

Module Title:	Philosophy from Plotinus to the Scholastics
Module Code:	403PPTS
Level:	4
Credit Rating:	20 credits
Duration:	200 hours
Teaching Hours:	40
Academic Responsibility:	Monica Tobon PhD

Module Aims:

- To develop an ability to read, interpret, analyse and evaluate philosophical texts.
- To acquaint the student with the primary philosophical thinkers after Aristotle
- To show the importance of Plotinus and Neoplatonism for the history of philosophy
- To demonstrate the importance and crucial influence Neoplatonic language and ideas had on Christian philosophy
- To show the state of philosophy at the so-called 'Dark Ages' before Eruigena

Module Content:

This module functions as a 'bridge' between what was studied in the Ancient Greek philosophy module and what will be studied in the Medieval Philosophy module. Attention will be paid to Plotinus and the emergence of what has become known as 'Neoplatonism' and its important contribution to philosophy since its arrival. The essential ideas of Neoplatonism the One, The Nous, the World Soul, the problem of evil inter al, will be explored as well as the contribution of Porphyry in its spread and its importance for Christian philosophy. The module will end its examination of the development of philosophy from Plotinus [Augustine, Boethius, Ps.Dionysius]onwards at the point where John Scottus Eruigena arrives on the philosophical time thus setting the scene for Medieval Philosophy.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module students should be able to :

1. Demonstrate a systematic understanding of the principle aspects of Ancient Greek philosophy after Aristotle and before the middle ages.
2. Be able to offer a coherent appreciation of that philosophy and major Ancient Greek post Aristotelian philosophers.
3. Think and work creatively and intellectually and be stimulated in their search for useful knowledge and insight into the endeavours of Ancient Greek philosophy and its practical applications.
4. Critically reflect, assess and offer problem solving solutions to aspects of their work both in this area of study and others by adopting a systematic philosophical approach.

Learning and Teaching Strategy:

The module will be taught through a variety of teaching methods: delivered lectures, question/discussion, power point presentation, philosophical text, response and discussion, problem setting and possible solutions from students, presentations by

students (with feedback from peers), at least one of the presentations will involve the students working in groups.

Assessment:

This module will be assessed through two 2,500 essays.

Indicative Essay Titles

1. Plotinus and Origen of Alexandria both attended the school of Ammonias Saccas at Alexandria. Are there features of their teaching which would indicate a common source moderated to fit in with their philosophical purposes?
2. Discuss the idea that Augustine is only comprehensible through the lens of Neoplatonism.
3. How far do you agree with the statement that the Pseudo-Dionysius is a 'Neo-Platonist masquerading as a pious Christian'?
4. Assess the importance of John Scottus Eriugena's contribution to the spread of Christian Neoplatonism.

Illustrative Bibliography

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