

Topics in Philosophy IA | PIU11041

Year	Junior Fresher
ECTS Credits	5
Contact Hours	22 Lectures, 5 Tutorials
Pre-requisite	None
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Julian Bacharach
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Module Outline:

Will the sun come up tomorrow? Can we know that an external world exists? What am I, and could I survive the destruction of my physical body? Can we be free in a universe governed by physical laws? Are people really divided into races, and what does this amount to?

This course will address such fundamental questions about the nature of the reality we live in and our knowledge of it. The first half of the module will focus on epistemology, covering topics such as: the nature of knowledge, external world scepticism, the problem of induction, and the rationality of belief in God. The second half of the module will focus on metaphysics, covering the topics: consciousness, the self and personal identity, free will and determinism, and race.

Assessment:

1 coursework essay, worth 50%; an exam (one question), worth 50%.

Recommended Reading List:

An accessible introduction to many of the topics to be covered over the course is Thomas Nagel, *What Does it All Mean?*

In the first week we will discuss the first Meditation from Descartes' *Meditations on the First Philosophy*. The text for this is available online here:

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/descartes/1639/meditations.htm>