



SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMME PHIL 123: CRITICAL THINKING

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

Students who enrol in this course must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal 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

<u>LECTURER AND COURSE COORDINATOR</u>	<u>SENIOR TUTOR</u>
Stuart Brock MY 701 (04) 463-6970 Stuart.Brock@vuw.ac.nz Office Hours: By appointment	Gareth Leniston-Lee MY704 021 0296 9449 leniston.lee@gmail.com Office Hours: Monday 1:00-2:00

TUTORS

Kasper Christensen MY612 skal_vi_kramme@hotmail.com Office Hour: Tuesday 1:00-2:00	Chiara Ferrario MY 708 Chiara.Ferrario@vuw.ac.nz Office Hour: Wednesday 1:00-2:00
Gareth Leniston-Lee MY704 leniston.lee@gmail.com Office Hour: Monday 1:00-2:00	Udayan Mukherjee MY704 mukheruday@myvuw.ac.nz Office Hour: Thursday 1:00-2:00

Class times and locations

Lecture time: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10:00–10:50

Lecture venue: Maclaurin 101

Students are also strongly encouraged to sign up for weekly tutorials using S-Cubed. Information about S-Cubed can be found by clicking the course information icon in the blackboard course menu. Tutorials commence in the **second** week of the course. Tutorial groups will be posted on blackboard on the Friday of the first week of the course.

Course delivery

This course will involve three lectures per week, and one tutorial. Friday lectures will involve a mini-test on material covered in the previous week. Lectures and tutorials will run for 50 minutes. Attendance is strongly encouraged but not mandatory. Students will also be encouraged to work in small groups outside of the class and to participate in discussions online through the blackboard course page.

Communication of additional information

Additional information will be conveyed to students via Blackboard.

Course Prescription

This course provides an introduction to the theory of critical thinking. Students will learn how to evaluate arguments and weigh up the evidence in support of a conclusion. Students will also learn how to make rational decisions based on the hypotheses they come to believe after consideration of such arguments

Learning objectives

Students passing the course should be able to:

1. evaluate arguments and weigh up the evidence in support of a conclusion.
2. make rational decisions based on the hypotheses they come to believe after consideration of such arguments.

Expected workload

During the twelve teaching weeks of trimester, there will be four contact hours a week. Independent working hours during teaching weeks should average at nine hours per week. Independent work during other periods (preparing for the test and exam, and writing up the assignment) should equal roughly 44 hours in total.

Group Work

The course will involve a small group work component. The group project will be group assessed (i.e., all contributing members of the group will be assigned the same grade for the project). Group work will contribute to 5% of the overall assessment. It is also a mandatory

course requirement that all students contribute to a group project. Details of the group project appear under 'assessment requirements.'

Readings

Students must purchase the PHIL 123 course book, which will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 13 February to 16 March 2012. After week two of the trimester all student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus.

Customers can order 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 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.

Additional Required Materials

Students will also be required to buy the computer program *Rationale* and use it for their assignment, and some tutorial exercises and mini-tests. The program is available to download at the following url: www.mindmuse.com.au/Thinking_Skill_Solutions/VUW.html. The program usually costs \$69USD, but Victoria students enrolled in PHIL123 will be able to purchase it from this personalised webpage for the substantially reduced price of \$27.50NZD. Purchases should be made in the first week of the course. Be aware, though, that Rationale is PC software. If you have a Mac, you will need virtual software plus the Microsoft Windows operating system. If you do not own a PC or a Mac with Windows and virtual software, please see the course coordinator in the first week to make alternative arrangements.

Assessment requirements

The assessment will be based on the following: one group project (worth 5%); one assignment (worth 30%); seven mini-tests (each worth 5%); and one final exam (worth 30%).

TEST: On most Fridays students will be required to complete a short test (approximately 20 minutes) on material covered the week before. The test will be designed to partially assess how well students have met both of the course learning objectives. The tests will be held during the usual lecture time (10:00-10:50) in MC101. The test will be composed of one or more problem questions designed to get students to apply skills learnt the previous week. Each of a student's best seven test results will count towards his or her final grade. Each of these tests is worth 5% of the final grade. Tutorials will be designed to prepare students for the test that week. Students who miss three or more tests, and have a legitimate excuse for

missing them, will be assigned an average of their other grades for all except the first two tests missed (e.g., if you miss three tests and have a legitimate reason for missing all three, you will get 0 for the first two tests and the average grade for the third). If the reason is medical, a doctor's certificate must accompany the request. An excuse will count as legitimate only if it can be demonstrated that you could not reasonably have been expected to make it to the test given your circumstances. The course coordinator will decide what is reasonable in these circumstances. More details about the tests are posted on blackboard. [35%]

GROUP PROJECT: The group project is due on Thursday April 5 before 4:00pm. The project is designed to assess how well students have met the first learning objective. Projects should be handed into Sophia Zhao in the Philosophy Programme Office (MY 518). The project will require students to work together in assigned groups to diagram an argument using the methods and tools discussed in lecture. Groups will be assigned in the tutorial of the week beginning March 26, 2012. Students will be required to use the argument software *Rationale* to complete their project, and are advised to keep a copy of their project. Late projects will not be accepted. Individual students who do not contribute to the group work and individuals that are part of a group that fails to hand in a project will be given an opportunity to hand in another make-up project. A make-up project will count towards the student's mandatory course requirements but will not be given a numerical grade (unless the course coordinator is satisfied that there was a legitimate reason for the failure to submit or contribute). More details of the project are posted on blackboard. [5%]

ASSIGNMENT: The assignment is due on Monday May 14 at 10:00am. The assignment is designed to assess how well students have met the first learning objective. Assignments should be handed in to the lecturer at the beginning of the lecture that day or to Sophia Zhao in the Philosophy Programme Office (MY 518) if they are handed in any earlier. The assignment will require students to diagram someone else's argument using the methods and tools discussed in lecture. The argument will be a recently published opinion piece chosen by the student (but not chosen by anyone else). Students will be required to use the argument software *Rationale* to complete their assignment, and are advised to keep a copy of their assignment. Late assignments will only be accepted if the student has a legitimate excuse for failing to get it in on time. Requests for an extension should be made *before* the due date, and should be directed to the course coordinator. If the reason is medical, a doctor's certificate must accompany the request. An excuse will count as legitimate only if it can be demonstrated that you could not reasonably have been expected to hand the assignment in on time given your circumstances. The course coordinator will decide what is reasonable in these circumstances. More details of the assignment are posted on blackboard. [30%]

FINAL EXAM: After completing the course, students should sit a two-hour closed-book exam on all of the material covered in the course. The exam is designed to assess how well students have met both of the course learning objectives. The exam will be composed of true/false, short answer, and problem questions. More details about the exam are posted on blackboard. 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 first trimester 2012 runs from Friday 15 June to Wednesday 4 July. Students who enrol in this course must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during this period. [30%]

Return of assignments

All assignments and completed mini-tests will be returned in tutorials. Uncollected work will be available from the tutors during their office hours.

Penalties

Unless an extension has been granted by the course coordinator, late *individual* assignments will not be accepted. Moreover, there will be no make-up tests for those who miss the in-class tests (see above for more detail). Late group work or a lack of engagement with group work may result in a student failing the course (see below).

Mandatory course requirements

To gain a pass in PHIL123, each student must contribute to the group project. Students who fail to do so will be given an opportunity to hand in an alternative project. A make-up project will count towards the student's mandatory course requirements but will not be given a numerical grade (unless the course coordinator is satisfied that there was a legitimate reason for the failure to submit or contribute).

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>

WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at 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. Most statutes and policies are available at 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 (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/avcademic.