

**FIL-0704  
EXAMEN PHILOSOPHICUM – ENGLISH ALTA**

**SYLLABUS  
SPRING 2018**

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**Seminar leader:**

You will find your seminar leader on Canvas under contact information

**Administration:**

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**Congratulations on the choice of study**

*Through your choice of Examen Philosophicum English Alta, you now have a unique opportunity to build a solid foundation for the rest of your academic career. Our goal is to provide you with a curriculum that is engaging, and which stimulates reflection and learning.*

*The lecturers at the Department of Philosophy welcome you to the discipline and look forward to be of assistance.*

**EXAMEN PHILOSOPHICUM (EX. PHIL.)** is with certain exceptions, obligatory for everyone receiving a bachelor degree from UiT – The Arctic University of Norway. Ordinarily, students will take the subject in their first semester together with Examen facultatum (ex.fac.) and/or a subject from the degree program that the students are attending.

## ENGLISH CAMPUS ALTA

Examen philosophicum Alta English is a course with few but intense study meetings. The way the course is organized invites you to establish good contact with both your seminar leader and fellow students

The teaching consists of an online quiz, which tests your knowledge of the readings for the seminars, online lectures and six days of seminars on campus in Alta. The seminar days will run in sections of one three-hour session each day with two subsequent seminar days in a row. In order to get your exam, you must have attended at least four three-hour sessions.

The exam consists of a term paper and a final oral exam. These will be evaluated together as a portfolio assessment, and be the basis for the final mark on the course.

The various versions of examen philosophicum offered by UiT address the same topics and have the same educational goals. The examen philosophicum Alta English class is organized around five main topics: philosophy of mind, epistemology, ethics, political philosophy and philosophy of science. There will also be an elementary introduction to academic writing.

The educational goals of the study are to provide basic knowledge of these five central branches of philosophy and to provide training in and tools for critical independent thinking. Together, this will provide you with a good foundation for further studies.

You can find further information about the class on the department's homepage. **Read these documents carefully. Pay special attention to the deadline for submission of the term paper and the dates for the oral exam.**

### Contact information and pictures

We encourage everyone to submit a picture of themselves and contact information on the list of participants on Canvas. Telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for the seminar leader can be found on the Canvas contact cards (in the "Participants" folder).

## LECTURES AND SEMINARS

During the semester, there will be three gatherings for seminars in Alta. These gatherings will last two days with one three-hour session each day. You will find the date and time on the department's homepage and on Canvas.

The seminars will provide in-depth studies of three of the five main topics of the required readings. There will be an emphasis on teaching forms that requires the students to be active, to collaborate with each other, like, for example, in group work, group presentations and plenary discussions. In addition to the seminars there will be lectures which will be uploaded on Canvas.

We will expect that you have prepared for these gatherings by having read the required readings before each session and listened to the lectures. In preparation for the sessions students are to read the basic readings from the syllabus for each meeting day. The teaching covers all five topics in the lectures and out of these your seminar leader will choose three topics to be studied in depth in the seminars. The term paper topics will be selected from these in-depth topics.

## ASSIGNED READINGS

The basic readings are taken from the following three books:

- M. Chrisman and D. Pritchard. *Philosophy for Everyone (PE)*. Routledge, 2017
- C. Bennet – *What is this thing called ethics? (WE)*. Second Edition. Routledge, 2015
- D. Pritchard – *What is this thing called philosophy? (WP)*. Routledge, 2016.

### Philosophy of Mind

Basic readings:

PE: Chap. 6 (What is it to have a mind?) and chap. 7 (Do we have free will? And does it matter?)

WP: Part V: Philosophy of Mind: Chap 14 (What is consciousness?)

### Epistemology

Basic readings:

PE: Chap. 4 (What is knowledge? Do we have any?)

WP: Part IV: Epistemology: Chap. 11 (What is knowledge?), chap. 12 (Is knowledge valuable?) and chap. 13 (Do we have any knowledge?).

### Ethics

Basic readings:

WE: Part II: Three starting points in moral theory: Chap. 4 (Utilitarianism), chap. 5 (Kantian ethics), and chap. 6 (Aristotelean virtue ethics).

### Political Philosophy

Basic readings:

WP: Part II: Political philosophy: Chap. 5 (What is freedom?), chap. 6 (What is justice?) and chap 7 (What is global justice?).

### Philosophy of Science

Basic readings:

PE: Chap. 8 (Are scientific theories true?).

WP: Part VII: Philosophy of Science: Chap. 20 (What is science?), chap. 21 (Can we trust scientific models?) and chap. 22 (Is science getting closer to the truth?).

Besides the basic readings, there will be additional texts for this class pertaining to the three in-depths topics chosen by your seminar leader. Your seminar leader will assign these supplementary readings to you.

All the basic readings are part of the required readings for this class and form the basis for the oral exam together with some of the supplementary readings. Your seminar leader selects the topics of the seminar and the assignments for the term paper. Your seminar leader will announce what the three in-depth topics for the seminars will be.

## OFFICIAL REQUIREMENTS

The final mark will be given on the basis of a term paper and an oral exam at the end of the semester. Attendance at seminars is mandatory and it is a requirement that the student attend at least **four** of the seminars (four three-hour sessions). Attendance will be taken for each session of the

six meeting days. Failure to meet this requirement can lead to not being given a final grade, i.e. the student will fail the class.

## **EXAM**

### ***The portfolio assessment is made up by your term paper and your oral exam***

After you have met the official attendance requirement, you are allowed to submit your term paper. The length of the paper should be minimally 1800 words and maximally 2200 words (excluding the bibliography). The final exam is the oral exam. In order to take our oral exam, your term paper must be given a pass mark. The oral exam is a 20 minutes oral examination of your knowledge and understanding of all the basic readings of the class and some of the supplementary readings.

The term paper and the oral exam will be considered together in a portfolio assessment. The grading scale goes from **A** to **F**, where **F** is fail.

In the case where a student receives an F on the oral exam, but has fulfilled the attendance requirement and the term paper has passed, then the term paper can be used again if the student retakes the oral exam the next semester.

### ***Re-sit examination will not be arranged for candidates that fail the exam, either on their essay or on the oral exam***

However, students who have valid reasons for failing to take the exam and can prove that their absence has a valid reason (e.g. medical certificate in the case of illness) may present themselves for a "delayed exam" immediately after the new semester has started. In the latter case, the student must register to retake the exam before a given deadline at the beginning of the next semester.

In general, we refer to "Forskrift for eksamener ved Universitetet i Tromsø" ("Regulations for exams at the University of Tromsø"), which is found on the university's homepage. Students are required to familiarize themselves with this regulation.

#### **A. Term paper**

Your seminar leader will hand out the topics for the term paper. There will be individual supervision on the term paper, which will be conducted over the phone. The term paper is to be written in English (no other language will be accepted). The length of the paper should be minimally 1800 words and maximally 2200 words (excluding the bibliography). It is also a requirement that the student has a bibliography and that the student gives a word count of the term paper at the end of the paper. Failure to meet these requirements can lead to being excluded from being given a final mark, i.e. the student will fail the class.

#### **Formal requirements**

The term paper must be between 1800 and 2200 words. It must include your name and be formatted as a pdf.

The term paper must include references to the various sources you have used, when writing the text, including the basic readings. This requirement does not only concern direct quotes, but also if you paraphrase other texts or have got your information from them. You must include references in your text, in order to make it clear which sources the different parts of your text is based on.

Extensive violation of the requirement of referring to the sources a text has used will be regarded as plagiarism and will be treated a case of cheating on your exam, which in turn may lead exclusion from Norwegian universities for a period of time.

### **Term paper topics**

When picking a topic for your term paper, you should choose something that interests you, since that most often gives the best result. The thesis of your term paper will often be given in the assignment itself, other times your seminar leader will expect you to clarify and state the thesis of your term paper. You should keep in mind that the term paper should be minimally 1800 words and maximally 2200 words, so there are limitations on how many issues you can handle within that framework.

### **A good term paper is/has**

- A clearly stated goal, not only just a topic. The aim of the term paper is not only to present a certain topic in philosophy, but also to argue for some specific point or another.
- About philosophical questions, problems, theories and arguments, and does not merely list what various philosophers have meant and written about some topic.
- Written in a clear and concise style.
- Only includes background information like, for example, the political situation in ancient antiquity when writing about Plato or the date of birth when writing about Kant, when this is needed for the argument or arguments of the paper.
- Presents important positions and terms in a correct and fair manner
- A certain level of independence and ability to make the material one's own. Examples that shows that includes, that:
  - The presentation of the material does not rely on formulations taken from the basic or supplementary readings, but is to some degree formulated in the student's own words
  - The student provides his or her own examples
  - The student tries to present own observations, arguments or objections.
- Argue for or against a position, while presenting the material in balanced and nuanced way.
- An introduction that clearly states what the topic is, the structure of the paper and what the goal of the paper is.
- Does what the introduction promised would be done in the term paper. It is important that the structure of the paper is clear and that you are clear on what you are doing in each section of the paper and what conclusions to draw from discussions and examples. You might consider using subtitles.
- A conclusion that reflects the arguments and discussions that have been presented in the paper.

### **USING SOURCES**

For some topics and questions, it is useful, perhaps even necessary, to use other sources than your assigned and supplementary readings. Using other sources is not a goal in itself and should only be used if it makes the term paper better.

It is important to be critical to sources, especially those you find on the internet. For example, Wikipedia should not be used when writing about philosophical topics, but is acceptable for looking up facts. Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (link: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>) and Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy EP (link: <http://plato.stanford.edu/>) have good entries on most of the central topics in philosophy, though some of them, in particular SEP, are quite advanced. Some paper

topics will state which supplementary readings we expect you to use when writing your paper. These supplementary texts will also be useful if you are writing a paper on a related topic. Consult your seminar leader, if you need any more advice.

### **Referring to sources**

In all academic writing, it is important to refer to the sources one has used in one's work so that your reader easily can check them. This is not only a question of formalities, but also of intellectual honesty.

**Quotations** are to be given verbatim and be put in quotation marks. Quotations that run for more than three whole sentences should be separated from the rest of the paragraph by a free line above and below, and indented at the left margin. If you omit something from a quotation, mark it with three dots in square brackets: [...]. If you need to insert something into a quotation in order for it to fully make sense to your reader, then you also need to use square brackets to mark that the inserted word(s) are your own addition. You must never add any of your own comments in a quote.

If you are presenting other authors' arguments and viewpoints, then you need to refer to them, even if you are paraphrasing. In footnotes or endnotes, you can also refer to verbal information from conversations, seminars, lectures and the like.

In academia, there are numerous so-called reference styles, that is, techniques of showing which sources you have used. You are free to use whatever reference-style you please. The only thing we ask of your reference style is that it enables us to check your references and that you are consistent, i.e. use the same style of reference throughout your paper.

In the term paper, you refer to a source by putting the author's last name, year of publication, in addition to page numbers, chapter numbers and the like, in parentheses. After a direct quote, you immediately give the reference of the cited work. If you have used a source throughout an entire section, then in order to avoid needless repetition you can wait with the reference to the end of the section. If you have used a source throughout large parts of your term paper, then inform your reader about that in a footnote.

**An example of a reference in a text:** «Benardete speaks of the forces of infinity. (Benardete 1964:258).»

**The bibliography** must include all the literature referred to in the text. They are to be listed alphabetically after the surnames of the authors. The list of literature is also to include the following information, as stated below:

- Name of the author, possibly also editor
- Title
- Year of publication
- Publishing house and city, or name of journal

**An example of a reference to a book:**

Benardete, José A: *Infinity: An Essay in Metaphysics*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1964.

**An example of a reference to a paper in an anthology:**

Maitra, Ishani: "How and Why to be a Moderate Contextualist", in George Peter and Gerhard Preyer (eds.), *Context-Sensitivity and Semantic Minimalism: New Essays on Semantics and Pragmatics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2007, p. 122-132.

**An example of a reference to a journal:**

Saito, Yoriko. "The Aesthetics of Unscenic Nature". *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 52, 2, 1997, p. 101-111.

If you use material from the internet that cannot be referred to in the manners mentioned above, then use the internet address where you found the material. In such reference, you can write **www1**, **www2** etc., and in the bibliography: **www1** = [URL and download date], etc.

**An example of a reference to an internet address:**

**www1** = [www.nakayama.org/polylogos/philosophers/arendt/index-e-arendt](http://www.nakayama.org/polylogos/philosophers/arendt/index-e-arendt), retrieved 08.05.2014