PH332-15 Sartre and Existentialism

24/25

Department
> Philosophy

Level
> Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader
> Andrew Cooper

Credit value
> 15

Module duration
> 10 weeks

Assessment
> 20% coursework, 80% exam

Study location
> University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module introduces students to existentialism, a major current in twentieth century philosophy that originates in the work of Jean-Paul Sartre. Existentialism had an enormous impact that extended beyond academic philosophy to art, politics, and wider culture. By grounding the major questions of philosophy in the texture of everyday human experience, it confronts us with a stunning question: what does it mean to live an authentic life? The module begins with a study of Sartre's existential phenomenology and then considers responses to Sartre's work by existentialists including Frantz Fanon and Simone de Beauvoir. A range of Sartre's original ideas will be covered, including consciousness, bad faith, freedom, knowledge of other minds, love, sexuality, and the nature of value. The main text is Sartre's central philosophical work, Being and Nothingness, supplemented by the work of other existentialists including Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks and Beauvoir's The Ethics of Ambiguity.

Module aims

To introduce students to a major strand of 20th century philosophy through a study of central works of its main exponent.
To explore the tensions and possibilities within existentialism by examining early responses to Sartre's arguments.

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 module will focus on a set of issues central to Sartrean existentialism, using Sartre's work Being and Nothingness as the main textual basis. It will also explore responses to Sartrean existentialism, using texts from other philosophers such as Fanon and Beauvoir. Topics normally include:

Sartre's notion of prereflective self-consciousness
Radical freedom, reasons, and value
The idea of bad faith
Conscious emotions
Experiencing others as subjects
Sartre's ethics
Fanon and the colonised other
Beauvoir's ethics of ambiguity

Learning outcomes

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

- understand Sartre's existential phenomenology
- identify the important claims within readings, and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses
- critically reflect on the texture and structure of their lived experience using Sartre's existential phenomenology
- examine different views of Sartre's argument, and offer relevant support for and critical responses to those views

Indicative reading list

Beauvoir, Simone de (1948) The Ethics of Ambiguity (Secaucus: Citadel Press).
Beauvoir, Simone de (2011) The Second Sex (New York: Vintage).
Fanon, Frantz (2008) Black Skin, White Masks (New York: Grove Press).
Eshleman, Matthew and Lui, Constance (eds.) (2020) The Sartrean Mind (London: Routledge).
Gardner, Sebastian (2009) Sartre's 'Being and Nothingness' (London: Continuum).
McCulloch, Gregory (1994) Using Sartre (London: Routledge).
Moran, Richard (2001) Authority and Estrangement (Princeton: Princeton UP).
Korsgaard, Christine (2009) Self-Constitution (Oxford: OUP).
Poellner, Peter (2012) 'Early Sartre on Freedom and Ethics', European Journal of Philosophy.
Sarte, Jean-Paul (1980) Existentialism and Humanism (London: Methuen).
Sartre, Jean-Paul (1992) Notebooks for an Ethics (Chicago: Chicago UP).
Sartre, Jean-Paul (2002) Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions (London: Routledge).
Sartre, Jean-Paul (2003) Being and Nothingness (London: Routledge).
Sartre, Jean-Paul (2020). Being and Nothingness (London: Routledge).
Webber, Jonathan (2009) The Existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre (London: Routledge).

Webber, Jonathan ed. (2011) Reading Sartre (London: Routledge).
Webber, Jonathan (2018) Rethinking Existentialism (Oxford: OUP).
Zahavi, Dan (1999) Self-Awareness and Alterity (Evanston: Northwestern UP).

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

Pursue and organize philosophical research using a range of sources (print and electronic media), documenting research carefully, and showing the ability to engage independently in philosophical debate.

Transferable skills

Students should be able to communicate clearly and substantively in speech and in writing on the questions addressed in the module.

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 DA

	Weighting	Study time
1000 word reflective piece	20%	
2 hour examination	80%	
~Platforms - AEP		

- Online examination: No Answerbook required

Feedback on assessment

Feedback on reflective piece will be provided via Tabula, addressing standard areas of evaluation and individual content. Students will also receive individualised examination feedback in Tabula.

[Past exam papers for PH332](#)

Availability

Courses

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 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 VQ52 Philosophy, Literature and Classics
- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
  - ○ Year 2 of V7MR Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major)
  - ○ 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 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)
  - ○ Year 3 of V7MR Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major)
  - ○ 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)
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  - ○ 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 UPHA-V7MV Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Work Placement)
- UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
    - ○ Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
    - ○ Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
    - ○ Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
    - ○ Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law