

**SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

**PHILOSOPHY 106
CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL ISSUES
2009 TRIMESTER 1
2 March to 1 July 2009**

Philosophy Programme: The Philosophy Programme is located on the fifth, sixth, and seventh floors of the Murphy Building. The School Office (MY518) has a direct line, (04) 463 5368. The admin assistant is Sophia Zhao.

The Cast:

Nick Agar (Course Coordinator)

MY601 x5046 nicholas.agar@vuw.ac.nz

Dan Turton

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David Eng

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Sondra Bacharach

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Matt Gers

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The course tutors are: Michael Hemmingsen, Rhydian Thomas, and Brendan Vize

LECTURE OUTLINE

Weeks 1-2	Dan Turton	Introduction to Ethics, Ethics and advertising
Week 3-4	David Eng	The morality of euthanasia
Weeks 5-6	Nick Agar	The morality of the death penalty
Weeks 7-10	Sondra Bacharach	The abortion debate, Life boat ethics
Weeks 11-12	Matt Gers	Cloning and Genetic Enhancement

LECTURES: Lectures are on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays in HMLT206 from 11:00-11:50.

Tutorial Times and Venues: as shown in S-cubed. Tutorials commence in the **second** week of the course. **Attendance at tutorials is not compulsory, but is strongly recommended**

PHIL106 will use S-Cubed for tutorial registration.

Use your internet browser to go to: <https://signups.vuw.ac.nz>.
Use your normal **student login** and **password** to sign into S-Cubed.
Click on “**PHIL106**” You will see info about your course and about the different tutorial sessions. Sign up to your preferred session by clicking on the “**sign up**” button.

Please note: This sign-up programme is only available from Monday 2 March to Friday 6 March 2009. If you do not sign up during this time, you may be extremely limited in your choice of tutorial time. If you have problems please see the Philosophy Programme Administrator, Murphy Building, 5th Floor, MY518.

Mandatory Course Requirements:

None.

Relation Between Assessment and Course Aims/Objectives: The topics for the in-class tests, essay, and final examination are chosen to ensure that the subject matter in the course has been adequately covered in the depth appropriate for the 100-level, while also giving students an opportunity to focus on those arguments and issues that they find most interesting. Students should demonstrate that they understand and can evaluate arguments (issues) covered in at least four sections of the course.

Communication of additional information

A copy of this course information outline, the tutorial programme, overheads used in lectures, and any additional course information will be posted on *Blackboard*.

Learning objectives

Aims and Objectives: The main aim is to provide an introduction to philosophy, with special attention given to the nature and analysis of argumentation. The student who passes this course will have acquired an adequate understanding of, and ability to evaluate, some arguments (issues) discussed in several areas of philosophy. The course should provide a solid foundation for further work in the discipline, and also help students think more carefully and critically about a wider range of issues.

Graduate attributes

As with all PHIL courses, learning objectives of this course contribute to the attainment of specific attributes in the areas of logical and critical thinking, conceptual analysis and rational and ethical decision-making. Please consult the Programme Prospectus 2009, p. 7, for more details or on our website <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/phil/degrees/index.aspx>

Expected workload

In accordance with Faculty Guidelines, this course has been constructed on the assumption that students will devote 12 hours per week to PHIL 106. This includes 3 hours of lectures per week and one tutorial

Text: The *Philosophy 106 Coursebook 2009* is available for purchase from the University's Class Notes Shop on the ground floor of the Student Union Building. Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to

enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays) 10.00 am – 1.00 pm Saturdays. Ph: 463 5515

Assessment requirements

PHIL 106 is assessed on the basis of one in-class test, one essay, and the final examination.

The final grade is determined as follows:

In-class test: 15%

Essay: 35%

Final exam 50%

The **in-class test** will be held during the lecture time on **Friday 27 March**. The test will consist of one question.

In-Class Test Question:

Is advertising immoral or not? Make sure that you critically discuss some of the arguments from the lectures for and against the morality of advertising. Also ensure that you clearly outline and justify your stance on the issue.

Essay Question:

The **essay**, of approximately 2,000 words, is due by **4:00 pm on Thursday 14 May**.

Write on one of the two following topics:

Question 1

Is active euthanasia morally permissible?

Question 2

Evaluate one of Ernest Van Den Haag or Martin Perlmutter's arguments in favour of the death penalty.

You must submit your essay electronically via *Blackboard* (please consult *Blackboard* for instructions). **This electronic version will be sent to *turnitin.com*, an anti-plagiarism website, and is the version that will be graded.** (Additional information regarding the use of Turnitin will be given on the essay topic handout.) However, as a back-up **you must also submit a hard copy of your essay to the Philosophy Programme office (MY 518).**

The **final examination** is a closed-book, three-hour examination, to be held during the exam period (Friday 12 June to Wed 1 July 2009). The examination paper will be divided into three sections, one for the abortion debate, one for life boat ethics, and one on cloning and genetic enhancement. Students must answer three questions, no two of which may be from the same section. All questions will have equal marks value. A short handout confirming arrangements for the final exam will be posted on *Blackboard* in May.

Return of assignments

In-class tests will be held in the main office of the Philosophy Programme (MY 518) and will be made available for pick-up *roughly 2 weeks* after the test. They can be picked up between 12-2pm. Essays will have made available on *Blackboard roughly 2 weeks* after submission.

Penalties

Students will be penalised for late submission of essays – a deduction of 10 marks per week, or part thereof. Work that is more than 14 days late will not be marked. However, penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds (for example, illness [presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary] or similar other contingencies). An extension can be granted only with the (prior) approval of the course co-ordinator, and only in **exceptional** circumstances. Procrastination is not a legitimate ground for an extension. If you have other assignments due around the same time, plan ahead.

Mandatory course requirements

None

Statement on the use of Turnitin:

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 online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

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 the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

This website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates.