



SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMME PHIL 403: METAPHYSICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY

TRIMESTERS 1 AND 2, 2012

1 March* to 18 November 2012

Trimester dates

Teaching dates: 1 March* to 19 October 2012

Mid-trimester breaks: 6–22 April 2012; 27 August to 7 September 2012

Mid-year break (including University study and examination period): June 9–July 15 2012

Last piece of assessment due: 15 October 2012

*The start date for this course is a few days earlier than the official start of first trimester. This is because Professor Max Cresswell will be overseas after the mid-trimester break (and therefore will not be available to teach after the fifth week of trimester). All students in the course have communicated by email with Professor Cresswell alerting them to the need for an extra session before the mid-trimester break. All students have indicated that March 1 between 2:00 and 4:00 pm is a convenient time for such a session. Approval for the extra session has been sought and given by the Associate Dean (Students). Please email the course coordinator (Stuart Brock) if this poses any unforeseen difficulty for you.

The taught portion of all courses at 400-level will end after 18 weeks, in order to allow students time to focus on their PHIL 489 research essays. During the final six weeks of the term, it is expected that you will be working on your research essays, and staff will be available for meetings, consultations and advice.

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

Stuart Brock (co-ordinator) Murphy 701 (04) 463-6970 Stuart.Brock@vuw.ac.nz	Max Cresswell Murphy 721 (04) 463 6902 Max.Cresswell@vuw.ac.nz	Cei Maslen Murphy 707 (04) 463 6524 Cei.Maslen@vuw.ac.nz
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Office hours: By appointment

Class times and locations

FIRST LECTURE TIME: Thursday March 1, 14:10–16:00
FIRST LECTURE VENUE: New Kirk 202

Regular lecture time: Tuesdays 14:10–16:00
Regular lecture venue: New Kirk 201

Course delivery

This course will involve one seminar per week for the whole of the first trimester and the first six weeks of second trimester. Seminars will run for one hour and 50 minutes. Students are expected to attend all seminars for the course and will be expected to read closely two or more articles for each class. Students must come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading critically.

Communication of additional information

Additional information will be conveyed to students via email.

Course Prescription

This course examines several topics in contemporary metaphysics and epistemology.

Course Content

The first six weeks of the course will be taught by Max Cresswell, on Russell's *Philosophy of Logical Atomism* and Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. The following seven weeks will be taught by Stuart Brock on the metaphysics of fictional objects. The final six weeks will be taught by Cei Maslen on causation. More detailed information about the course content will be given in the first class of each module.

Learning objectives

Students passing the course should be able to:

1. understand and appreciate key issues and debates in metaphysics and epistemology,
2. critically evaluate the views, methods, and presuppositions of metaphysicians and epistemologists working in the analytic tradition, and
3. embark on a research project in metaphysics and epistemology.

Expected workload

PHIL403 is a 30-point full-year course. The total expected workload for students enrolled in this course is 300 hours.

Readings

A full reading list and selected papers for each module will be given to students in (or by) the first class of each module.

Assessment requirements

1. A 3000-3500 word essay on Max's section of the course, due on Wednesday 11 April.
 2. A 3000-3500 word essay on Stuart's section of the course, due on Monday July 16.
 3. A 3000-3500 word essay on Cei's section of the course, due on Monday October 15.
- Each essay is worth 1/3 of your final grade
 - Each essay task is designed to assess how well students have met all of the course learning objectives.

Penalties

Late essays will only be accepted if the student has approval from the Philosophy Coordinator of Graduate Studies (Associate Professor Nick Agar). Without such approval, the essay will not be accepted.

There will be no penalty for exceeding the word limit, but precision is a virtue in philosophy and exceeding the word limit is a sign that you are padding your essay or have not focused narrowly enough on the topic.

Mandatory course requirements

There are no mandatory course requirements in PHIL403.

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. 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/avcacademic.