



## FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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

#### PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMME PHIL123: CRITICAL THINKING 20 POINTS

#### TRIMESTER 1 2016

#### Key dates

**Trimester dates:** 29 February to 29 June 2016

**Teaching dates:** 29 February to 5 June 2016

**Easter break:** 24–30 March 2016

**Mid-trimester break:** 25 April to 1 May 2016

**Study period:** 6–9 June 2016

**Examination/Assessment Period:** 10–29 June 2016

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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds).

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats)).

#### Class times and locations

##### Stream 1: CRN 13093

Lecture Day and Time	Venue
Monday, 12:00-12:50	Hugh Mackenzie HM104
Wednesday, 12:00-12:50	Maclaurin MC102
Friday, 12:00-12:50	Maclaurin MC102

##### Stream 2: CRN 14512

Lecture Day and Time	Venue
Monday, 10:00-10:50	Hugh Mackenzie HM104
Wednesday, 10:00-10:50	Maclaurin MC102
Friday, 10:00-10:50	Maclaurin MC102

#### Tutorials

Please see the Academic Timetable 2016 [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables).

## **Names and contact details**

Course Coordinator: Stuart Brock  
Room No: MY312  
Phone: 463-5400  
Email: Stuart.Brock@vuw.ac.nz  
Office hours: By Appointment

To sign up for a tutorial, click on the following link:

[www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables/tutorial-sign-up](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables/tutorial-sign-up)

Tutor contact details will be available on blackboard in the first week.

## **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 tutorial programme will be advised by email, announced in lectures, and posted on the course Blackboard site.

## **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.

## **Course learning objectives (CLOs)**

Students who pass this course should be able to:

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

## **Teaching format**

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. Tutorials will help students prepare for the test on the Friday of that week. Attendance at lectures and tutorials 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.

## **Mandatory course requirements**

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of at least 50%, students must submit a project (as part of group work). The requirement is in place to scaffold learning for the main assignment. Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet this requirement because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

## **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. This includes weekly attendance at lectures and tutorials and revision for and completion of all set assessment tasks.

The University's Assessment Handbook stipulates that course outlines should "specify the average time that is notionally assigned to the completion of each assessment task." Notional assignments of workload expectations appear below.

Revision for weekly test:	6-7 hours per test (36-54 hours total)
Lecture Attendance (inc. tests):	50 minutes Tue, Wed, Fri (30 hours total)
Tutorial Attendance:	50 minutes per week—except first week (9 hours)
Revision for final exam:	60-70 hours over the trimester
Exam completion time:	2 hours
Group Project:	10-15 hours
Main Assignment:	70-80 hours

## Assessment

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Weekly Tests (best seven)	35%	1, 2	N/A
2	Group Project (group assessment)	5%	1	April 8
3	Main Assignment	30%	1	May 2
4	Final Exam (two hours)	30%	1, 2	N/A

Extra credit (up to 5%) can be attained by completing the e-portfolio. Your mark for the e-portfolio will replace your worst test mark (but only if it is the greater of the two marks).

The project and assignment will be evaluated against the following six criteria:

1. ability to identify and illustrate argument patterns,
2. ability to identify premises and conclusions of arguments
3. ability to uncover tacit premises and presuppositions of arguments
4. ability to interpret arguments charitably
5. ability to evaluate arguments in terms of how rationally compelling they are
6. ability to articulate arguments clearly (salient connection to original text, use of complete declaratives, no misleading operators, no referential ambiguities, etc.)

## Submission and return of work

The group project is due on Thursday August 21 at the beginning of lecture that day. A hard copy of the project should be handed into the course coordinator then. The main assignment is due on September 8. Students must submit two versions of their assignment. A hard copy of the assignment (including a marked up copy of the original article) must be submitted to the course coordinator by the start of lecture that day. Before submitting the hard copy, students should also submit a digital copy of their diagram (and a scan of their marked up copy of the original article) via blackboard.

A grade and feedback on assignments and projects will be posted on blackboard. Tests will be returned during tutorials. If students fail to attend these tutorials in a given week, they may collect their assessment tasks from the tutors during their office hours.

## **Extensions and penalties**

Groups that fails to hand in a project (and individuals who fail to contribute to group work) will be given an opportunity to hand in another make-up project. A make-up project will count towards a 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).

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

## **Materials and equipment and/or additional expenses**

Students will be required to subscribe to Rationale Online and use it for their assignment, and some tutorial exercises. Students can get a subscription to either the basic or the extra version from the following website [www.rationaleonline.com/accounts/upgrade/educational](http://www.rationaleonline.com/accounts/upgrade/educational). The extra version, unlike the basic version, includes an ebook, allows for real time collaboration and can be used on a tablet.

A discounted rate has been provided for Victoria students, who can use a discount license code when making a purchase. Discount codes will be available from blackboard once students enroll in the course. To receive the discount, enter the relevant discount code into the "Do you already have a license code?" box, which will take you to a payment page. You will also need to create an account, which can be done before or during the purchase process. Purchase queries can be made at [www.reasoninglab.com/contact/](http://www.reasoninglab.com/contact/).

## **Set texts**

Students must purchase the PHIL 123 course book. There will also be links to additional readings posted on the Blackboard course page. The PHIL 123 course book is available from Vic Books. See their website: [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) for details on buying Books of Readings. The course book is currently available for purchase.

## **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. Contact details for the class representative will be made available on blackboard.

## **Student feedback**

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be discussed in the first week of the course. No changes to the course were made in response to feedback since the last time the course was evaluated because the median response to each of the ten standard evaluative questions was higher (closer to one) than the median response for all courses evaluated in the faculty. With respect to the only other question (i.e., the question about workload), the median response was 3.0 (where '3 = about right'). Student feedback on University courses can be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades)
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at [www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter)
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: [www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- Victoria graduate profile: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)