

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

**PHILOSOPHY  
 PHIL 104 KNOWLEDGE AND REALITY**

**TRIMESTER 1 2012  
 5 March to 4 July 2012**

**Trimester dates**

Teaching dates: 5 March to 8 June 2012

Mid-trimester break: 6–22 April 2012

Study week: 11–15 June 2012

Examination/Assessment Period: 15 June to 4 July 2012

*Please note that as the University has not yet set examination dates for courses, students must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the scheduled examination period.*

**Withdrawal dates**

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

**Names and contact details**

The contact details of the lecturers are listed below:

Cei Maslen  MY 707 463-6524 cei.maslen@vuw.ac.nz Office Hours: Tuesdays 10-11am & by apt	Nick Agar (Course Coordinator) MY 601 463-5046 nicholas.agar@vuw.ac.nz Office Hours by apt.	Dan Weijers  MY 715 463-5233 x8651 dan.weijers@vuw.ac.nz Office Hours: Wednesdays 12-1pm	Dan Burkett  MY 710 463-5233 x8937 daniel.burkett@vuw.ac.nz Office Hours: Wednesdays 9-11am
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The contact details of the tutors are listed below:

Dan Burkett (Senior tutor) MY 710 463-5233 x8937 Daniel.Burkett@vuw.ac.nz Office Hours: Wednesdays 9-11am	Simon Bunckenburg MY 704 463-5233 x8959 Office Hours: Mondays 10- 11am	Felice Marshall  MY 704 463-5233 x8959 Felice.Marshall@vuw.ac.nz Office Hours: Fridays 1-2	Agata Orlowicz  MY 706 463-5233 x8938 agata.orlowicz@gmail.com Office Hours: Thursdays 12-1pm
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**Class times and locations**

Lecture time: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 11:00-11:50 in first trimester.

Lecture venue: HMLT206

Tutorials commence in the *second* week of the course. *Attendance at tutorials is compulsory*: students can miss two tutorials without penalty, but will lose 2% for each tutorial missed after that (unless for medical or other serious reasons.)

*PHIL104 will use S-Cubed for Tutorial registration. These are the tutorial times:*

Thursday	9:00	9:50	MY617
Wednesday	3:10	4:00	EA201
Monday	9:00	9:50	EA201
Wednesday	10:00	10:50	KK202A
Thursday	13:10	14:00	KK202A
Monday	9:00	9:50	KK203
Thursday	14:10	15:00	KK203
Monday	10:00	10:50	MY531
Monday	10:00	10:50	MY631
Monday	13:10	14:00	VZ506
Wednesday	10:00	10:50	VZ515
Thursday	13:10	14:00	VZ515
Wednesday	13:10	14:00	KK202A

**Using S-Cubed:**

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 "*PHIL104*" 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: If you do not sign up during the first week of trimester, you may be extremely limited in your choice of tutorial time. The sign-up programme is only available until 19 March 2012. If you have problems please see the Philosophy Programme Administrator, Murphy Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, MY518.

**Course delivery**

There will be three one-hour lectures per week. Students will be expected to have done some set reading for each lecture. There will be one one-hour tutorial per week, commencing with the second-week of the course. Attendance at tutorials is not compulsory, but is strongly recommended.

**Communication of additional information**

Additional information will be conveyed to students in lectures, and via Blackboard.

**Course Prescription**

An introduction to philosophical questions about the nature of reality and what (and how) we can know about it. Topics may include: What, if anything, do we know? What is time?

What is science? Is the mind separate from the body? 50% internal assessment, 50% examination.

### **Course content**

The course is divided into four sections.

*Section 1* (Ceil Maslen): 12 lectures (5 March- 30 March)

This section addresses analyses of knowledge and the problem of scepticism. (This covers Part I of the textbook and some additional topics).

*Section Two*. (Dan Burkett): 5 lectures (2 April- 27 April)

This section looks at time travel and the nature of space and time. (This covers Part V of the textbook.)

*Section Three* (Nick Agar): 12 lectures (30 April- 26 May)

This section looks at issues connected with the mind. Can computers think? Might technological advances radically enhance minds? (This covers Parts III and IV of the textbook.)

*Section Four* (Dan Weijers): 5 lectures (28 May- 8 June)

This section looks at the debate about personal identity. (This covers Part II of the textbook.)

### **Learning 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. For more details please consult our website <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/hppi/about/phil-overview.aspx#grad-attributes>

### **Expected workload**

In accordance with Faculty Guidelines, this course has been constructed on the assumption that students will devote 13 hours per week to PHIL 104. This includes 3 hours of lectures per week and one tutorial.

### **Readings**

**Essential texts:**

PHIL 104 has a required textbook this year: *Science Fiction and Philosophy: from time-travel to superintelligence*, edited by Susan Schneider, Wiley & Sons, 2009.

This will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 13 February to 16 March 2012. After week two of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building. Customers can order textbooks online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or can email an order or enquiry to [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz). Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. 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 104 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 Monday 26 March. The essay will be due by 12 noon on Friday May 18th

**Essay Question:**

The **essay**, of approximately 2,000 words, is due by 12 noon on Friday May 18th.

Here is the essay question:

Is time travel possible? Discuss with reference to both forwards and backwards time travel, but focus your answer on the possibility of backwards time travel. Be sure to discuss the Grandfather Paradox in your answer.

*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).*

HOW TO WRITE THE ESSAY: If you need help with your essay then please see Dr Das or your tutor during their office hours. I also recommend P. Martinich, *Philosophical Writing*, Blackwell, 1996.

HOW WE MARK YOUR ESSAYS: See the handout "Assessment Criteria" on the BlackBoard website for criteria that we use in marking essays.

The **final examination** is a closed-book, three-hour examination, to be held during the exam period (Friday 15 June to Wednesday 4 July 2012). The examination paper will be divided into four sections, one for theory of knowledge; one for moral philosophy; one for philosophy and

religion, and one for philosophy of science. Students must answer four questions, no two of which may be from the same section. All questions will have equal value. A short handout confirming arrangements for the final exam will be posted on *Blackboard* near the end of trimester.

### **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. 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

### **Class Representative**

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator, tutors and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

### **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.

### **WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION**

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study). Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress). Most statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy), except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx) (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/avcacademic](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic).