work Placement)
- UPHA-VQ52 Undergraduate Philosophy, Literature and Classics
 - Year 2 of VQ52 Philosophy, Literature and Classics
 - Year 3 of VQ52 Philosophy, Literature and Classics
- Year 4 of UPHA-VQ53 Undergraduate Philosophy, Literature and Classics (with Work Placement)
- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
 - Year 3 of V7MR Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major)
 - Year 3 of V7MP Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite)
 - Year 3 of V7MP Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite)
 - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
 - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
 - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
- UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MS Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major) (with Intercalated Year)
 - Year 4 of V7MS Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major) (with Intercalated Year)
 - Year 4 of V7MQ Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite) with Intercalated Year
 - Year 4 of V7MM Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite) (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MH Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Economics/Philosophy Bipartite (Economics Major) (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MF Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Economics/Politics Bipartite (Economics Major) (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MI Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Philosophy/Economics Bipartite (Philosophy Major) (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MJ Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Philosophy/Politics Bipartite (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MG Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Politics/Economics Bipartite (Politics Major) (with Intercalated year)