



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Anthropocene Philosophies	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Coordinating: prof. Mintautas Gutauskas Other: prof. Audronė Žukauskaitė, assoc. prof. Egidijus Mardosas	Faculty of Philosophy, Institute of Philosophy

Study cycle	Type of the course unit

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Face-to-face and self-study	Autumn and Spring semester	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites: None	Co-requisites (if relevant): none

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	133	48	85

Purpose of the course unit
<p>This course aims to educate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Students will be introduced to the main philosophical interpretations of the Anthropocene (Capitalocene, Chthulucene, Neganthropocene, Symbiocene and others), 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 relationships between humans and nature, and between humans and animals.	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
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

Content	Contact hours							Individual work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	Contact hours, total	Individual work	Tasks for individual work
1. 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.	1						1		
2. Genesis of the Anthropocene. Modernity and the Anthropocene. The mathematisation and “enframing” (transformation into a resource) of nature in the New Age modernity. The end of nature as a feature of late modernity. The relation between the Anthropocene and late modernity.	1		2				3	4	Giddens, <i>Modernity and Self-Identity</i> . p. 10-31.
3. The origins and critique of anthropocentrism. The formation of the hierarchy of living beings in Greek philosophy, Christianity, New Age modernity, and 20th-century Humanism. The question of the animal, critique of anthropocentrism, and search for new forms of relationship with animals and environments in the contemporary context.	2		2				4	4	M. Calarco, <i>Thinking through animals</i> , p. 6-69.
4. Anthropocene as a challenge to imagination. Non-human timescales and the emergence of planetary awareness. The difference between humanity as a	6		2				8	4	D. Chakrabarty, <i>The Human Condition in the Anthropocene</i> ,

species and humanity as a political subject. Dipesh Chakrabarty's idea of conjoined histories. Climate change as a hyperobject.									<i>Lecture 1</i> , p. 139-164.	
5. The Capitalocene. The role of global capitalism in the transformation of nature. The production of abstract nature and cheap nature. Capitalism as a way of organizing human and non-human natures. The metabolic rift theory and the crisis of life-making.	4		2					6	4	S. Barca, <i>Forces of Reproduction: Notes for a Counter-Hegemonic Anthropocene</i> , p. 1-7; 27-52; 59-61.
6. Gaia Theory. The Gaia Hypothesis as it was formulated by James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis. Bruno Latour's reinterpretation of Gaia according to his Actor-Network Theory. Latour argues that Gaia is no longer the backdrop to human history, but an active participant in it.	4		2					6	4	Bruno Latour. <i>Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime</i> . Cambridge: Polity, 2017, pp. 75-110.
7. The Chthulucene. Donna Haraway's notion of the Chthulucene as an opposition to the Anthropocene and the Capitalocene. The distinction between autopoiesis and sympoiesis. Haraway's notion of sympoiesis as "becoming-with" in multispecies worlds.	4		2					6	4	Donna J. Haraway. <i>Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene</i> . Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016, pp. 30-57.
8. The Neganthropocene. For Bernard Stiegler, the Anthropocene is associated with the increase of entropy and the destruction of biodiversity and habitats. Stiegler challenges this approach with his notion of the Neganthropocene, which means negentropy as a new form of life.	2							2		
9. Patchy Anthropocene. Anna Tsing and Bruno Latour argue that the Earth is not a unified globe but a multiplicity resisting any unification and homogenisation. Anna Tsing introduces the notion of "patchies", whereas Bruno Latour discusses "critical zones", which mark a new way of situating ourselves after the collapse of the old "global" worldview.	4		2					6	4	Anna Tsing. "On Nonscalability: The Living World Is Not Amenable to Precision-Nested Scales", <i>Common Knowledge</i> , 2012, 18 (3), pp. 505-524.
10. Imagining Anthropocene futures. "Good Anthropocene" and its critique; the necessity for alternative conceptions of well-being. Degrowth, buen vivir and other visions of non-consumerist and non-extractivist living. Multispecies flourishing and the Symbiocene.	4		2					6	4	G. Albrecht, <i>Exiting the Anthropocene and Entering the Symbiocene</i>
11. Preparing for an oral presentation in seminar (presentation of a selected part of the text).									6	
12. Study of secondary literature, preparing for an exam.									47	
Total	32		16					48	85	

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Exam or written assignment	50	In the examination session	<p>The student will answer two questions from the programme in writing. The following will be assessed:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Identifies the most general issues, understands the most general theses and arguments, and presents a reasonably coherent presentation - 1 to 3 points.</p> <p>Alternatively, students can choose a written assignment. For the assignment, the student can choose one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose two or three authors or theories discussed in lectures and seminars and compare them on a specific aspect. - Choose a contemporary phenomenon and analyze it using a chosen theory or author. <p>The recommended length of the paper is 3000-3500 words. The following will be assessed: demonstration of knowledge and competence; creativity in analyzing and presenting the chosen theory; and examination and explanation of problems.</p>
Active participation in seminars	20	During the semester	Accumulative mark. The grade calculation will depend on the number of students taking the course. The following will be assessed: demonstration of knowledge and competence, creativity in examining and explaining problems.
Seminar presentation	30	During the semester	<p>Presentation of a selected part of the text.</p> <p>Recognises key concepts and thesis - 1 point.</p> <p>Recognises the main concepts and theses and presents the development of the argument of the text – 2 points.</p> <p>Presents the main issues, the main thesis, and the argumentation in a coherent and articulate manner, formulating the main questions in a 3-point format.</p>

Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
Required reading				
Anthony Giddens	1991	<i>Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age</i>		Cambridge, Polity Press
M. Calarco	2015	<i>Thinking through animals. Identity, Difference, Indistinction</i>		Stanford: Stanford University Press
S. Barca	2020	<i>Forces of Reproduction: Notes for a Counter-Hegemonic Anthropocene</i>	Cambridge Elements in Environmental Humanities	Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
D. Chakrabarty	2015	<i>The Human Condition in the Anthropocene</i>	The Tanner Lectures on Human Values	https://tannerlectures.org/lectures/the-human-condition-in-the-anthropocene/
G. Albrecht	2016	“Exiting the Anthropocene and Entering the Symbiocene”	<i>Minding Nature</i> 9.2	https://www.humansandnature.org/filebin/pdf/minding_nature/may_2016/Albrecht_May2016.pdf

B. Latour.	2017	<i>Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime</i>		Cambridge: Polity Press.
Haraway, D. J. d.	2016	<i>Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene</i>		Durham and London: Duke University Press.
Stiegler, B.	2018	<i>The Neganthropocene</i>		London: Open Humanities Press.
Tsing, A.	2012	“On Nonscalability: The Living World Is Not Amenable to Precision-Nested Scales”	<i>Common Knowledge</i> , 18 (3)	
Tsing, A.	2015	<i>The Mushroom at the End of the World. On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins</i>		Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
Recommended 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. Rethinking Modernity in a New Epoch.</i>		London: Routledge.
Jason W. Moore	2015	<i>Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital</i>		London and New York: Verso.
Stiegler, B.	2021	<i>Bifurcate. ‘There Is No Alternative’</i>		London: Open Humanities Press.
Latour, B.	2018	<i>Down to Earth. Politics in the New Climatic Regime</i>		Cambridge: Polity.
Latour, B., Weibel, P. (eds.)	2020	<i>Critical Zones: The Science and Politics of Landing on Earth</i>		Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.