



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

**PHILOSOPHY 309: SPECIAL TOPIC
SOCIETY, POWER AND KNOWLEDGE**

TRIMESTER 2 2009
13 July to 15 November 2009

COORDINATOR/LECTURER David Eng
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OFFICE HOURS: Wed., Thurs., 2-3

LECTURES: Lectures are on Tuesdays from 9am-12noon in Murphy (MY) LT 101.

COURSE DELIVERY: This course involves three lectures per week. Attendance is strongly encouraged but not mandatory. There are no tutorials for this class.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Additional information and changes about the course will be conveyed to students via class Blackboard.

COURSE CONTENT: This course examines the key issues relating to knowledge within a social context. The course explores issues underlying how we can acquire knowledge from others: How do we know when to trust experts? Should there be controls on free speech and communication? How do we make sense of groups and whether they have beliefs? The course then examines how social factors affect the objectivity of scientific knowledge and in particular issues relating to whether reality is socially constructed and whether science presupposes a masculine point of view.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students passing the course should be able to demonstrate a broad knowledge of and an ability to critically analyse some of the central philosophical issues on how social factors and power affect knowledge.

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. For more details please consult our website 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 16 hours, which includes 3 hours of lecture, per week to this course.

READINGS - ESSENTIAL TEXTS: Students must purchase the PHIL 309 Course Book. For the first two weeks of the trimester, all undergraduate student notes will be sold from the

Memorial Theatre foyer. After week two, all undergraduate student notes will be sold from the Student Notes Distribution Centre 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. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from the shop. Customers will be contacted when they are available. Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS: PHIL 309 is assessed on the basis of in-class tests, an essay, and a final exam:

- (a) **In-Class Tests:** There will be **3 in-class tests**, each worth **10%** of your final grade. The tests will occur at the beginning of class in weeks 3, 6, and 9. Each test will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and are designed to test your understanding of the material in a particular section of the course.
- (b) **Essay:** The essay is worth **35%** of your overall final grade. The essay is designed to test your ability to critically analyse one of the key issues discussed in class. It should be approximately **2,500-2,750 words** and is due by **5 pm on Friday, 16 October**. It must be submitted electronically to Blackboard; a hard copy is not required. The essay topics are available on the assignments page of Blackboard.
- (c) **Final Exam:** The final examination is worth **35%** of your final grade. It is designed to test whether you have acquired a broad knowledge of the issues in this course. The exam is a **closed-book, 3 hour** exam and will require that you write **4 short essays**. Information about the examination rules and timetable can be found at the following web address: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/timetables/exam-timetable.aspx>. The **examination period** for second trimester 2009 runs from **27 October to 15 November**. Please note that you must be available to attend an examination at any point during this period.

PENALTIES: A make-up for the in-class tests will be granted only for valid grounds, such as a serious illness. Presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary. In such cases, you must notify the course instructor as soon as a potential problem emerges.

Students will be penalised for late submission of essays—a deduction of 5% for the first day late (e.g., 5 pm, 30 October), and 5% per day thereafter, up to a maximum of 5 days. Penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds, e.g., illness (presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary) or similar other contingencies. In these cases, you must notify the course instructor as soon as a potential problem emerges.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS: There are no mandatory course requirements for this course.

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>

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.

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>

The AVC(Academic) 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. This website can be accessed at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/Publications.aspx>