



Module Specification

Understanding our Global and Social Environment

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Understanding our Global and Social Environment

Module code: UZRYFE-30-1

Level: Level 4

For implementation from: 2023-24

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

College: College of Health, Science & Society

School: CHSS School 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 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

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

Portfolio one:

Portfolio of written work equivalent to 1000 words, which may include a short literature review.

Portfolio two:

Portfolio of written work equivalent to 2000 words, which may include a short essay-based submission.

Rationale:

These tasks provide an opportunity for more in depth coursework and assess students' ability to convey ideas in a written format. Typically, one portfolio will be submitted in each semester.

Formative feedback:

Formative feedback opportunities are provided through scaffolded activities building toward summative assessments.

Assessment tasks:

Portfolio (First Sit)

Description: 1000 word (equivalent) written portfolio

Weighting: 40 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

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

Portfolio (First Sit)

Description: 2000 word (equivalent) written portfolio

Weighting: 60 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

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

Portfolio (Resit)

Description: 1000 word (equivalent) written portfolio

Weighting: 40 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

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

Portfolio (Resit)

Description: 2000 word (equivalent) written portfolio

Weighting: 60 %

Final assessment: Yes

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 [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2023-24

Philosophy {Foundation}[Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2022-23

Philosophy [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2022-23