

Sensorveiledninger: FIL 2208/4200

The aim of FIL 2208/4200 is for students to gain an in depth understanding of an advanced topic within the scope of epistemology, the philosophy of science, and the philosophy of cognition. Students will be assessed in terms of their ability to understand and critically engage with select sub topics within the general scope of the course. For example, they may have to write an extended essay on a particular sub topic discussed in the course, or they may have to write two essays on different subtopics. The aim of these assessments will be to gauge depth of understanding, and level of critical engagement. As such, the following guidelines are appropriate:

1. Essays should be focused on a particular positive thesis or argument, and not try to cover too much ground. The focus should be on depth and detail rather than breadth. Tightness of presentation is encouraged. As such, it is acceptable for a student to focus on just one or two items of source material in their essays, as long as they engage with the material in depth. Where students choose to focus their essays in this way, they should not be penalized for lack of curriculum coverage.
2. As one of the primary goals of the course is to develop an advanced understanding of the topic, and the ability to critically engage with the material, independent critical engagement with the material is encouraged. Some level of original critical engagement will be a requirement for the highest grade bands. This is appropriate since students have the option to acquire in depth feedback on essay drafts from the course coordinator.
3. The course is taught in English, which is a second language for most students. There should be an effort to write clearly in English, such as to make the presentation comprehensible. However, as long as the material is comprehensible students should not be marked down for slightly poor English.
4. As critical engagement is encouraged, students should not be penalized for using the essay questions in creative ways. However, there must always be a reasonable reading of the essay question such that it is clear that the essay answers said question.

Furthermore, since this is both a BA and MA level course, the standards for what counts as, for example, ‘advanced understanding’, ‘well-judged independent engagement’, or ‘major failures of understanding’ will be variable. For example, an MA student must display a higher level of critical engagement and present more convincing arguments to count as having displayed ‘well-judged independent engagement’.

Typical examples for different grade boundaries:

A: Outstanding. Focused and well structured, demonstrating an advanced understanding of the material through clear and independent engagement with the topic at hand.

B: Very good. Sound judgement, good understanding of the topic, displays some critical engagement with the topic (although this can be somewhat derivative from the literature). Clear presentation and good structure.

C: Good. Displays a solid understanding of the topic, and a reasonable degree of judgement. Displays some level of critical engagement, although this may be very derivative from the literature.

D: Satisfactory. A reasonable performance but with shortcomings in either clarity, critical engagement, or understanding.

E: Weak. Displays only a low level of critical engagement, understanding, and/or clarity.

F: Fail. Displays either clear and significant failures of understanding, a complete failure to critically engage with the material, or else is incomprehensible to the average reader.