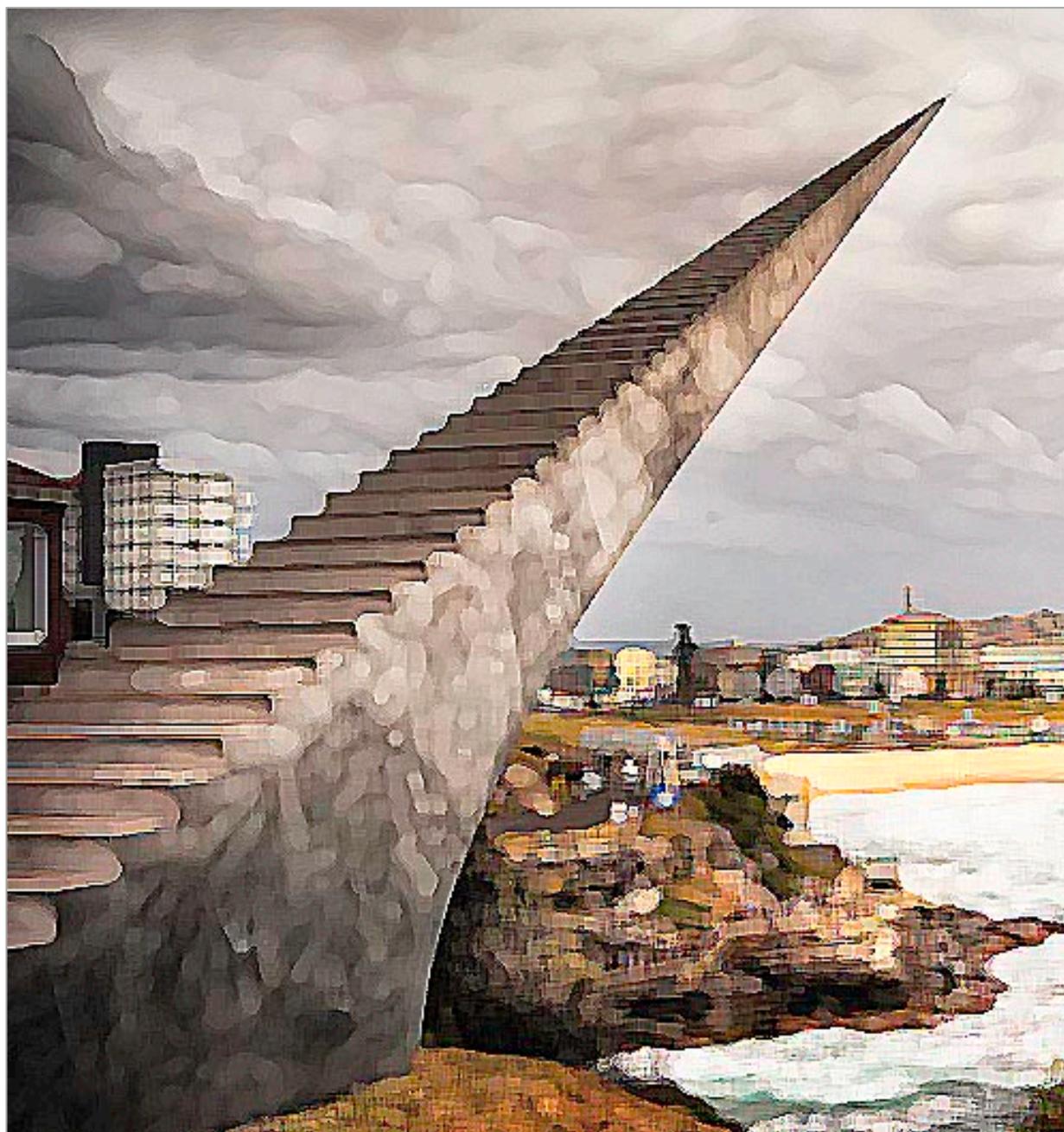

Honours Handbook 2019



Departments of Philosophy
The University of Adelaide and Flinders University

Welcome to Honours in Philosophy!

Honours in Philosophy is both challenging and fun. It will help you develop into a more independent researcher, able to address philosophical questions with greater confidence and skill. Honours will also provide the opportunity to study an area of your own interest, and undertake, with the supervision of an academic staff member, a substantial research project. For most of you this is a new task, which will be both demanding and deeply satisfying. (But we are here to help!)

Whatever your anticipated outcome – whether you are aiming at further study, or simply aren't ready to stop thinking about philosophy just yet – you will find Honours in Philosophy a rewarding experience. It offers an opportunity to work closely with teachers and fellow students in small groups unlike those you have encountered before. In Honours, you'll be mixing with, and be supported by, similarly-minded, enthusiastic and well-prepared students and staff.

The Honours program is offered jointly by Flinders University and the University of Adelaide. This means you can select seminars offered by either department (see Section 4), and can have a thesis supervisor at either institution.

1. Honours Coordinators

The Honours Coordinators at Flinders and Adelaide are:

Flinders University	University of Adelaide
Ian Ravenscroft Humanities 221, 8201 3942 ian.ravenscroft@flinders.edu.au	Jon Opie Napier 709, 8313 4341 jon.opie@adelaide.edu.au

Feel free to email the Honours Coordinators to discuss your plans or any questions about honours.

2. Admission and Enrolment Procedure

Adelaide Students

Students interested in Honours at Adelaide apply using the form available at the faculty website:

<http://arts.adelaide.edu.au/future-students/honours/apply/>

To be eligible for Honours in Philosophy you must typically have:

- Completed the requirements for a Bachelor degree;
- A Credit average of 70 or better in your Philosophy courses; and
- A major in Philosophy (24 units, 18 Advanced) or, for combined honours, a minor in Philosophy (18 units, 12 Advanced).

Application for first semester entry are already closed, but we are still willing to consider applications. For those interested in mid-year entry, you must apply by early June 2019. The Faculty will notify

candidates of acceptance to the program shortly after this deadline. Enrolment is managed by the Faculty and will occur in February for standard entry, and July for mid-year entry.

Flinders Students

Students wanting to enrol at Flinders must formally enrol as an Honours candidate with the BA Office. If you are eligible, they will contact the Honours Coordinator, who will then admit you to the program.

Provision of Supervision

Between them, the staff at the two departments can supervise theses in most areas of philosophy. However, some thesis topics lie in areas where it may not be possible to provide expert supervision or examiners. In such a case, unless you are willing to compromise on your preferred thesis topic, it may not be possible to admit you into the Honours program.

Accordingly, it's important that you begin thinking about your thesis topic as soon as possible. We take students' preferences into account when assigning a supervisor, but sometimes, due to research leave or other factors, your preferred supervisor may not be available. If you have a supervisor in mind, it is wise to approach them regarding their availability, before you apply. Prospective students should also contact their Honours Coordinator to explore potential topics and supervisors.

3. Program Structure

The Honours program is run jointly by the Department of Philosophy at Flinders University and the Department of Philosophy at The University of Adelaide. The program, which is completed over one year on a full-time basis, or two years part-time, comprises both a thesis and seminars. The program of seminars offered changes from year to year.

Because our program is run jointly, you can select seminars at either Adelaide or Flinders. Your performance in the program is assessed by the examination of two sorts of written work:

- A [thesis](#) of between 15,000 and 18,000 words, worth 50% of your overall mark; and
- Either [three seminar papers](#) of 6000 words (Flinders) or [four seminar papers](#) of 5000 words (Adelaide), which contribute the remaining 50% of your mark. Each seminar paper makes an equal contribution to this mark.

If you are enrolled in [combined honours](#) in Philosophy and another discipline, the structure of your program will be a matter of individual negotiation between you and the departments involved. Typically, students in combined Honours will take roughly half their Honours coursework in Philosophy, and may choose to write their thesis in either department, wherever appropriate supervision can be found.

Thesis Supervision

Prospective Honours students are asked to see their Honours Coordinator at the earliest opportunity to talk about a thesis topic, as it is advisable that students should begin preliminary work on their theses during the vacation prior to commencing honours. You should have confirmed both a supervisor and a thesis topic no later than [mid-February](#) (or [late August](#) for students entering mid-year), assuming you are writing your thesis in Philosophy.

Your supervisor will meet with you regularly throughout the program. You and your supervisor should decide together how often to meet, and what format your meetings will take. If you want to receive comments on a full draft of their thesis, you should submit it to your supervisor at least four weeks prior to the submission deadline. After this date, supervisors may have difficulty providing timely feedback.

The content of the thesis must be significantly different from the content of any other work submitted for assessment as part of the Honours program or your earlier degree.

Thesis Proposal

Students must submit to their supervisor a thesis proposal of approximately 1000 words. Due dates for the thesis proposal are [15 March 2019](#) and [20 September 2019](#) for students commencing in first semester or second semester, respectively. The thesis proposal is an initial description of the ground you intend to cover in your thesis. It should be developed in consultation with your supervisor, and should demonstrate extensive reading and include a bibliography. This proposal will provide you with a framework to guide your ongoing thesis work. However, you are not bound to follow the thesis proposal exactly; it is common for a thesis to depart from what was initially proposed as research proceeds. The proposal is not part of the basis for the assessment of your thesis.

Work in Progress Presentation

During the semester prior to the submission of your thesis, the Honours Coordinators will arrange one or more [work in progress seminars](#), the purpose of which is to give Honours students an opportunity to present some of their thesis work to an audience of peers and staff members.

Public presentation of your ideas is an important part of the profession, and indeed any other profession you might go into. Moreover, it is useful for students to expose their work in progress to wider scrutiny than just their supervisor, enabling constructive feedback from a wider range of philosophers, perhaps with different backgrounds. Finally, the presentation gives an intermediate deadline to work towards, well before the thesis is due.

The presentation is not assessed, but Honours Coordinators expect that each Honours student will make a presentation. Your supervisor can provide advice about how your work might be usefully presented, and which parts you might wish to highlight, but the content and form of the presentation is up to you. A typical presentation might last 20–25 minutes, followed by 10–15 minutes of questions and comments from the audience.

Provisional presentation dates for 2018 are as follows:

For students submitting their thesis in June 2019	Friday 3 May 2019
For students submitting their thesis in October 2019	Friday 13 September 2019

These dates are subject to change; the actual dates will be confirmed by the Honours Coordinators.

4. Seminars

Each seminar runs over a semester and involves a weekly two-hour class. Assessment is by one essay of 5000 words (Adelaide) or 6000 words (Flinders). In addition, you must make a class presentation. This presentation is not assessed, but it is compulsory.

The seminars below are labelled 'E&M' for *Epistemology and Metaphysics*, or 'M&S' for *Moral and Social Philosophy*. You must take at least one seminar from each category.

Please note, *Moral Philosophy and its Discontents* may not run, but if it does it will be offered in one semester only. We will run four seminars in total, with the choice of seminars based on demand.

Semester 1	<i>Scepticism, Ancient and Modern</i> (E&M) Han Baltussen, George Couvalis and Greg O'Hair
	<i>Moral Philosophy and its Discontents</i> (M&S) Craig Taylor (Flinders)
Semester 2	<i>How Should I Live</i> (M&S) Garrett Cullity (Adelaide)
	<i>Key Text in Philosophy</i> (E&M) Philip Gerrans (Adelaide)

Scepticism, Ancient and Modern

Han Baltussen, George Couvalis and Greg O'Hair
han.baltussen@adelaide.edu.au

Semester 1, E&M

This topic will examine ancient and early modern scepticism and their contexts. This important philosophical 'school of thought' originated in classical antiquity and has been hugely influential as both a philosophical position and an approach to specific sub-fields, such as epistemology.

The course will include discussion of ancient Pyrrhonian and Academic scepticism, and the revival of scepticism in the early modern period. It will focus especially on the central arguments in Pyrrhonian and Academic scepticism as well as undertake a detailed discussion of the aims of ancient scepticism and the responses to scepticism in the early modern period.

In addition, the later reception and transformation of the sceptical arguments by Descartes and Hume will receive particular attention, including the recent literature on Hume's various responses to, and uses of, ancient and modern sceptical arguments.

There will be a two-hours seminar each week, 10-12 pm Thursdays in Napier 823.

Moral Philosophy and its Discontents

Craig Taylor

craig.taylor@flinders.edu.au

Semester 1, M&S

Contemporary Anglo-American moral philosophy is widely characterized by certain foundational assumptions. Here are four of the deepest:

1. That moral concepts and moral thought must be *naturalistic* in the that they are finally and exhaustively accountable for in terms of capacities and interests that are *pre-moral* or 'factual', e.g. sentience, happiness, desire-satisfaction, rationality, autonomy, person-hood, human flourishing. Notions of (say) *good* and *evil* which outstrip this are suspect.
2. That the concepts of experience and understanding relevant to morality are not essentially different from those exemplified in the physical sciences. Thus, moral thought is configured as a speculative enterprise, building theories testable against the assumed concept of experience in the light of criteria for theoretical virtue imported from science.
3. That meta-ethics – the branch of moral philosophy concerned with questions like 'What is the meaning of moral language?' or 'Are moral propositions matters of truth and falsity or do they just express attitudes?' – is a value-neutral discipline. Its object of study is the semantics of certain words (*ought, should, right, wrong, etc.*) which pick out the subject-matter of morality.
4. That moral truth is *impersonal* in a sense captured by the doctrine of the universalizability of moral judgments: if agents are in the same 'morally relevant circumstances' then they enjoy the same permissions and are subject to the same obligations. On this view it is impossible for there to be radically personal moral judgments, ones which apply to me and not to you.

These assumptions are widely held, and not infrequently regarded as simply obvious. But this is far from being universally so. Several important philosophers over the last half-century have questioned some or all these views. These philosophers have argued that moral judgment and understanding are in an important sense radically individual and personal; that they are not confined to the conceptual resources of (even the most liberal) naturalism and empiricism, but require a concept of experience which is *internally* connected to the exercise of the imagination as we find it in art and literature; and who deny that morality is well defined in terms of standard meta-ethical concepts.

This seminar will examine the assumptions above and the arguments of the critics, and their alternative conceptions of moral thought. We will look at the work of Iris Murdoch (vs. Stuart Hampshire and R M Hare), Cora Diamond (vs. Peter Singer, Jeff McMahan, and others), Peter Winch (vs. Sidgwick), Stanley Cavell (vs. C L Stevenson) and others such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, Bernard Williams, Raimond Gaita, Martha Nussbaum, Charles Taylor, Emmanuel Levinas, and Simone Weil.

There will be a two-hours seminar each week, time and place to be advised.

Suggested Reading:

Iris Murdoch, *Vision and Choice in Morality*, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, Vol. 30 (1956) and *The Sovereignty of Good*.

Cora Diamond, *The Realistic Spirit* (papers on ethics, especially 'Eating Meat and Eating People').

Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason* (especially, but notionally, material on C L Stevenson).

How Should I Live? Contemporary Ethical Theories

Garrett Cullity

garrett.cullity@adelaide.edu.au

Semester 2, M&S

How should we live our lives, morally speaking? This is a big question, and philosophers have tackled it by breaking it down into several distinct but related (and fascinating) questions. In this course we follow their lead. We start with questions about the nature of the good life, and about the criteria for morally right action. What aspects of a life make it go better or worse for the person who is living it? What are the general principles (if any) that tell us which actions are right and which are wrong, and which explain why they are right or wrong? In the second part of the course we look at some more general questions about the nature and status of morality (questions in so-called "metaethics"). How does morality fit into the natural world described by science? Is moral thought and talk a matter of attempting to describe some external morality reality, or does it have some other function? Can there be evidence for or against a moral claim? What would it look like? Our focus will be on contemporary philosophical work, though there will also be opportunities to look at some of the historical roots of contemporary views.

Note that this seminar is *a combined Level 3/Honours class*. You will be expected to attend a two-hour lecture in [PHIL 3019 How Should I live?](#) and a dedicated one-hour tutorial. Your assessment will have the same structure as other honours seminars.

Lecture: Tuesday 3-5 pm
Bar Smith South 534

Tutorial: To be advised

Key Texts in Philosophy

Philip Gerrans

philip.gerrans@adelaide.edu.au

Semester 2, E&M

This capstone course for the Philosophy major will focus on a close reading and analysis of influential texts in philosophy. It will act as a suitable culmination to a major in Philosophy, and a bridge into Honours/MPhil, with an emphasis on in-depth treatment of more narrowly focused topics and, in some cases, their historical genesis. The content is not fixed in advance but will be determined from year to year by a combination of available expertise and the latest research in the field.

Please note that this seminar is *a combined Level 3/Honours class*. You will be expected to attend a two-hour lecture in [PHIL 3033 Key Texts in Philosophy](#) and a dedicated one-hour tutorial. Your assessment will have the same structure as other honours seminars.

Lecture: Tuesday 9-12 am
Napier 108

Tutorial: To be advised

5. Study Advice

We hope that you will enjoy and benefit from Honours. The crucial determinant of this is your own level of commitment. Seminars are not lectures – preparation and participation are vital.

To improve your chances of success, please consider the following:

- Make sure you keep up with seminar reading, and don't skip classes.
- Let your supervisor and seminar coordinators know about potential problems before they become severe.
- **Get started on your thesis as soon as you can.** Many students defer work on the thesis, because the deadline seems a long way off, and then find themselves frantic as the due date nears.
- Don't fall into the trap of thinking you need to read everything before you start writing – there's always more to read than you can sensibly discuss in an honours thesis.
- Make sure you get involved in academic events in the Departments. As Honours students, you are participating in the strong research culture in Philosophy in South Australia. So, try to get along to departmental research seminars, as well as conferences and workshops that may occur from time to time in Adelaide.
- Your peers – other Honours students, and postgraduates in the Departments – are excellent sources of feedback and support, both academic and personal. Many students find they learn as much from other students in the program as from direct instruction.

One of the things being assessed in honours is your ability to apply yourself to your studies. It can help to **treat Honours as a full-time job**; the expected work during the program for students enrolled full time is equivalent to 35+ hours per week. Make a timetable and stick to it!

6. Start of Year Meeting

A start of year planning meeting for Honours students, MPhil students and staff will be held in *mid-February*. This will be an opportunity to meet fellow students, to receive information about seminars and the dates of the work in progress presentations, among other Honours matters. It will also be a good opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the program. We will contact you via email in February with the date and location of the meeting.

7. Assessment

Submission Format

Both essays and thesis must be submitted to your honours coordinator *via email*. We prefer PDF files, but Word documents are also acceptable. Please ensure they reach your honours coordinator, who will acknowledge receipt, by the due dates listed below.

Due Dates

Essay due dates are as follows:

- Semester 1 Essays 5 pm Friday 5 July 2019
- Semester 2 Essays 5 pm Friday 15 November 2019

Thesis due dates, for both full-time and part-time students, are:

- Commencing Semester 1, 2019 5 pm Friday 18 October 2019
- Commencing Semester 2, 2019 5 pm Friday 29 May 2020

Overdue work will be penalised at the rate of 2% for each day it is late. Work submitted more than two weeks late without an extension will not be marked.

Extensions

If circumstances prevent you from submitting your work by the due date, Honours Coordinators can authorize an extension. Extensions will only be granted on medical or compassionate grounds. Requests must be made in writing and must be supported by appropriate evidence from a doctor or counsellor. The request for an extension should always be made before the due date. Pressure of other work will not be accepted as grounds for an extension.

Word Limits

There are penalties for exceeding the essay and thesis word limits, which are deducted from the mark achieved in the relevant assessment piece. They are:

- Exceeding the word limit by more than 25% 5 marks
- Exceeding the word limit by more than 50% 10 marks
- Exceeding the word limit by more than 75% 20 marks

An essay or thesis that exceeds the word limit by more than 100% will not be marked.

Marking

Each individual piece of work (seminar essay or thesis) will be marked by two examiners. After independently assigning their marks, the examiners confer and come to an agreed mark. If the examiners cannot agree, a third marker will adjudicate. Because of this extensive moderation process, requests for re-marking will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

All individual pieces of work are marked on a scale from 0–100, different schemes apply at Flinders and Adelaide. Although Adelaide and Flinders use the same mark classes, the mark boundaries differ (see below). For example, a piece of work which received 80 at Adelaide, a Class 1 mark, would receive 85 at Flinders, corresponding to the same mark class.

8. Classification

In addition to the marks you receive for each individual assessment piece, you will receive an *honours classification* for the whole year's work. We determine this by first calculating an overall mark, and then using that to determine a degree class. The details vary between Adelaide and Flinders.

Classification	Flinders Mark	Adelaide Mark
Class 1	85-100	80-100
Class 2A	75-84	70-79
Class 2B	65-74	60-69
Class 3	50-64	50-59
Fail	0-49	1-49

For all students, the overall mark is calculated by taking the weighted average of the numerical marks you receive on your thesis (weight 50%) and essays (weight 16.67% each at Flinders, 12.5% each at Adelaide). Your degree classification will appear on your transcript and can be important when applying for employment or postgraduate study.

Classification at Flinders

Your degree class is determined by the class your overall mark falls into on the Flinders mark scale. For example, if Sarah receives a thesis mark of 82, and essay marks of 88, 81 and 83, her overall mark will be $\frac{82}{2} + \frac{88+81+83}{6} = 83$. This will result in a degree classification of 2A.

Classification at Adelaide

For Adelaide students, the overall mark doesn't lead directly to a classification. In determining which degree class to award you, we are guided by two principles:

1. an overall mark of Class 1 is sufficient for a Class 1 degree, an overall 2A is sufficient for a Class 2A degree, an overall 2B is sufficient for a Class 2B degree, and an overall 3 average is sufficient for a Class 3 degree; and
2. that students whose mark fall just short of a degree class can, if the preponderance of their work, including their thesis, is at that level, be taken to have achieved that honours class.

This scheme recognises the high demands that honours in philosophy places on students. Here is the detail of how it works, where M is the overall mark calculated by taking the weighted average of the marks you receive on your thesis (weight 50%) and essays (weight 12.5% each).

- An honours degree will be classified 1 iff either (i) $M \geq 80$ or (ii) individual marks for the thesis and two or more seminar essays are first class, and no individual mark falls below 2A.
- An honours degree will be classified 2A iff it does not meet the conditions for awarding any higher classification, and either (i) $70 \leq M < 80$, or (ii) individual marks for the thesis and two or more seminar essays are at least 2A, and no individual mark falls below 2B.

- An honours degree will be classified 2B iff it does not meet the conditions for awarding any higher classification, and either (i) $60 \leq M < 70$, or (ii) individual marks for the thesis and two or more seminar essays are at least 2B, and no individual mark falls below 3.
- An honours degree will be classified 3 iff it does not meet the conditions for awarding any higher classification, and either (i) $50 \leq M < 60$, or (ii) individual marks for the thesis and two or more seminar essays are at least 3, and no individual mark falls below 45.

Examples:

- Medina has a thesis mark of 81, and seminar marks of 84, 80, 75, and 70. Her overall mark is calculated as follows: $M = \frac{81}{2} + \frac{84+80+75+70}{8} = 79.125$. While her overall mark alone doesn't qualify her for a first, three of Medina's five pieces of work, including her thesis, are at or above 80, and no piece of work is less than 2A quality. Medina's honours result would be Class 1.
- Felix has a thesis mark of 83, and seminar marks of 88, 74, 71 and 60. His overall mark M is 78.125. This overall mark qualifies Felix for a 2A. Since only his thesis and one seminar essay are Class 1, and one of his essays is below 2A. Felix's honours result would be 2A.