



Subject Notes: PHILOSOPHY AND MODERN LANGUAGES

Academic Staff

Fellows

Professor Katrin Kohl is a Fellow and Tutor in German. She teaches German literature from 1750. Her research focuses on poetry and poetics, and on the theory and practice of metaphor. Currently she is on research leave, leading an interdisciplinary research project on Creative Multilingualism for the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages.

Professor Caroline Warman, Fellow and Tutor in French. She teaches and researches eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French literature and thought, and has translated novels and essays from French. She has just finished a book about Enlightenment philosopher Diderot and co-organised a congress on the Enlightenment for 1500 people from all over the world. She teaches French literature and thought and also translation to all years.

Lecturers

Dr Julie Curtis, a Fellow of Wolfson College, is a Lecturer in Russian for Jesus College. Her research interests lie in twentieth-century Russian literature, especially Mikhail Bulgakov and Evgenii Zamiatin. She has also published on the literature of the Gorbachov era.

Dr Kirstin Gwyer is a Departmental Lecturer in German at Jesus. She teaches German literature from the eighteenth century to the present, with a special interest in twentieth- and twenty-first-century prose fiction, and translation into and out of German. Her research interests are in the first-generation Holocaust novel, contemporary German-Jewish and American-Jewish literature, German memory writing since 1945, and postmodernism and post-postmodernism.

Dr Elena Lombardi, a Fellow of Balliol College, is a Lecturer in Italian for Jesus College. Her teaching interests focus on Dante, early Italian poetry, and Medieval Studies.

Dr Daniela Omlor, Fellow in Spanish at Lincoln College, also looks after Jesus students. Her research focuses on contemporary Spanish literature, with a particular emphasis on memory, trauma and exile. Her first book examined the role of memory and self-representation in the works of Jorge Semprún. Currently, she is exploring the interaction between memory and fiction in recent novels by Javier Cercas, Javier Marías and Antonio Muñoz Molina and others, in order to investigate how the recovery of historical memory in Spanish novels increasingly extends beyond the Spanish Civil War.

Dr Joe Cunningham is a Lecturer in Philosophy who teaches General Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Ethics, Knowledge & Reality, and Philosophy of Mind. His research interests are in the theories of reasons, rationality, and moral psychology.

About the Course

Philosophy and Modern Languages (PML) brings together some of the most important approaches to understanding language, literature and ideas. The degree is constructed in the belief that the parallel study of these related disciplines significantly enhances your understanding of each, bringing added dimensions of understanding and perspective.

The study of philosophy develops analytical rigour and the ability to criticise and reason logically. It allows you to apply these skills to questions ranging from how we acquire knowledge and form moral judgements to the nature of language, art and literature. Since many works of literature are shaped by the dominant philosophical ideas of their epoch, study of philosophy can illuminate that intellectual background. The study of a modern European language develops analytical and critical abilities as well as a high level of linguistic skills; the study of the literature written in that language contributes to an understanding of many aspects of European culture. It develops attention to stylistic and terminological detail and rhetorical strategies, and sensitivity to intratextual, cultural and historical context, which are also of great value for the study of philosophy.

The Philosophy Faculty is the largest philosophy department in the UK, and one of the largest in the world, with more than 70 full-time members, admitting more than 500 undergraduates annually to read the various degrees involving philosophy. Many Faculty members have a worldwide reputation, and our library and other facilities are acknowledged as among the best in the country.

Oxford's Modern Languages Faculty is also one of the largest in the country, with a total intake of more than 300 students a year, including those reading joint degrees. It possesses in the Taylor Library the biggest modern languages research library in the country, together with an undergraduate lending library and a modern and excellently equipped Language Centre. Its Faculty members include many who are internationally renowned for their research work. Jesus College accepts students for all the languages taught at Oxford, and has Fellows in French and German, Lecturers in Italian, Russian and Spanish, and Lectors in French and German.

The Preliminary Examination is taken after three terms, its philosophical components being the same as for PPE and PPL, but divided over two papers. Students sit a paper in General Philosophy (metaphysics, epistemology and philosophy of mind) and a further paper in Logic and Moral Philosophy (the latter being studied through engagement with J. S. Mill's *Utilitarianism*.) Those taking the Final School will have to study one historical paper (either Early Modern Philosophy, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, or Plato's *Republic*). A considerable number of optional papers are available; including bridge papers in Aesthetics, the Philosophy of Kant, and Post-Kantian Philosophy. It is also possible to specialize to some extent in Linguistic Theory. The languages most commonly taken are French and German, where there are obvious connections on the philosophical side, but other combinations are possible.

The year abroad

All Modern Languages courses and Joint Schools with Modern Languages last for four years, including a year abroad after the second year. A common pattern is for students to spend their year abroad as Assistants, working in a school in the country of their choice. This offers experience of working in the country, and it is organised through a scheme run by the British Council. Students may also spend the year at a university abroad; this is discussed thoroughly with the tutors in Modern Languages, and students are responsible for making arrangements themselves. Students normally stay in one country throughout the year, but if they are studying two languages, they are advised to spend periods in the country of their other language during vacations.

The College has an exchange scheme with the University of Trier, which accommodates one student a year. All undergraduate members of the College are eligible to apply for this exchange.

Joint Schools

Modern Languages may be studied as a separate degree course (one or two European languages), or one European language may be taken in combination as below:

- European and Middle Eastern Languages
- Modern Languages and Linguistics
- Classics and Modern Languages

- English and Modern Languages
- History and Modern Languages

Philosophy **cannot** be studied at Oxford as a single subject. It may be studied as part of the following degrees:

- Computer Science and Philosophy
- Mathematics and Philosophy
- Politics, Philosophy, and Economics (PPE)
- Philosophy and Theology
- Psychology, Philosophy and Linguistics (PPL)

Admissions

In a total College entry of about 100 undergraduates, 9-10 are offered places in a typical year to read Modern Languages and related joint schools. Candidates are selected on the basis of academic record (e.g. GCSEs) and potential, as shown by their UCAS reference, submitted written work, and performance in written tests and in interviews if shortlisted.

Academic requirements: Offers made to candidates will be conditional upon A-level results (AAA, with an A in the language the candidate is applying to study to degree level) or equivalent qualifications.

Written test: All candidates must take the **Modern Languages Admissions Test (MLAT)** in schools on **4 November 2020**. Please note that separate registration is required and the deadline for doing this is **15 October 2020**. This test is a booklet containing several different papers including a Philosophy paper for students applying for Philosophy and Modern Languages. In terms of content; the language tests consist of a monolingual exercise and a number of non-consecutive sentences for translation from and into the language, and are primarily intended to test knowledge of grammar rather than vocabulary. Please check the information on the University's website carefully to see which papers are required for your course: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/tests/mlat>

Written work: Candidates are required to submit marked pieces of recent school or college work: one piece in each of the languages they are currently studying, plus one piece written in English (perhaps on literature, or history, or some other subject you are studying at school or college). The piece of written work submitted in English may also be seen by the philosophy tutors, so it should show your capacity for reasoned argument and clear writing; a good length would be between 1000 and 2000 words. Most candidates will not be studying philosophy, so there is no expectation that it will be on a philosophical topic. The deadline to submit written work is **10 November 2020**. Further information can be viewed here: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/guide/written-work>

Interviews: Candidates will have an interview lasting approximately 30 minutes with our Modern Languages tutors, with an additional interview with the lecturer in the language applied for if not French or German. Interviews will be mainly in English, but will include a brief conversation in the language offered if it is being studied to A2 level. We aim to encourage candidates to do themselves justice at interview, and we will ask them about their course rather than expect them to have done a certain type of course. We expect candidates to be motivated to do a course with a focus on literature, but do not assume that they will have studied literature formally. There will be a separate interview for Philosophy.

Deferred Entry: Applications for deferred entry to Jesus College are accepted. You must apply for deferred entry at the time of application to Oxford: you cannot change your mind after an offer has been made. Please refer to departmental web sites for subject-specific advice. You should be aware that applicants who are offered places for deferred entry will generally be among the strongest of the cohort for their subject. We would not usually offer more than one deferred place per subject in order not to disadvantage the following year's candidates. In some cases, an applicant for deferred entry may be offered a place for non-deferred entry instead. If you require any further advice, please contact the Admissions

Officer via admissions.officer@jesus.ox.ac.uk

Postgraduate Studies and Careers

Philosophy Graduate students will find themselves members of a large graduate community, together with others with shared interests who are at an equivalent stage in their intellectual development. The following degrees are offered at postgraduate level:

- BPhil or DPhil in Philosophy
- MSt in Ancient Philosophy
- MSt in Philosophy of Physics

Oxford has a large, varied, and active teaching and research community in Modern Languages. There are over ninety members of the Faculty, with research interests spread across the full chronological range of the languages and into most areas of linguistics and literary study. The College welcomes applicants for the following degrees:

- MSt or MPhil Modern Languages
- DPhil Medieval and Modern Languages
- MSt Women's Studies

PML graduates enter a wide range of careers, including academic teaching and research, commerce, banking and financial services, journalism and communications. Knowledge of a modern language opens up opportunities for careers abroad or with international organisations.

Preliminary Reading and Further Information

If you are contemplating a course involving Philosophy, or wondering whether such a course would suit you, you might wish to read some of the following:

Thomas Nagel	<i>What Does It All Mean?</i> (Oxford)
Bertrand Russell	<i>The Problems of Philosophy</i> (Oxford)
M Hollis	<i>Invitation to Philosophy</i> (Blackwell)
Nigel Warburton	<i>Philosophy: The Basics</i> (Routledge)
Julia Driver	<i>Ethics: the Fundamentals</i> (Blackwell)
Simon Blackburn	<i>Think</i> (Oxford)
Roger Scruton	<i>An Intelligent Person's Guide to Philosophy</i> (Duckworth)

Further information about reading Philosophy and Modern Languages at Oxford can be found on the faculty websites: www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk and www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk

Information about Admissions can be found at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses-listing/philosophy-and-modern-languages>

Contact details

If you have any questions about our entrance requirements, or about applying to study at Jesus College, please contact the Admissions Officer:

Tel:	01865 279721
Email:	admissions.officer@jesus.ox.ac.uk
Web:	www.jesus.ox.ac.uk/study-here

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