

# **ARTS2374 Ways of Reasoning Summer Semester, 2014**



**PHILOSOPHY@UNSW**

**Course Convener: Michaelis Michael**

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## Course Staff and Contact Details

### Lecturer

Dr. Michaelis Michael.  
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### Tutors

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**Consultation times:** by arrangement. Since the course is in intensive mode, we will often be in class together. But feel free to contact me by email or by phone. Be aware that long email responses are not possible given the number of students. We can arrange a meeting by email.

**Aims:** This course aims to introduce you to and to develop some key skills involved in critically assessing and developing arguments. More broadly, the course aims to develop skills and abilities that are essential for dealing discursively with open intellectual questions and complex practical issues and problems of many kinds, and it is expected that students who successfully complete the course will have improved their ability to think for themselves in a wide variety of contexts. In particular, you will develop the skills of identifying and analyzing arguments; of being able to identify presuppositions of questions.

**Overview of Course Content:** The understanding we have of our nature as reasoning beings and perhaps more is a fascinating topic which has captivated thinkers for thousands of years. In this course we will chart its history and focus on the developments in the recent past.

### ASSESSMENT

There are two components to the assessment. In class exercises will assess the student's ability to analyze arguments, to explore concepts and theories, and generally to reason and argue about issues and ideas arising out of the set material. A final exam covers all material covered in the subject basic understanding of the overall course content.

**Exercises:** There will be **four short answer exercises held in tutorials**, Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> of December, Friday 6<sup>th</sup> of December, Monday 9<sup>th</sup> of December and Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> of December. Questions will be based on material presented in lectures and selected readings from assigned readings. The exercises will test your understanding of course content and are each worth 15% of the final mark.

**Final exam:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> of December from 10am to 1pm. The exam is worth 40%.

**Note:** Attendance at class is a course requirement. Students who fail to attend at least 80% of classes without documented reasons for special consideration may be given a grade of Unsatisfactory Fail (UF) for this course.

## **OUTSIDE CLASS ACTIVITIES**

There will be two activities outside class times. Neither will be assessed. They are aimed at developing your skills and familiarizing you with the material we cover.

The first occurs on the weekend Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> of December. This will involve examining a passage and discerning the arguments within. This is not assessed and should take about two hours.

The second occurs on the weekend Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December. This is a practice exam and is not assessed. The sorts of questions covered in the practice exam will be similar to those covered in the exam on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> Dec

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> Dec

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> Dec

10am—12noon Lectures

What we do with language  
Objectivity/Subjectivity

Validity and Proof  
Argument Structures  
Truth

Aristotelian Logic  
Categorical  
Propositions

Aristotelian Logic  
Syllogisms &  
Venn Diagrams

Tutorials 1pm to 3pm

no tutorial

tutorial

1<sup>st</sup> Assessment Task  
Identifying arguments  
15%  
tutorial

2<sup>nd</sup> Assessment Task  
Validity & Soundness  
15%  
tutorial

Week 2

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> Dec

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> Dec

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> Dec

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> Dec

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> Dec

10am—12noon Lectures

Compositionality  
& Truth Tables

Truth Tables  
and Beyond

Vagueness, questions &  
presupposition

Scepticism,  
Science & Knowledge

Objectivity &  
Relativism

Tutorials 1pm to 3pm

3<sup>rd</sup> Assessment Task  
Aristotelian  
Syllogisms 15%  
tutorial

tutorial

4<sup>th</sup> Assessment Task  
Truth-Tables 15%

tutorial

tutorial

no tutorial

## **Readings**

All readings will be available on Moodle or through links provided.

### **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**

Nozick – The Nature of Rationality

Russell – ch 1 of The Problems of Philosophy

Harman – Change in View (chapters 1 & 2 in particular) (available at Harman's Website

<http://www.princeton.edu/~harman/Papers/index.html>)

### **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December**

Class Notes on Truth and Validity

### **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December**

Class Notes on Aristotle's Logic

### **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December**

Class Notes on Aristotle's Logic (again)

### **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December**

Class notes on Truth Tables and Connectives

### **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

Class notes on Truth Tables and Connectives

David Kaplan "The Meaning of 'Oops' and 'Ouch'"

<http://www.uctv.tv/search-details.aspx?showID=8593>

### **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December**

Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy article on vagueness by Roy Sorensen

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/vagueness/>

See section (2.1) in Stanford Encyclopedia Of Philosophy article on Assertion

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/assertion/>

### **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December**

René Descartes – Meditation 1

Edmund Gettier – Is Knowledge Justified True Belief?

Karl Popper – Science: Conjectures and Refutations

Carl G. Hempel "Studies in the Logic of confirmation" Mind 1945

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/2250886.pdf>

### **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December**

Simon Blackburn – Relatively Speaking

<http://www.butterfliesandwheels.com/articleprint.php?num=12>

## **RELEVANT RESOURCES**

Materials related to each class will be made available on the Moodle site or links will be provided.

### **Other useful resources are**

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://plato.stanford.edu>

JSTOR is a very useful resource for finding articles. If you are on campus, you can go there directly to download articles: <http://www.jstor.org/>

If you are off campus, go to the library catalogue and look up JSTOR in the catalogue then click on "Online Access", you should then be asked to login to your UniPass account and you will have full access to JSTOR.

Eg, here is an article you might find interesting:

**"What the Tortoise Said to Achilles" by Lewis Carroll from Mind, New Series, Vol. 104, No. 416 (Oct., 1995), pp. 691-693**  
**Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2254477>**

The hyperlink will only get you the paper directly if you are on campus. If you are not then you will need to login to your UNSW account go to the library catalogue (NOT SIRIUS) and look up JSTOR in the catalogue. Once in JSTOR you can paste in the hyperlink.

### **Advice about Intensive Mode Classes**

This class meets every day (excluding weekends) for two hours of lecture and two hours of tutorials. There are four short assessment tasks which take place in the tutorials over the nine teaching days. It is intensive in format and for that reason skipping classes is a really bad idea. Whereas with classes taught over three months, you have the chance to catch up if you fall behind, in a class taught in intensive mode there is no prospect of that. And given the nature of this course, you would be in a serious disadvantage. Material which occurs on one class is built on in the next. This means that missing one class puts you in risk of not successfully completing this subject.

### **Inquiries**

If you have inquiries about the reading, your assignments or the course in the first instance contact your lecturer, Michaelis Michael. The lecturer in this course is available for consultation at his listed consultation times, and at other times by appointment (contact details below).

If there is an issue relating to the course that you feel you need to discuss with someone other than the lecturer, please contact the Philosophy Programme Co-ordinator, Dr. Simon Lumsden, [s.lumsden@unsw.edu.au](mailto:s.lumsden@unsw.edu.au)

If you are contacting your tutor or the lecturer by E-mail please provide your name and a telephone number as well as your E-mail address.

### **Course aims**

- Provide a broad introduction to some of the most central concepts and issues in critical thinking, from both a classical and a contemporary perspective.
- Encourage in-depth analysis of individual philosophical problems, arguments, and positions, together with the development of an understanding of the wider philosophical context in which they arise.
- To enhance the development of the skills and reasoning ability associated with the discipline of philosophy.
- Provide opportunities for developing the skills necessary for scholarly inquiry, including written and oral communication skills, information literacy and research skills, and critical and analytic skills

### **Student learning outcomes**

Upon completing this course, you are expected to be able to:

- Formulate, analyse, and respond critically to the problems, arguments, and positions covered in the course.
- Display skills associated with scholarly inquiry in the discipline of philosophy, particularly the ability to recognize, create, analyze and criticize arguments.

**Attributes of UNSW Graduates**

1. The skills involved in scholarly enquiry
2. An in-depth engagement with the relevant disciplinary knowledge in its interdisciplinary context
3. The capacity for analytical and critical thinking and for creative problem-solving
4. The ability to engage in independent and reflective learning
5. Information literacy - the skills to appropriately locate, evaluate and use relevant information
6. The capacity for enterprise, initiative and creativity
7. An appreciation of, and respect for, diversity
8. A capacity to contribute to, and work within, the international community
9. The skills required for collaborative and multidisciplinary work
10. An appreciation of, and a responsiveness to, change
11. A respect for ethical practice and social responsibility
12. The skills of effective communication.

These attributes have been identified by UNSW as the characteristics it seeks to instill in its students. They include generic skills, such as information literacy and research skills, as well as more specialised skills for collaboration and effective communication. They also include more general and personal qualities, which are displayed in your relations with others and engagement with the wider world. There a number of ways in which this course contributes to graduate attributes.

First, the teaching strategies used encourage analytic and critical thinking skills, as well as the skills of effective communication. You are encouraged to express and refine your own views of the topics discussed, and engage with the complexities of various approaches to philosophical problems.

Second, the content of the course encourages the development of a respect for diversity and intellectual fair-play, as you are required to engage deeply with viewpoints that you may strongly disagree with.

Third, the assessment package in the course is designed to allow you to develop analytic and critical thinking skills, research skills, and effective communication skills. It also allows you to enhance your ability to engage in creative problem solving and independent learning. To do this, the assessment takes a number of different forms, including oral and written work.

## Learning and Teaching Rationale

This is a second-level philosophy course suitable for students who wish to develop their own understanding of the use and analysis of arguments.

No prior background in philosophy is assumed, but students should have obtained at least 36 units of credit prior to commencing the course.

The course encourages students to actively engage in philosophical inquiry as well as to acquire a significant skill set. A mixture of reading, lectures, web-based support, discussion and exercises writing will be used. Apart from illuminating the set reading material for each week, lectures will pay particular attention to the development of skills in conceptual exploration and the analysis and construction of argument. The development of these skills will also be supported through materials made available on the School website and through discussion in class.

### Formal Examination

This course has a formal examination which will be held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2013. Students are expected to give their studies priority and this includes making themselves available for the entire examination period. Travel commitments made prior to the publication of the final examination timetable are not a valid reason for alternate assessment.

### Grades

All results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards, a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the grading categories see

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/GuideToUNSWGrades.html>

## Attendance/Class Clash

### Attendance

Students are expected to be regular and punctual in attendance at all classes in the courses in which they are enrolled. Explanations of absences from classes or requests for permission to be absent from classes should be discussed with the teacher and where applicable accompanied by a medical certificate. If students attend less than 80% of their possible classes they may be refused final assessment.

**Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the student misconduct policy.**

### Class Clash

**Because this course is taught in intensive mode, class clashes will NOT be approved for this course.**

## 1. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: <http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/>. They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student's work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here:

<http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf>

## 2. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students' feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

## 3. Student Support

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the below website:

<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au>

## 4. Grievances

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should in the first instance attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at: <https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html>

## 5. Other Information

### myUNSW

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myUNSW is the single online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing & current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au>

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html>

### OHS

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UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see

<http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/>

### Special Consideration

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In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.

Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/SpecialConsideration.html>

### Student Equity and Disabilities Unit

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Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734). Information for students with disabilities is available at: <http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au>

Issues to be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.