Module Specification

Understanding our Global and Social Environment

Version: 2022-23, v1.0, 01 Dec 2021

Contents

Part 1: Information

Module title: Understanding our Global and Social Environment

Module code: UZRYFE-30-1

Level: Level 4

For implementation from: 2022-23

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

Faculty: Faculty of Health & Applied Sciences

Department: HAS Dept of Social Sciences

Partner institutions: None

Delivery locations: Frenchay Campus

Field: Philosophy

Module type: Standard

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 prepares students for the global social/political, technological, and environmental themes that they encounter throughout the programme.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: The aims of the module are to:

Introduce students to a number of contemporary global issues/crises that they may address philosophically.

Prepare students for the global social/political, technological, and environmental themes that they encounter throughout the programme.

Introduce students to a range of historical and contemporary thinkers who provide concepts potentially useful in thinking through these issues/crises.

Demonstrate the practical applicability of philosophy (historical and contemporary) to contemporary global issues and crises.

Outline syllabus: The module will be divided into three sections: Political/social environment; Technological environment; Natural environment

Each section will begin with the outline of contemporary global issues or crisis to be addressed philosophically – these are not, specifically, philosophical in nature, but are issues that anyone would recognise. The point being to demonstrate the practical applicability of philosophy to issues faced by humanity and the planet as a whole.

This will be followed by an introduction to a number of philosophers – historical and contemporary – who provide concepts useful for thinking about, and addressing, these issues and crises.

Political/social environment may include contemporary topics such as:
Political populism
Identity politics and the culture wars
Reality/perception (and denial) of immanent crises
Inequalities
Migration
Nationalism

The alt-right

Fascism and white supremacism

Fragmentation of consensus reality

Conspiracy theory

Pandemic

Mental health

Relevant thinkers may include, for example, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Adorno, Foucault, Baudrillard, Fisher, Pomarentsev, Nagle, Moishe Postone, Lyotard

Technological environment may include contemporary topics such as:

Surveillance capitalism

Transhumanism

Artificial intelligence and machine learning

Biotechnology

Human machine interfacing

The future of work

Platform economics

Decentralised autonomous organisation

Relevant thinkers may include, for example, Marx, Marcuse, Jonas, Simondon, Weiner, Deleuze, Clark, Stiegler, Kurzweil, Bostrom, Zuboff, Lanier, Srnicek, Fred Turner, Yuk Hui, Satoshi Nakamoto

Natural environment may include contemporary topics such as:

Sustainability

The sixth great extinction (omnicide)

Global warming

Ecological systems and deep ecology

Environmental ethics

Relevant thinkers may include, for example, Spinoza, Williams, Bertalanffy, Maturana and Varela, Bateson, Margulis, Capra, Lovelock, Stafford Beer.

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 Display a knowledge of key aspects of the contemporary global and social environment

MO2 Demonstrate skills in reading philosophical texts and understanding the philosophical arguments they contain

MO3 Demonstrate the ability to think critically about the global and social environment

MO4 Engage reflectively with philosophical issues relating to the global and social environment

MO5 Show transferable communication skills developed through the presentation and analysis of philosophical concepts and arguments

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Total = 300

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at readinglists.uwe.ac.uk via the following link https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/76D81950-6D75-C97D-2222-75A4CDE75BB9.html?lang=en-GB&login=1

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Assessment for this module is as follows:

Component A: a portfolio of Discussion Board contributions.

Rationale: this task retains a degree of 'controlled conditions' while assessing both subject content and a range of transferable skills. It also helps to ensure engagement across the module.

Component B: written assignments (70%) consisting of two elements, as a 1000-word essay and a 1000-word literature review.

Rationale: these tasks provide an opportunity for more in depth coursework and assess the students ability to convey ideas in an extended written format. There will be two elements to this component. One submitted at the end of the first term, and one submitted at the end of the second term.

Component A and B tasks provide opportunity for formative assessment.

Assessment components:

Portfolio - Component A (First Sit)
Description: A portfolio of Discussion Board contributions
Weighting: 30 %
Final assessment: No
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Written Assignment - Component B (First Sit)

Description: Essay

Weighting: 35 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Written Assignment - Component B (First Sit)

Description: Literature review

Weighting: 35 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Portfolio - Component A (Resit)

Description: A portfolio of Discussion Board contributions

Weighting: 30 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Written Assignment - Component B (Resit)

Description: Essay

Weighting: 35 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Written Assignment - Component B (Resit)

Description: Literature review

Weighting: 35 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MO5

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Philosophy [Sep][FT][Frenchay][3yrs] BA (Hons) 2022-23

Philosophy [Sep][SW][Frenchay][4yrs] BA (Hons) 2022-23