
School of Economics and Finance

MMCA 401 METHODOLOGY

Trimester One 2008

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

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Class Times and Room Numbers

Friday 11-30 to 12-20 RWW126

The final examination will be held in the period 6 June to 25 June

Course Objectives

By the end of the course the students should

Have the ability to analyse the structure and assess the cogency of arguments

Have an understanding of some of the central themes in the philosophy of social science

Course Content

Full details for the readings given below can be found in the next section

1. Week beginning 25 Feb

Lecture: Argument analysis

Reading: Argument Analysis Handout, Baggini [1], Baggini [2], Govier CHs 1-3

2. Week beginning 3 Mar

Lecture: Argument analysis

Reading: Argument Analysis Handout, Baggini [1], Baggini [2], Govier CHs 1-3

Non assessed assignment: Standardise and evaluate passages 4, 8, 19 from Argument Analysis Handout.

3. Week beginning 10 Mar

Lecture: Case Study of Argument Analysis: Nagel, "Free Will."

Reading: Nagel

Non assessed assignment: Read the introductory section and the section headed “11.1 The Naturalistic Tradition” from Salmon [1995] and then present all of the arguments contained in section 11.1 in standard form.

4. Week beginning 24 Mar

Lecture: Argument Analysis/Testing Hypotheses
Reading: Salmon (1995) Sections I to V and VII

5. Week beginning 31 Mar

Lecture: Explanation
Reading: “Explanation” in Course documents, Baker and Bettner, Hollis p. 68-70,, Searle p.168-9.

6 Week beginning 7 Apr

Lecture: Social Study and Objectivity
Reading: Pratt

Non assessed assignment: Standardise Baker and Bettner’s explanation for the paucity of interpretative/critical studies in mainstream accounting journals? Is their explanation convincing? Standardise Baker and Bettner’s argument which concludes that mainstream accounting journals should publish more interpretative/critical studies. Is their argument cogent?

7 Week beginning 28 Apr

Lecture: Philosophy of Social Science 1
Reading: Salmon (1992) 11.1 to 11.4, [Braybrooke]

8 Week beginning 5 May

Lecture: Philosophy of Social Science 2
Reading: Salmon [1992] 11.5 to end. [Searle]]

9. Week beginning 12 May

Lecture: Philosophy of Social Science 3
Reading: Hollis, opening section and sections 1 and 2

10. Week beginning 19 May

Lecture: Philosophy of Social Science 4
Reading: Hollis, sections 3 and 4, [Boghossian, Schick and Vaughan]

11. Week beginning 26 May

Lecture: Homo Economicus-Homo Sociologicus [1]
Reading: Elster, Becker, Hollis Section 3.1

Expected Workload

Students should devote about 10 to 12 hours a week of independent study to this course

Readings

1. Govier, T., 1992, *A Practical Study of Argument*, Third Edition, Belmont, Wadsworth, [BC177 G721P 3ed] at least CHs. 1-3 and Ch. 11 Multiple copies of the book are available in the Study Hall. Notice it is important that you attempt some of the exercises in this book.
 2. Argument Analysis Handout
 3. Full details of the readings referred to in the lecture outline are presented below. Students will be provided with copies of these.
 4. For some of the topics notes prepared by the lecturers will be provided.
- Baggini, J (1).**, 2002, "Introduction", from *Philosophy, Key Themes*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan. **p1**
- Baggini, J (2).**, 2002, "Introduction", from *Philosophy, Key Texts*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan. **p6**
- Baker, C. R., and M. S. Bettner**, 1997 "Interpretative and Critical Research in Accounting: A Commentary On Its Absence From Mainstream Accounting Research", *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 8, 293-310. **p12**
- Becker, G.**, 1986, "The Economic Approach to Human Affairs.", from J. Elster (ed.) *Rational Choice*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell. **p22**
- Boghossian, P. A.**, 2001, "What is Social Construction?", *Times Literary Supplement*, February 23, 6-8. **p30**
- Braybrooke, D.**, 1987, "Three Sides of Social Science.", from *Philosophy of Social Science*, Englewood Cliffs N.J., Prentice Hall. **p33**
- Elster, J.**, 1989, "Social Norms and Economic Theory", *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 3, 99-117. **p43**
- Hirschman, A. O.**, 1982, "Rival Interpretations of Market Society: Civilising, Destructive, or Feeble?", *Journal of Economic Literature*, XX, 1463-1484. **p53**
- Hollis, M.**, 1996, "Philosophy of Social Science", from N. Bunnin and E. P. Tsui-James (eds), *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford, Blackwell. **p65**
- Lipsey, R. G.**, 1966, "Introduction", chapter 1 from *An Introduction to Positive Economics*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London. **p80**
- Macintyre, A.**, 1981 "The Character of Generalisations in Social Science and their Lack of Predictive Power", from *After Virtue*, London, Duckworth Press. **p89**
- Nagel, T.**, 1987, "Free Will", from *What Does It All Mean*, Oxford, Oxford University Press. **p99**
- Pratt, V.**, 1978, "Social Study and Objectivity", Chapter 11 from *The Philosophy of Social Science*, Methuen, London. **p106**
- Rosenberg, A.**, 1995, "What is the Philosophy of Social Science", Chapter 1 from, *The Philosophy of Social Science*, second edition, Boulder, Westview Press. **p111**
- Salmon, M. H.**, 1992, "Philosophy of the Social Sciences", from *an Introduction to the Philosophy of Science* [Q175 I61 T], A Text by Members of the Department of the History and Philosophy of Science of the University of Pittsburgh. **p125**
- Salmon, M. H.**, 1995, "Confirmation of Hypotheses", from *Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking*, third edition, Fort Worth, Harcourt Brace. **p136**
- Schick, T. and L. Vaughn**, 1999, "Relativism, Truth and Reality", from *How to Think about Weird Things*, Mountain View California, Mayfield Publishing Company. **p155**

Searle, J., 1984, "Prospects for the Social Sciences.", from *Minds Brains and Science*, London, Penguin. p168

The lectures will be given assuming that the students have already read the relevant material. For most of the tutorials you should, before attending,

1. Prepare a short summary of the material that is to be discussed.
2. Identify what you take to be the central arguments/explanations and provide a standardisation of them.
3. Evaluate these arguments/explanations using the methods suggested in the lectures

Assessment Requirements

Assignment 1	20%
Assignment 2	30%
Two hour Registry examination	50%

All pieces of assessment will contribute to and test the three objectives, with the balance varying.

Assignment 1: Due 27 Mar, 3-30 a.m.

Assignment 2: Due 30 May

Details of Assignment 1 and 2 will be given in a separate document

The final examination will consist of two parts. Part A will consist of a compulsory question in which students are presented with an argument which they have to appraise using the tools of argument analysis. Part B will consist of a set of essay questions, of which two have to be answered. The weighting for Part A is 25% and the weighting for Part B is 75%. To help you with preparing for the examination a set of revision questions will be distributed separately.

Penalties

Late work will be accepted without penalty with good reason (e.g. a medical certificate) and prior permission. In other cases 5 marks will be deducted from the student's mark (out of 100) for each day, or part day, the assignment is late.

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information will be conveyed by email

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office

The Faculty's Student and Academic Services Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office

The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building on the ground floor (EA005). This counter is the first point of contact for :

- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Notice of Turnitin Use

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. *At the discretion of the School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin.* You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx

For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website www.victoria.ac.nz/fca under Important Information for Students:

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times. Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 6015. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 5842.