



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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

**PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMME
PHIL 106: CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL ISSUES
20 POINTS**

TRIMESTER 1 2015

Important dates

Trimester dates: 2 March to 1 July 2015

Teaching dates: 2 March to 5 June 2015

Easter/Mid-trimester break: 3–19 April 2015

Study period: 8–12 June 2015

Examination/Assessment Period: 12 June to 1 July 2015

Note: students who enrol in courses with examinations must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the scheduled examination period.

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Class times and locations

Lectures:

Stream 1: Monday, Tuesday, Friday 11:00-11:50

Stream 2: Monday, Tuesday, Friday 14:10-15:00

Venue: MCLT 101

Tutorials:

Students must sign up to a tutorial group. Tutorials begin in week 2 of the trimester. Tutors will be announced in class and on Blackboard. For tutorial times and venues see:

www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables

A list of tutorial topics will be available at the start of term (posted on Blackboard). The topic of each week's tutorial will be the material covered in lectures in the previous week.

Names and contact details

Course Coordinator: Nicholas Agar
Room No: MY 601
Phone: 463 5061
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Office hours: by arrangement

Lecturer: Sondra Bacharach
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Phone: 463 5178
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Lecturer: Ramon Das
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Office hours: by arrangement

Communication of additional information

This course uses Blackboard and presumes that all enrolled students have valid myvuw.ac.nz addresses. Please check that this account is active and you have organised email forwarding. Additional information and any changes to the timetable or lecture and seminar programme will be advised by email, announced in lectures, and posted on the course Blackboard site.

Prescription

An introduction to issues in applied ethics. Topics may include: the morality of the death penalty, war, cloning, abortion and euthanasia, and the moral status of non-human animals.

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students passing the course should be able to:

1. explain the fundamental ethical principles that govern good scholarship in philosophy
2. explain some of the current debates in the field of applied ethics
3. evaluate a variety of arguments
4. define clearly and precisely key concepts in the field of applied ethics.

Teaching format

PHIL 106 is delivered as three 50-minute lectures per week and one 50-minute tutorial per week.

Class schedule

Weeks 1-2: Ramon – Topics: ethical theory, animal rights

Weeks 3-4: Nick – Topics: genetic enhancement, cloning

Weeks 5-6: Ramon – Topic: global justice

Weeks 7-8: Nick – Topic: death penalty

Weeks 9-12: Sondra – Topics: abortion, euthanasia

Mandatory course requirements

There are no mandatory course requirements beyond achieving an overall pass mark of 50%.

Workload

In accordance with University Guidelines, this course has been constructed on the assumption that students will devote 200 hours to the course throughout the year. An approximate indication of the hours to be spent on each component of the course is as follows:

Preparation and attendance at classes	100 hours	
<i>Breakdown of assessment:</i>		
In-class tests	15 hours	
Tutorial exercises	15 hours	
Essay	35 hours	
Examination	35 hours	(= total 200 hours)

Assessment

Assessment Item	Weighting	CLOs	Due Date
In-class test (50 mins)	15%	2,3,4	31 March
Tutorial exercises (best 5 out of 6)	15%	1,2,3,4	See below
Essay, 2000 words	35%	1,2,3,4	13 May - 5.00 pm
Final Exam (two hours)	35%	2,3,4	exam period 12 June to 1 July

- In-class test:** An in-class test will be held on Tuesday, 31 March during the usual lecture time. (The test given at the afternoon lecture time will not be the same as the one given at the morning lecture time.)
- Tutorial exercises:** Over the course of the trimester there will be six exercises held during tutorials. A student's *five* best test results will count toward 15% of his/her final grade (and the weakest result will be ignored). These tests begin in week 2 of the trimester (i.e., the first tutorial), and thereafter in weeks 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12. These will be very short tests, more like mini-quizzes. There will be no make-up tests for students who miss the tutorial without a documented excuse.
- Essay:** The essay should be approximately 2000 words long. It is worth 35% of the final grade. Essays must be submitted electronically to Blackboard; a hard copy is not required. The essay is due no later than **5.00pm on Wednesday, 13 May**. The essay topics will be available on Blackboard.

4. **Final examination:** The date and time will be announced later in the trimester, but will fall sometime between 12 June and 1 July. The exam consists of three essay questions, and is worth 35% of the final grade.

The tutorial exercises will assess your knowledge of the material covered in lectures during the previous week, the in-class test will assess your understanding of the material given in previous weeks, the essay will assess your knowledge of the topics and ability to critically analyse the central philosophical issues, and the examination will focus on the comprehension and understanding of the topics in the latter part of the course.

Submission and return of work

Essays must be submitted electronically to Blackboard; a hard copy is not required. The in-class test from the Office, Murphy Room 518, between the hours of 2.00 and 3.00 pm from Monday to Friday and must show their Student ID card before collection. The tutorial exercises will be returned by tutors during the time of the tutorial.

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

Late submission of assignments will not be accepted unless the student makes an appointment as soon as practically possible with the course coordinator to explain the lateness (preferably before the assignment is due to be submitted). The circumstances under which an extension will be considered are outlined in section 3.2.1 of the Assessment Handbook.

(See: www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf).

Penalties

Philosophy Programme policy stipulates that late submission of essays is penalised. Late essays submitted without extensions having been obtained will receive a penalty of 5 points per day (or part thereof) late. No assignment will be accepted after 29 May.

Set texts

There is no required textbook for PHIL 106. Every week there is a set reading posted on Blackboard which students will be expected to have read prior to the lectures, and to have thought about (and be ready to discuss) for the following week's tutorial.

In addition, lecturers will post extra readings on Blackboard grouped according to topic.

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

Student feedback

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be covered during the course. Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz