



Module Specification

Philosophy of Science, Nature, and Sustainability

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Philosophy of Science, Nature, and Sustainability

Module code: UZRYFK-15-3

Level: Level 6

For implementation from: 2023-24

UWE credit rating: 15

ECTS credit rating: 7.5

Faculty: Faculty of Health & Applied Sciences

Department: HAS Dept of Social Sciences

Partner institutions: None

Field: Philosophy

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: The module explores different approaches in the philosophy of science and the philosophy of nature, and investigates their implications for technologies of the future and sustainability.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: The aims of this module are to:

Enable students to understand the intersections and divergences between philosophy of science and philosophy of nature, and the implications these have for how we understand the natural world.

Through applying these theoretical frameworks to case studies or practical cases in the form of live briefs, the module ensures that students understand the implications that these different ideas of nature have for our practical interactions with the natural world.

Outline syllabus: The approaches of Philosophy of Nature and Philosophy of Science result in different theoretical and practical outcomes on a range of different topics. This module assesses how the different approaches of the Philosophy of Nature and Philosophy of Science have differing implications for thinking about sustainability and the related global issues in the crisis of nature. Both approaches offer a variety of ways to conceptualise nature and this module explores whether they are wholly divergent, or if there are interconnections, and if so, what these may be

Examining how different approaches characterise nature gives rise to an a set of implications that must be evaluated in order to then be applied to a range of issues, such as, sustainability and the future of nature.

The module will focus on a selection of interconnected philosophical questions and topics, such as:

What is nature?

What does it mean to take a naturalistic approach?

What is the relationship between our practices of knowledge/sense making, and what nature is like?

Should a philosophy of nature be scientific?

How should we approach intervention in nature?

Is nature simple or complex?

What is natural causality like?

Orphic vs. Promethean conceptions of nature

Historical conceptions of nature and their impact on ethical thought

Philosophy of nature and the crisis of naturalism

Philosophy of nature and the crisis of rationality

The way that we answer these different questions will have an impact on how we approach particular applied topics. This module may offer students the opportunity to present a live brief, articulating what their chosen concept of nature's implications are and to do so to a non-philosophical audience.

There are a range of relevant applied topics in relation to the question of nature with resulting implications that may be considered within this module. For instance, geo-engineering, sustainability, biodiversity. These topics can be approached from both a critical theoretical position, or examined within an ethical framework. This module demonstrates not only the applicability but also the theoretical value of philosophically assessing nature for future innovations.

Students will have the opportunity to engage with a variety of thinkers, such as Hadot, Whitehead, Coccia, Schelling, Eschenmeyer, Kielmeyer, Spinoza, Ellis, Dupree, Mumford, Marmodoro, Putnam, Carnap, Quine, Kuhn, Popper, Lakatos, Feyerabend, Hacking, Rescher, Prigogine and Stengers, Lyotard.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: The module will employ a combination of lectures, seminars, and workshops. Our pedagogy is interactive, discussion-based, and student-facing. Students are an active part of the learning process, and will be asked to contribute ideas, questions, and critical standpoints. The learning environment is designed to promote peer-to-peer support and exchange.

While teaching and learning will be predominantly classroom based, appropriate use will be made of online resources and learning environments.

The content of the module would be appropriate for the use of live briefs.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Critically assess different philosophical understandings of nature and their implications

MO2 Deconstruct and evaluate different arguments in the philosophy of science and the philosophy of nature

MO3 Apply theoretical frameworks from the philosophy of science and the philosophy of nature to practical issues

MO4 Communicate concepts and arguments from the philosophy of science and the philosophy of nature, and their implications, to a non-philosophical audience

Hours to be allocated: 150

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 117 hours

Face-to-face learning = 33 hours

Total = 150

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://uwe.rl.talis.com/index.html) via the following link <https://uwe.rl.talis.com/index.html>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Assessment for this module is as follows:

Assessment task A: a 2,000-word essay (50%).

Rationale: The essay ensures that students display the requisite knowledge of the philosophical content, and the philosophical skills required of them at this level.

Assessment task B: a 15-minute oral presentation (50%) to a non-philosophical audience (this could be the external partner who set the live-brief, to a public audience, etc.) followed by questions.

Rationale: The presentation allows the students to focus on the practical/applied dimension of the module, both in the focus of the piece and in the intended audience. The presentation element allows flexibility depending on how the module is run by a particular module lead - for example, if the module lead is using a live-brief, the topic and audience of the presentation will be determined by the live-brief partner in collaboration with the module lead; however it would also be possible to give students the option of selecting their own case study, and their own audience, to support them in gaining the transferrable skills they need for their future career path (e.g. some students may want to present to an industry audience, some to a public audience, some to young adults, etc.).

Formative feedback will be provided via online discussions, online session learning and through discussions with tutors.

Assessment tasks:**Written Assignment (First Sit)**

Description: 2,000 word essay

Weighting: 60 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Presentation (First Sit)

Description: Presentation to a non-philosophical audience (this could be the external partner who set the live-brief, to a public audience, etc.) (15 mins)

Weighting: 40 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Written Assignment (Resit)

Description: 2,000 word essay

Weighting: 60 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Presentation (Resit)

Description: Presentation to a non-philosophical audience (this could be the external partner who set the live-brief, to a public audience, etc.) (15 mins)

Weighting: 40 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Philosophy [Sep][FT][Frenchay][3yrs] BA (Hons) 2021-22

Philosophy {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Frenchay][4yrs] BA (Hons) 2020-21

Philosophy [Sep][SW][Frenchay][4yrs] BA (Hons) 2020-21

Philosophy [Sep][PT][Frenchay][6yrs] BA (Hons) 2019-20

Philosophy {Foundation} [Sep][SW][Frenchay][5yrs] BA (Hons) 2019-20

Philosophy [Sep][PT][Frenchay][6yrs] BA (Hons) 2018-19