

# **Tutorial Letter 101/3/2022**

## **Introduction to Western Philosophy PLS1501**

**Semester 1 and 2**

**Department of Philosophy, Practical &  
Systematic Theology**

This tutorial letter contains important information about your module.

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Dear Student

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Department of Philosophy, Practical and Systematic Theology and to the module Introduction to Western Philosophy (PLS1501). We trust that you will find this module intellectually and philosophically stimulating. This module is offered on a semester basis and the tutorial letter contains information for Semester 1 and Semester 2. Assignments for the two Semesters are different and you must always refer to the correct Semester you are registered for. This tutorial letter is an important document which you must read and refer to for the entire duration of this module. It acts as your guide in the successful completion of this module. It outlines the study units to be covered and the estimated amount of time you may devote to each unit. However, you should remember that this is only a guide and your success in this module will depend on the amount of time you yourself set aside to study. As you plan your study program, you should always take into consideration important dates such as the due dates for assignments and of course the date for the final examination. At the end of each study unit, there are self-test questions you must attempt in order to measure your own understanding of the topic but these should not be submitted for marking. This module is offered as blended (meaning that we use a *combination* of printed and online material to engage with students).

The study material for this module comprises of the following:

1. **Tutorial Letter 101:** which is this Tutorial Letter. It contains all the important information and guidelines on completing this module. Please read it carefully.
2. **Tutorial Letter 301:** It contains guidelines on referencing which is required for all essays.
3. **Tutorial Letter 501:** This serves as the study guide for this Module.
4. There is **no prescribed textbook for this module**. Read the Study Guide. Only additional readings are provided in the study units.
5. Other Tutorial Letters on assignment feedback and any other important information that may need to be communicated will be posted once these are available and an announcement will be posted on myUnisa to that effect.

## 2 PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES

### 2.1 Purpose

To introduce you to philosophy and specifically to the history, figures, problems, and themes in Western philosophy.

To help you develop an awareness of philosophical issues in the academic environment.

To help you develop critical skills necessary for the systematic study, analysis, and evaluation of philosophical arguments.

To help you apply these reflective skills to real life situations in the world in which we live.

## 2.2 Outcomes

Once you have completed this module, you will have the theoretical competence necessary for undertaking more advanced philosophical studies.

More specifically, you will

- a) Understand the basic theoretical frameworks and dimensions of philosophical thinking.
- b) Develop skills to think systematically and to construct philosophical arguments and counter arguments.
- c) Develop a critical philosophical attitude which will give you the skills to assess various philosophical positions.
- d) Be able to deal with arguments of increasing complexity.

## 3 CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION

Unisa has implemented a transformation charter based on five pillars and eight dimensions. In response to this charter, we have placed curriculum transformation high on the teaching and learning agenda. Curriculum transformation includes the following pillars: student-centred scholarship, the pedagogical renewal of teaching and assessment practices, the scholarship of teaching and learning, and the infusion of African epistemologies and philosophies. These pillars and their principles will be integrated at both programme and module levels as a phased-in approach. You will notice a marked change in the teaching and learning strategy implemented by Unisa, together with how the content is conceptualised in your modules. We encourage you to embrace these changes during your studies at Unisa in a responsive way within the framework of transformation.

### **Notice of change of Learning Management System from SAKAI to Moodle in the near future**

Modules offered by UNISA are either *blended* (meaning that we use a *combination* of printed and online material to engage with students) or *online* (all information is available via the *internet*). In all cases of online engagement, we use myUnisa as our virtual campus. From 2022, the myUnisa virtual campus *may* change from SAKAI the *Learning Management System* currently in use to Moodle. A *Learning Management System* is an online system that is used to administer, document, deliver educational material and support engagement with students. The introduction of a new *Learning Management System* is a systematic process, and for this reason, some modules may display a different new look and feel.

Please be on the lookout for information from your lecturer as well as other UNISA platforms to determine where you will be able to access your virtual module site. Information as to the tools that will be available to engage with the lecturer and fellow students to support your learning will also be communicated via various communication platforms. The university undertakes to communicate as clearly and as frequently as is necessary to facilitate a smooth transition from SAKAI to the Moodle *Learning Management System*.

## **4 LECTURER(S) AND CONTACT DETAILS**

### **4.1 Lecturer(s)**

Prof P Mungwini

Email: [mungwp@unisa.ac.za](mailto:mungwp@unisa.ac.za)

Phone: 0124296317

Office 9-102 Winnie Madikizela-Mandela Building  
Muckleneuk Campus, Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge  
Pretoria

### **4.2 Department**

You are welcome to contact our administrative officer

Ms. Petronela Sekhukhune

Office: 9-51 Winnie Madikizela-Mandela Building  
Muckleneuk Campus, Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge  
Pretoria, South Africa

PO Box 392, UNISA, 0003, South Africa

Phone: +27 12 429 6888

Email: [sekhunp@unisa.ac.za](mailto:sekhunp@unisa.ac.za)

### **4.3 University**

Contact addresses of the various administrative departments are included in the brochure Study@Unisa which you received with your study package. Always use your student number when you contact the university.

## **5 RESOURCES**

### **5.1 Prescribed book(s)**

There is no prescribed book for this module.

### **5.2 Recommended book(s)**

There are no recommended books for this module.

### **5.3 Electronic reserves (e-reserves)**

There are no e-reserves for this module.

### **5.4 Library services and resources information**

The Unisa Library offers a range of information services and resources:

- For brief information, go to <https://www.unisa.ac.za/library/libatglance>
- For more detailed Library information, go to <http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Library>
- For research support and services (eg Personal Librarians and literature search services), go to <http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Library/Library-services/Research-support>

The Library has created numerous Library guides: <http://libguides.unisa.ac.za>

Recommended guides:

- Request and find library material/download recommended material: <http://libguides.unisa.ac.za/request/request>
- Postgraduate information services: <http://libguides.unisa.ac.za/request/postgrad>
- Finding and using library resources and tools: [http://libguides.unisa.ac.za/Research\\_skills](http://libguides.unisa.ac.za/Research_skills)
- Frequently asked questions about the library: <http://libguides.unisa.ac.za/ask>
- Services to students living with disabilities: <http://libguides.unisa.ac.za/disability>

Important contact information:

- Ask a Librarian: <https://libguides.unisa.ac.za/ask>
- Technical problems accessing library online services: [Lib-help@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Lib-help@unisa.ac.za)
- General library related queries: [Library-enquiries@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Library-enquiries@unisa.ac.za)
- For queries related to library fines and payments: [Library-fines@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Library-fines@unisa.ac.za)

## 6 STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The *Study @ Unisa* website is available on myUnisa: [www.unisa.ac.za/brochures/studies](http://www.unisa.ac.za/brochures/studies)

The website has all the tips and information you need to succeed at Unisa.

### 6.1 First-Year Experience Programme @ Unisa

For many students, the transition from school education to tertiary education is beset with anxiety. This is also true for first-time students to Unisa. Unisa is a dedicated open distance and e-learning institution. Unlike face-to-face/contact institutions, Unisa is somewhat different. It is a mega university and all our programmes are offered through a blended learning mode or fully online learning mode. It is for this reason that we thought it necessary to offer first-time students additional/extended support so that you can seamlessly navigate the Unisa teaching and learning journey with little difficulty and few barriers. In this regard we offer a specialised student support programme to students entering Unisa for the first time. We refer to this programme as Unisa's First-Year Experience (FYE) Programme. The FYE is designed to provide you with prompt and helpful information about services that the institution offers and how you can access information. The following FYE programmes are currently offered:

- FYE website: All the guides and resources you need to navigate through your first year at Unisa can be accessed using the following link: [www.unisa.ac.za/FYE](http://www.unisa.ac.za/FYE)
- FYE e-mails: You will receive regular e-mails to help you stay focused and motivated.
- FYE broadcasts: You will receive e-mails with links to broadcasts on various topics related to your first-year studies (eg videos on how to submit assignments online).
- FYE mailbox: For assistance with queries related to your first year of study, send an e-mail to [fye@unisa.ac.za](mailto:fye@unisa.ac.za)

## 7 STUDY PLAN

### Semester 1

<b>Study Unit 1:</b> Conquest and the history of Western philosophical education in South Africa. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501. Activity: Attempt the Self-test questions in the unit.	10 notional hours January 30- 3 February
<b>Study Unit 2:</b> The Pre-Socratics, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501 Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 6 February-17 February
<b>Study Unit 3:</b> Medieval Philosophy- Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501 Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 20 February- 2 March
<b>Study Unit 4:</b> Greeks II Plato and Aristotle's Ethical Theories. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501. Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 5 March-16 March
<b>Study Unit 5:</b> Medieval Ethics- Augustine and Aquinas. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501. Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 2 April- 13 April
<b>Study Unit 6:</b> The Greeks III- Political Philosophy. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501. Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 16 April- 27 April
Revision and Preparation for Examinations.	



## Semester 2

<b>Study Unit 1:</b> Conquest and the history of Western philosophical education in South Africa. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501. Activity: Attempt the Self-test questions in the unit.	10 notional hours 2 July- 6 July
<b>Study Unit 2:</b> The Pre-Socratics, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501 Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 9 July-20 July
<b>Study Unit 3:</b> Medieval Philosophy- Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501 Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 23 July-3 August
<b>Study Unit 4:</b> Greeks II Plato and Aristotle's Ethical Theories. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501. Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 6 August- 17 August
<b>Study Unit 5:</b> Medieval Ethics- Augustine and Aquinas. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501. Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 20 August- 31 August
<b>Study Unit 6:</b> The Greeks III- Political Philosophy. Reading: Tutorial Letter 501. Activity: Attempt the self-test questions in the unit.	20 notional hours 3 September-14 September
Revision and Preparation for Examinations.	

Remember that this is only a suggested reading plan the assignment questions and their due dates must also guide you on which topics to read first so that you can be able to respond adequately to the question.

## 8 PRACTICAL WORK

There is no practical work.

## 9 ASSESSMENT

### 9.1 Assessment criteria

During the semester, you will be required to write and submit two assignments which will be assessed following the criteria outlined below. This will be followed by a written examination at the end of each semester. Your essay should comprise of the following:

Introduction	Is there an introduction? Does it spell out the aims of the essay? Does it shed light on the critical aspects of the question and key concepts-typical of philosophy?
Body	Is the philosophical theme, concept, or problem adequately explained? Are the arguments clearly presented and supported? Does the presentation satisfy the philosophical tenets of coherence, clarity, and consistency? Has the student demonstrated a good knowledge of the reading material? Does the student make use of scholars to support his/her own ideas? Has appropriate content been covered and communicated properly? Analysis and evaluation of arguments: has the student made any effort to go beyond the text and make his/her own meaningful philosophical contribution and or analysis?
Conclusion	Is there a conclusion that sums up the major argument in the essay?
Referencing	Are all materials that have been consulted properly referenced? Is the referencing system chosen being used consistently throughout the essay (whether endnotes; footnotes or in-text referencing) and bibliography?
Overall impression	The essay's overall impression, from well thought out sub-headings, paragraphing, pagination and font size. Has the student adhered to the prescribed essay length?

## 9.2 Assessment plan

- To complete this module, you will be required to submit two assignments.
- All information on when and where to submit your assignments will be made available to you via the myUnisa site for your module.
- Due dates for assignments, as well as the actual assignments are available on the myUnisa site for this module.
- To gain admission to the examination, you will be required to submit at least one assignment.
- Your assignments will comprise a combination of short paragraph questions and a long essay.
- The assignment weighting for the module is 40%.
- The examination will be a take-home examination.
- The examination will count 60% towards the final module mark.

### 9.3 Assignment numbers

- There are no assignment due dates included in this tutorial letter.
- Assignment due dates will be made available to you on the landing page of myUnisa for this module. We envisage that the due dates will be available to you upon registration.
- Please start working on your assignments as soon as you register for the module.
- Log on to the myUnisa site for this module to obtain more information on the due dates for the submission of the assignments

### 9.4 Assignment due dates

- Modules offered by Unisa are either *blended* (meaning that we use a *combination* of printed and online material to engage with you) or *online* (all information is available via the *internet*). In all cases of online engagement, we use myUnisa as our virtual campus.
- From 2022, the myUnisa virtual campus will be offered via a new learning management system. This is an online system that is used to administer, document and deliver educational material to you and support engagement with you.
- Look out for information from your lecturer as well as other Unisa platforms to determine how to access the virtual myUnisa module site.
- Information on the tools that will be available to engage with the lecturer and fellow students to support your learning will also be communicated via various platforms.
- The University undertakes to communicate as clearly and as frequently as is necessary to ensure optimum advantage in the use of the new learning management system.
- Additional information on the use of the myUnisa site for the module, as well as features to engage and communicate with your lecturer and other students will also be made available via the online site for the module.
- Therefore, log on to the myUnisa site for your module to gain more information on where to complete and/or upload your assignments and how to communicate with your lecturer.

Please note that assignments are submitted on or before the due dates indicated. Early submissions are encouraged. Do not wait for the final minute.

### 9.5 Submission of assignments

As indicated in section 9.2, you need to complete two assignments for this module. Details on the assignments are available on myUnisa.

## 9.6 Other assessment methods

There are no other assessment methods for this module.

## 9.7 The examination

Examination information and details on the format of the examination will be made available to you online via the myUnisa site. Look out for information that will be shared with you by your lecturer and e-tutors (where relevant) and for communication from the University

# 10 ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

## 10.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words, ideas and thoughts of others and presenting them as your own. It is a form of theft which involves several dishonest academic activities, such as the following:

- Cutting and pasting from any source without acknowledging the source.
- Not including or using incorrect references.
- Paraphrasing without acknowledging the original source of the information.

## 10.2 Cheating

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Completing assessments on behalf of another student, copying from another student during an assessment or allowing a student to copy from you.
- Using social media (eg WhatsApp, Telegram) or other platforms to disseminate assessment information.  
Submitting corrupt or irrelevant files.
- Buying completed answers from “tutors” or internet sites (contract cheating).

10.3 More information about plagiarism can be downloaded on the link below <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/myunisa/default/Study-@-Unisa/Student-values-and-rules>

# 11 STUDENT WITH DISABILITY

The Advocacy and Resource Centre for Student with Disability (ARCSWiD) provides an opportunity for staff to interact with new and returning students with disabilities.

If you are a student with a disability and would like additional support or need additional time for assessments, you are invited to contact your lecturer Prof Mungwini at [mungwp@unisa.ac.za](mailto:mungwp@unisa.ac.za) so that you can be assisted.

## **12 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

The *Study @ Unisa* website provides you with relevant study information.

## **13 SOURCES CONSULTED**

Refer to the reference list in the study guide.

## **14 IN CLOSING**

This tutorial letter contains important information for the successful completion of this module. We would like to thank you for choosing philosophy. It is our hope that the module will heighten your ability to engage philosophically and help you not only to become a reflective scholar but a good citizen.

## **15 ADDENDUM**

There is no addendum.