The New Zealand Curriculum puts a strong emphasis on critical thinking, most notably in its vision, values and key competencies. This suggests that students ought to think critically about problems inside and outside their classrooms on a regular basis. In this seminar I discuss the gap between these aspirations and current pedagogical achievements, with a focus on the problem of weak sense critical thinking: the tendency of students to use critical thinking skills one-sidedly, to defend their own beliefs, while attacking the beliefs of others. I will outline a method of teaching critical thinking that incorporates students’ worldviews, and end with a report on preliminary results from research I’m conducting with Dr Justine Kingsbury and Dr Tracy Bowell on measuring fair-minded critical thinking, or critical thinking in the strong sense.

Dr. Ilan Goldberg is a research associate with the Philosophy Programme of the University of Waikato. He specialises in critical thinking pedagogy, with a particular interest in problems associated with the influences of worldviews on reasoning. He taught critical thinking courses at the University of Auckland, Massey University, and the University of Waikato. In 2013 Ilan gained a Graduate Diploma in Teaching (Secondary), and in 2014 he taught social studies, and was the Teacher in Charge of History at Whangarei Boys’ High School.

Teaching Critical Thinking in New Zealand: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Ilan Goldberg

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Wednesday 22 April, 4.30pm
Karori Campus, GR 311