

PH948-30 Kant's Critique of Pure Reason

26/27

Department

Philosophy

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Stephen Houlgate

Credit value

30

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Immanuel Kant is one of the most important and influential modern philosophers; indeed he is one of the greatest thinkers of all time. He made ground-breaking contributions to epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, political philosophy, aesthetics and philosophy of religion, and his thought paved the way, directly or indirectly, for many of the most significant philosophical movements of the 19th and 20th centuries, including German Idealism and Romanticism, phenomenology and neo-Kantianism. In this module we will study Kant's first great work, the Critique of Pure Reason (1781, 2nd ed. 1787), in which he undertook his famous "Copernican Revolution" by arguing that objects of possible experience conform to the categories of understanding (rather than the other way round).

Module aims

We will study, among other things, the following topics: Kant's argument in the Transcendental Aesthetic that experience of objects presupposes a priori forms of intuition; his derivation of the categories of thought from the functions of judgement (the so-called "Metaphysical Deduction"); the Transcendental Deduction, in which Kant argues that categories are required for objects of experience; Kant's notorious conception of the "thing in itself", and his famous and influential

account of the “antinomies” of reason. Where appropriate, we will also consider the similarities and differences between Kant’s thought and that of other philosophers, such as Leibniz, Hume, Hegel and Nietzsche. No prior knowledge of Kant is required to take this module, and all students are welcome, whatever philosophical tradition they come from.

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.

weeks 1 - 2: Introduction to Kant's critical project week 3: Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic week 4: The derivation of the categories of thought weeks 5 - 6: The Transcendental Deduction of the categories weeks 7 - 8: the Schemata and Analogies of Experience weeks 9 - 10: The Ideas of Reason and the Antinomies

Learning outcomes

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

- Students will have a systematic and advanced understanding of key issues in Kant's theoretical philosophy
- Students will be able to read and interpret central sections of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason; present their own point of view on them in clear prose.
- Students will be able to analyse and critically evaluate Kant's doctrines; assess the textual accuracy and philosophical strength of different interpretations of Kant's doctrines.
- Students will be able to 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.

Indicative reading list

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

Subject specific skills

An ability to understand and assess the arguments in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. An ability to relate Kant's arguments to those of other thinkers, such as Spinoza and Hegel, and to assess their relative merits.

Transferable skills

An ability to understand and assess complex arguments. An ability to read texts carefully and with intelligence. An ability to enter sympathetically into a different way of thinking and to assess its merits from an internal vantage point. An ability to explain complex ideas to others.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	10 sessions of 2 hours (7%)
Private study	280 hours (93%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

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 A7

Assessment component	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
5000 word essay	100%		Yes (extension)

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Feedback on essays will be provided on the coversheet for the essay, addressing standard areas of evaluation and individual content.

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 1 of TPHA-V7P2 Postgraduate Taught Continental Philosophy
- Year 1 of TPHA-V7PM Postgraduate Taught Philosophy
- Year 1 of TPHA-V7PN Postgraduate Taught Philosophy and the Arts