



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMME PHIL 318: Philosophy of Science 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 to 19 April 2015

Last assessment item due: 15 June 2015

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: Monday 10.00-11.50 am, Wednesday 10.00-11.00 am

Venue: Alan McDiarmid (AM)LT105

Tutorials: Wednesday 11.00-11.50 am, in the lecture room

Names and contact details

Course Coordinator: Edwin Mares
Room No: Murphy MY618
Phone: 04 463 5234
Email: edwin.mares@vuw.ac.nz
Office hours: By appointment

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

This course surveys the issues and positions in modern philosophy of science, beginning with a discussion of the history of philosophy of science from Logical Positivism to the present. We then discuss particular problems such as the problem of induction, the problem of scientific explanation, the debate between realists and anti-realists, and the relationship between the various natural and social sciences.

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students passing the course should be able to:

1. explain in outline at least two of the central debates in contemporary philosophy of science;
2. give in outline the central history of philosophy of science in the 20th Century;
3. understand and explain the central arguments concerning the value of science (such as the argument concerning the underdetermination of theory by evidence, the theory-ladenness of observation, and the arguments concerning the problem of induction);
4. apply what the student has learned in the course to information in the media concerning contemporary scientific theories and related issues.

Teaching format

PHIL 318 is delivered as one 2 hour lecture and one 50 minute lecture per week and a 50-minute tutorial per week.

Lectures: The lectures are a core foundation for learning. They present the central course material.

Tutorials: The tutorials reinforce the lecture experience. They give students an additional chance to ask questions and to formulate their views on course material.

Mandatory course requirements

There are no mandatory course requirements in addition to 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 trimester, approximately 13 hours a week across the trimester. This total includes the following:

- weekly attendance at lectures, and tutorials; (4 hours)
- completion of all set weekly readings for tutorials; (6 hours)
- research and writing for assessment tasks. (3 hours)

Assessment

Assessment for this course is based entirely on three essays. Each essay is to be between 2,500 and 3000 words.

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Essay 1 (2,500-3,000 words)	30%	1,2,3,4	16 April
2	Essay 2 (2,500-3,000 words)	30%	1,2,3,4	18 May
3	Essay 3 (2,500-3,000 words)	40%	1,2,3,4	15 June

Submission and return of work

All assignments are due before midnight on the due date.

Submission: All work submitted for assessment must be submitted electronically on Blackboard. All essays will be checked for plagiarism using Turnitin.com. No hard copies will be returned. All comments will be provided electronically via Blackboard.

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 15 June 2015.

Set texts

A book of readings for PHIL 318 will be available from Vic Books. Please see their website: www.vicbooks.co.nz for details on buying Books of Readings. We will advise enrolled students via Blackboard when the Book of Readings are available to purchase.

Recommended reading

In addition to the philosophical readings in the coursebook, students will be recommended to read certain articles about contemporary science from the popular media. We will assess these in tutorials. All these readings will be provided on the Blackboard site.

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