



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Anthropocene: challenging human self-awareness	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Coordinator: Prof. Mintautas Gutauskas	Faculty of Philosophy, Institute of Philosophy
Other(s):	

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Face to face and self-study	Spring semester	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: none	Additional requirements (if any): none

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	133	48	85

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed
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This course aims to educate:

- An understanding of the Anthropocene epoch and the changes that have occurred in the actual human condition and its self-awareness in the face of today's climate change;
- The ability to relate the reflection of these changes to the concepts of modern philosophy;
- An understanding of the roots of the current crisis in Western thought, which is based on hierarchical human-animal and human-nature relationships.
- The ability to discuss possible ways out of the crisis, analyse new images of the human being, of nature and of the planet, clarify for oneself the extension and the limits of the personal (and human, in general) responsibility towards nature and animals.

Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Students will be introduced to the main philosophical interpretations of the Anthropocene, their main arguments and thesis.	Lectures	A written exam
Students will learn to recognise the structures of modern thinking in philosophical approaches and in everyday life by analysing the relationship between human and nature, human beings and animals.	Seminar work, lectures	Seminar work, a written exam, evaluation of the oral presentation
Students will be able to recognise and independently analyse the fundamental changes that have taken place in the Anthropocene in human understanding of itself and its relationship with the natural environment.	Seminar work, lectures	Seminar work, a written exam, evaluation of the oral presentation
Students will be able to recognise, independently analyse and discuss issues of human responsibility towards nature and animals.	Seminar work, lectures	Seminar work, a written exam, evaluation of the oral presentation

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
1. Lecture. What is the Anthropocene? The Anthropocene as a geological event and as an event in human self-awareness. Definitions, diagnoses, and narratives of the epoch. Naturalist, post-naturalist, eco-Marxist, and eco-phenomenological narratives.	2						2		
2. Seminar. Narratives of the Anthropocene			2				2	4	Bonneuil, „The Geological Turn. Narratives of the Anthropocene“,
3. Lectures. Genesis of the Anthropocene. Modernity and the Anthropocene. The mathematisation and “enframing” (transformation into a resource) of nature in the New Age modernity. Reflexivity and the disembedding of space and time - principles of modernity’s thinking and relationship to the environment. The end of nature as a feature of late modernity. The relationship between the Anthropocene and late modernity in terms of the control of time and space.	6						6		
4. Seminar. The characteristics of late modernity			2				2	4	Giddens, <i>Modernity and Self-Identity</i> . p. 10-31.
5. Lectures. The origins and critique of anthropocentrism. The formation of the hierarchical relationship between humans and animals, man and nature in Greek philosophy, Christianity, and New Age modernity. The search for the foundations of the new humanism and the essence of human in the 20th century philosophy. Contemporary critique of anthropocentrism. G. Agamben: the anthropological machine and the question of overcoming anthropocentrism.	8						8		
6. Seminar. Anthropological machine and constitution of human.			2				2	4	Agamben, <i>The Open</i> , p. 13-38.
7. Lecture. In search of a new relationship with nature. The Anthropocene as a developing of the imagination. The emergence of the global imaginary and its impact on our everyday experience. How does our relationship to the Earth depend on our imagination of it?	4						4		
8. Seminar. B. Latour: Globe vs. Gaia, D. Chakrabarty: Globe vs. The Planetary.			6				6	12	Latour, <i>Facing Gaia</i> .p. 111-145. Chakrabarty, <i>The Climate of History in a Planetary Age</i> . p. 23-92.

9. Lectures. In search of a new relationship with nature. D. Chakrabarty: The conjoining of natural and human history. New forms of self-awareness - humanity as a species and as a geological force. A shift in self-awareness - from <i>homo faber</i> to <i>homo detritus</i> . What carbon footprint and waste say about humans?	6						6		
10. Seminar. Phenomenology of waste and human self-awareness			2				2	4	Gutauskas, "Phenomenology of Waste in the Anthropocene"
11. Lectures. In search of a new relationship with nature and animals. The nature of human responsibility. The formation of the concept of responsibility in Western philosophy. The extension and inflation of responsibility in the Anthropocene. The question of the limits of human responsibility.	6						6		
12. Seminar. The limits of human responsibility			2				2	4	Bacevičiūtė, "The Inflation" of Responsibility"
13. Preparing for an oral presentation in seminar (presentation of a selected part of the text).								6	
14. Study of secondary literature, exam preparation.								47	
Total	32		16				48	85	

Assessment strategy	Weight, %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Exam	50	In the examination session	The student will answer in writing two questions from the programme. The following will be assessed: Good knowledge of the issues; familiar with the sources; clear understanding of the main concepts, thesis and argumentation; fluent, coherent presentation - 4 to 5 points. Identifies the most general issues, understands the most general theses and arguments, and presents a reasonably coherent presentation - 1 to 3 points.
Active participation in seminars	20	During the semester	Accumulative mark. The way the grade is calculated will depend on the number of students taking the course. The following will be assessed: demonstration of knowledge and competence, creativity in examining, explaining and solving problems.
Seminar presentation	30	During the semester	Presentation of a selected part of the text. Recognises key concepts and thesis - 1 point. Recognises the main concepts and theses and presents the development of the argument of the text – 2 point. Presents the main issues, the main thesis and the argumentation in a coherent and articulate manner, formulating the main questions - 3 point.

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory reading				
Christophe Bonneuil	2015	"The Geological Turn. Narratives of the Anthropocene", in Clive Hamilton, Christophe Bonneuil, Francois Gemenne, <i>The Anthropocene and the Global Environmental Crisis</i> .		London: Routledge

		<i>Rethinking Modernity in a New Epoch.</i>		
Anthony Giddens	1991	<i>Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age</i>		Cambridge, Polity Press
Giorgio Agamben	2004	<i>The Open. Man and Animal</i>		Stanford University Press
Bruno Latour	2017	<i>Facing Gaia. Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime</i>		Cambridge: Polity Press
Dipesh Chakrabarty	2021	<i>The Climate of History in a Planetary Age</i>		Chicago: The University of Chicago Press
Danutė Bacevičiūtė	2014	“The “Inflation” of Responsibility”, in: G. Chiurazzi, D. Sisto, S. Tinning (Eds.) <i>Philosophical Paths in the Public Sphere</i> , p. 159-176.		Wien: LIT Verlag
Mintautas Gutauskas	2023	“Phenomenology of Waste in the Anthropocene”, in: Wilmer, S. E., Žukauskaitė, A (ed.) <i>Life in Posthuman Condition. Critical Responses to the Anthropocene</i> . p. 71-86.		Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
Mintautas Gutauskas	2023	“Ecological Self-Awareness in the Anthropocene”, in; S. Geniusas (ed.) <i>Varieties of Self-Awareness: New Perspectives from Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Comparative Philosophy. Contributions to Phenomenology</i> , Vol. 121.		Springer
Optional reading				
Anthony Giddens	1990	<i>The Consequences of Modernity.</i>		Cambridge: Polity Press
Donna Haraway	2016	<i>Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene</i>		Durham: Duke University Press
Timothy Clark	2015	<i>Ecocriticism on the Edge. The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept</i>		London: Bloomsbury