1. **Title of the module**

PHIL5690/PHIL5950 (PL569/PL595) - Metaethics

1. **School or partner institution which will be responsible for management of the module**

School of European Culture and Languages

1. **The level of the module (Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 or Level 7)**

Level 5 (PHIL5950) and Level 6 (PHIL5690)

1. **The number of credits and the ECTS value which the module represents**

30 Credits (15 ECTS)

1. **Which term(s) the module is to be taught in (or other teaching pattern)**

Autumn or Spring

1. **Prerequisite and co-requisite modules**

None

1. **The programmes of study to which the module contributes**

Optional for BA Philosophy (Single & Joint Honours)

1. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module both Level 5 and Level 6 students will be able to:**

8.1 Outline the following positions, say why one might be motivated to adopt them, discuss arguments ranged against them and show understanding of how the strengths of one might depend on the weaknesses of another:

* + 1. Naturalism and non-naturalistic versions of moral realism
    2. Non-cognitivism
    3. Error theory
    4. Moral relativism

8.2 Analyse how different accounts of moral motivation cope with different types of psychological make-up, and show understanding of how metaethics relates to issues regarding moral motivation;

8.3 Connect the debates in metaethics to other areas of concern, such as minimalism about truth and response-dependence.

**On successfully completing the module Level 6 students will also be able to:**

8.4 Approach the material in this module at a higher level and in a more critical fashion than Level 5 students;

8.5 Write and discuss whilst paying attention to articles, books and ideas, commensurate with advanced undergraduate study.

1. **The intended generic learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**

9.1 Demonstrate their skills in critical analysis and argument through an engagement with these issues, both through their reading and through listening to others;

9.2 Demonstrate their ability to make complex ideas clearly understandable in their writing;

9.3 Demonstrate their ability to make complex ideas clearly understandable in their public speaking;

9.4 Demonstrate their ability to work autonomously and to take responsibility for their learning.

**On successfully completing the module Level 6 students will also be able to:**

9.5 Demonstrate confident and professional their skills in critical analysis and argument through an engagement with these issues, both through their reading and through listening to others;

9.6 Demonstrate their ability to make complex ideas clearly understandable in their writing to both specialist and non-specialists alike;

9.7 Demonstrate their ability to make complex ideas clearly understandable in their public speaking to both specialist and non-specialists alike;

9.8 Demonstrate their ability to work autonomously and to take responsibility for their learning, whilst identifying opportunities for further development and research.

1. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

What makes it the case that certain actions, such as stealing and sharing, have ethical value? Are ethical values such as goodness and badness, compassion and cruelty, mind-independent ethical properties, properties that exist no matter what anyone thinks, desires, aims at and the like? Or are there no such ethical properties at all and when we call something good we are just expressing our emotions and feelings about a nonethical world? Are there any other positions available?

This course is designed to introduce you to some of the most exciting and interesting philosophical literature in recent years, which brings together ethics and metaphysics with a little epistemology and philosophy of language. The first half of this course will examine (what are often called) “metaethical” questions such as those above. We will then move on to discuss debates concerning moral psychology and motivation. When one says ‘charity-giving is good’ is it a matter of necessity that one will be motivated to some extent to give to charity? Or is it possible for one to make such a judgement and have no motivation at all (and for such a judgement to count as a legitimate moral judgement)? At the end we will see how these questions concerning psychology are integral to the earlier debates of metaphysics.

1. **Reading list (Indicative list, current at time of publication. Reading lists will be published annually)**

Fisher, A. and Kirchin, S. (eds.) (2006). *Arguing about Metaethics*, London: Routledge

Miller, A. (2003). *An Introduction to Contemporary* *Metaethics*, Cambridge: Polity

McNaughton, D. (1988). *Moral Vision*. Oxford: Blackwell

Shafer-Landau, R. and Cuneo, T. (eds.) (2007). *The Foundations of Ethics: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell

1. **Learning and teaching methods**

Total Contact Hours: 40

Private Study Hours: 260

Total Study Hours: 300

1. **Assessment methods**
   1. Main assessment methods

* Essay (2,500 words) – 60%
* Summary (1,000 words) – 30%
* Seminar Performance – 10%

13.2 Reassessment methods

* Reassessment Instrument: 100% Coursework

1. ***Map of module learning outcomes (sections 8 & 9) to learning and teaching methods (section12) and methods of assessment (section 13)***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module learning outcome** | 8.1 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 9.1 / 9.5 | 9.2 / 9.6 | 9.3 / 9.7 | 9.4 / 9.8 |
| **Learning/ teaching method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Private Study | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
| Lecture | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  |  |  |  |
| Seminar | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |
| **Assessment method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Essay | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |
| Summary | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** |
| Seminar Performance | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  | **x** | **x** |

1. **Inclusive module design**

The School recognises and has embedded the expectations of current equality legislation, by ensuring that the module is as accessible as possible by design. Additional alternative arrangements for students with Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs)/declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the relevant policies and support services.

The inclusive practices in the guidance (see Annex B Appendix A) have been considered in order to support all students in the following areas:

a) Accessible resources and curriculum

b) Learning, teaching and assessment methods

1. **Campus(es) or centre(s) where module will be delivered**

Canterbury

1. **Internationalisation**

In many respects, Metaethics is a globally-focussed inquiry promoting the understanding of international values. The target learning outcomes within this module are applicable worldwide. With regard to subject content, the material within the syllabus has been developed for use within an international educational setting for students who will apply the theories of Metaethics in a wide range of international contexts. The reading list also has references to international research. Our support for students is also internationally attuned, given our international student body and our student mentoring system. The assessment methods, offer opportunities for comparing international and local examples linked to specific topics, such as Relativism and Naturalism.

**FACULTIES SUPPORT OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Revision record – all revisions must be recorded in the grid and full details of the change retained in the appropriate committee records.**

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| Date approved | Major/minor revision | Start date of delivery of revised version | Section revised | Impacts PLOs (Q6&7 cover sheet) |
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