

PH107-15 Problems in Philosophy and Literature

26/27

Department

Philosophy

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

Eileen John

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

Multiple

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

PH107 - Problems in Philosophy and Literature

Module aims

This module is the 1st-year, jointly taught module that is core for the BA in Philosophy and Literature and BA in Philosophy, Literature and Classics. It is open as an option for other 1st-year students. It is designed to introduce students to combined study of the disciplines. We discuss basic conceptions of philosophy and literature and how they relate, and we address four specific topics of importance to this relation (e.g., emotion and reason, conceptions of reality, self-knowledge, ethics and aesthetics, poetry and thought, education and authority).

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.

Sample topics and texts

Philosophy and Literature: basic ideas and questions

Emotion and reason (core reading J. M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals*)

Japanese aesthetics and critique of enlightenment (core reading Jun'ichirō Tanizaki, *In'ei raisan / In Praise of Shadows*)

Belief and unbelief (core reading Flannery O'Connor, short stories)

Empiricism and empire (core reading Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*)

Education, religion and authority (core reading Muriel Spark, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*)

Aesthetics and ethics of beauty (core reading Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*)

Poetic language (selected poems of Emily Dickinson)

Learning outcomes

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

- Understand how central themes are addressed in the core texts, and understand how philosophical and literary concerns combine in addressing these themes;
- Articulate their own views on how to interpret and evaluate the achievements of the core texts, showing ability to support claims with textual detail, enter into debate and respond constructively to other points of view;
- Critically analyse and evaluate philosophical and interpretive arguments on central issues in philosophy and literature;
- Recognize the distinctive contributions made by texts that have combined philosophical and literary significance.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Interdisciplinary

Co-taught across two departments.

International

Core texts can be drawn from non-UK and non-European traditions (e.g., works by Japanese, Argentinian and North American writers have been core texts on the module).

Subject specific skills

- Understanding how to bring the disciplines of philosophy and literature together, linking philosophical concepts and arguments to literary works and considering the relevance of literary forms to philosophical expression and inquiry
- Ability to critically discuss literary and philosophical texts
- Ability to support claims with textual detail, enter into debate and respond constructively to other points of view

Transferable skills

- Close reading, analysis and interpretation of complex texts
 - Ability to explain and support one's own claims
 - Communication, both oral and written
-

Study

Teaching split

Provider	Weighting
English and Comparative Literary Studies	50%
Philosophy	50%

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour 30 minutes (9%)
Private study	136 hours 30 minutes (91%)
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.

Assessment group A7

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Written Assignment (2500 words)	90%		Yes (extension)
Written Assignment (500 words)	10%		Yes (extension)
Close reading exercise			

Assessment group R2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
3000 word essay	100%		Yes (extension)

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback on essays (using standard Philosophy feedback cover-page or feedback on tabula)

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature
- Year 1 of UPHA-VQ52 Undergraduate Philosophy, Literature and Classics

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of UPHA-VL78 BA in Philosophy with Psychology
- 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
- UPHA-V700 Undergraduate Philosophy
 - Year 1 of V700 Philosophy
 - Year 1 of V700 Philosophy