

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEW SOUTH WALES



Australian School of Business  
School of Strategy and Entrepreneurship

**STRE8005**  
**INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**COURSE OUTLINE**  
**SEMESTER 1, 2010**

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## **1. STAFF CONTACT DETAILS**

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Ph.: 9385 9723  
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Consultation times: By appointment. Please contact me via email first.

Lecturer-in-charge: Associate Professor Peter Murmann  
Room: ASB Room 576  
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Consultation times: By appointment. Please contact me via email first.

## **2. COURSE DETAILS**

### **2.1 Teaching Times and Locations**

**Time:** Tuesday 18:00 - 21:00 (Weeks: 1-9, no class Week 10, 11)

**Location:** LAW 162

**Note:** full day or two half days Week 12 (Location to be announced)

### **2.2 Units of Credit**

This course is worth 6 units of credit.

### **2.3 Summary of Course**

This course is concerned with the nature of social science inquiry. It is intended for students in the business and management disciplines and those early in their master's and doctoral research program. The course is broken into five sections: (1) an introductory overview to the philosophy of science, (2) a review of epistemology – the nature and scope of knowledge – (3) a review of ontology – the what can be said to exist – (4) conclusions and (5) specific applications to the major disciplinary areas.

### **2.4 Course Aims and Relationship to Other Courses**

The main objectives of the course are:

1. To introduce the philosophy of science and its application to social science.
2. To outline major differing classes of theory in social science and to explicate their meta-theoretical foundations.
3. To familiarize students with the plurality of views on these issues in the intellectual community.
4. To provide students with an opportunity to apply these concepts to the analysis of issues in social science.
5. To provide students with an opportunity to practise scholarly discourse.

## 2.5 Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should:

1. Have a thorough understanding of the philosophy of science.
2. Be familiar with different classes of theory in social science and their meta-theoretical foundations.
3. Be able to evaluate social science research using meta-theoretical views.
4. Be able to proficiently base your own research on sound meta-theoretical foundations.

## 2.6 Graduate Attributes

By the end of this course, students should possess the following attributes:

1. Critical thinking and problem solving
2. Communication
3. Teamwork and leadership
4. In-depth engagement with relevant disciplinary knowledge
5. Professional skills

## 3. LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES

### 3.1 Approach to Learning and Teaching in the Course

The course will take the form of a seminar for the purpose of discussion and interaction. Readings are structured into 5 sections and 17 topics to emphasize important concepts and methods of each topic. Students will be pre-assigned readings, give presentations, lead the discussions and be encouraged to ask questions related to the topics.

### 3.2 Learning Activities and Teaching Strategies

The reading list is carefully structured to provide students with an in-depth understanding of various relevant disciplines. Students will be required to do pre-reading from the reading list in preparation for each of the seminars. For each particular item on the reading list students will give a presentation using critical thinking of the main points in order to initiate discussion.. Readings will be assigned at the beginning of the course. There will also be two written assignments, providing students with opportunities to apply major concepts to the analysis of issues in their own chosen fields.

## 4. ASSESSMENT

### 4.1 Formal Requirements

In order to pass this course, you must:

- Achieve a composite mark of at least 50

Note: the requirements of the specific degree program in which you are enrolled may **require a higher level of performance** for progression in that program. Relevant information may be obtained from your supervisor and Postgraduate Research coordinator in your School.

## 4.2 Assessment Details

Assessment Task	Weight	Learning Outcomes Assessed	ASB Graduate Attributes Assessed	Length	Due Date
1. Class discussion	20%	2, 3	5	N/A	Ongoing
2. Presentations	20%	1, 2, 3	1, 5	N/A	Per assignment
3. Written assignment 1	30%	3, 4	1	1000 words	Per assignment
4. Written assignment 2	30%	3, 4	1, 5	1,500 words	Per assignment

The assessment for this subject will be based 40% on class based requirements and participation, and 60% on submitted written materials. The class based requirements is split 50:50 between participation in discussion (including attendance) and your own presentations. The two written assignments are worth 30% each.

For the first assignment, you will be assigned one or two reading(s) in the epistemology or ontology components of the course. For each of these readings: (1) you are to prepare a short overview of the assigned reading (500 words, or 250 words each reading if you are assigned two readings) plus a discussion of relevance of that reading to thinking in your chosen field (500 words or 250 words each if you are assigned two readings) and (2) two (or one each reading if you are assigned two readings) power point slides summarizing your overview and two (or one each reading if you are assigned two readings) power point slides summarizing the relevance to your field. These papers are due at the beginning of each class.

For the second written assignment you will be assigned one/two readings relevant to your area from readings in the disciplinary application component of the course. You are to write an essay that reviews and critically evaluates the discussion in the assigned readings. Although your focus will be on the assigned articles you must integrate this with the relevant readings and discussion throughout the course. This essay is restricted to 1,500 words.

## 4.3 Assessment Format

**For the written Assignments 1 and 2**, you are expected to do a critical review of the reading(s) that will allow answer the following questions in your assignments:

- What is the **content** of the readings, summarizing clearly their main points.  
What **argument/s** and **evidence** are used (this can be empirical and/or discursive)?
- What **conclusions are reached**?
- What is your independent **evaluation** of the reading(s)?

**For written Assignment 2**, you are expected to go further and additionally explain:

- What **approach or perspective or theoretical school** is being used by the author(s) in the readings?

#### **4.4 Assessment Criteria**

To assess the learning outcomes (see Table in 4.2) for the course, the following criteria are used.

- Is there a development of a clear consistent and well-supported critical analysis of the readings? This includes quality of argument, and evaluating the extent to which it is logical, coherent and clear.
- Does the assignment follow assessment format instructions?
- Is there a demonstrated understanding of the content (concepts, argument, evidence, theory) of the readings?
- Is there an appropriateness and depth of the independent evaluation?
- Is the written communication of high quality? More specifically, is it clear, concise and incisive? Is the referencing appropriate, consistent and accurate?

#### **4.5 Assignment Submission Procedure**

All assignments are due on the scheduled dates at the beginning of the class (without exception). Students must also provide electronic copies of their presentations and essays (also due at the beginning of the class; or emailed by the beginning of the class).

#### **4.6 Late Submission**

Assignments will usually not be accepted late.

Any extension on assignments will not be granted except where there are extenuating circumstances supported by medical evidence or in instances where prior agreement has been made with the lecturer. This must be agreed on in advance of the due date. Penalties for late assignments will be 10 percent for each day late.

### **5. ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM**

The University regards plagiarism as a form of academic misconduct, and has very strict rules regarding plagiarism. For UNSW's policies, penalties, and information to help you avoid plagiarism see: <http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/index.html> as well as the guidelines in the online ELISE tutorial for all new UNSW students: <http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/skills/tutorials/InfoSkills/index.htm>.

## 6. COURSE RESOURCES

Required textbooks include:

Chalmers, A.F. (1999) *What is this thing called Science? An assessment of the nature and status of science and its methods*. Third Edition. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press. (Designated Chalmers).

Curd, M. and Cover, J.A. (1998). *Philosophy of Science: The Central Issues*. New York: W. W. Norton. (Designated C &C).

Kincaid, H. (1996) *Philosophical Foundations of the Social Sciences: Analyzing Controversies in Social Research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Designated Kincaid).

Other readings will be available in electronic format from the UNSW library. For the URL, go to the course website at:

<http://lms-blackboard.telt.unsw.edu.au/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>.

## 7. COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Each year feedback is sought from students about the courses offered in the School and continual improvements are made based on this feedback. In this course, we will seek your feedback through standard School procedures.

## 8. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to university policies in relation to class attendance and general conduct and behaviour, including maintaining a safe, respectful environment and understanding their obligations in relation to workload, assessment and keeping informed.

Information and policies on these topics can be found in the 'A-Z Student Guide': <https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html>. See especially, information on 'Attendance and Absence', 'Academic Misconduct', 'Assessment Information', 'Examinations', 'Special Consideration', 'Student Responsibilities', 'Workload' and policies such as 'Occupational Health and Safety'.

### 8.1 Workload

It is expected that you will spend at least **ten hours** per week preparing for this course. This time should be made up of reading, research, working on exercises and problems, and attending classes. In periods where you need to complete assignments or prepare for examinations, the workload may be greater.

Over-commitment has been a cause of failure for many students. You should take the required workload into account when planning how to balance study with employment and other activities.

### 8.2 Attendance

Your regular and punctual attendance at lectures and seminars is expected in this course. University regulations indicate that if students attend less than eighty per cent of scheduled classes, they may be refused final assessment.

### 8.3 Special Consideration and Supplementary Examinations

You must submit all assignments and attend all examinations scheduled for your course. You should seek assistance early if you suffer illness or misadventure which affects your course progress. For advice on UNSW policies and procedures for granting special consideration and supplementary exams, see:

‘UNSW Policy and Process for Special Consideration’:

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

### 8.4 General Conduct and Behaviour

You are expected to conduct yourself with consideration and respect for the needs of your fellow students and the teaching staff. Conduct which unduly disrupts or interferes with a class, such as ringing or talking on mobile phones, is not acceptable and students may be asked to leave the class. More information on student conduct is available at: [www.my.unsw.edu.au](http://www.my.unsw.edu.au)

### 8.5 Occupational Health and Safety

UNSW Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For more information, see

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

### 8.6 Keeping Informed

You should take note of all announcements made in lectures, tutorials or on the course website. From time to time, the University will send important announcements to your university e-mail address without providing you with a paper copy. You will be deemed to have received this information. It is also your responsibility to keep the University informed of all changes to your contact details.

## 9. ADDITIONAL STUDENT RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

The University and the ASB provide a wide range of support services for students, including:

- **ASB Education Development Unit (EDU)**  
([www.business.unsw.edu.au/edu](http://www.business.unsw.edu.au/edu))  
Academic writing, study skills and maths support specifically for ASB students. Services include workshops, online and printed resources, and individual consultations. EDU Office: Room GO7, Ground Floor, ASB Building (opposite Student Centre); Ph: 9385 5584; Email: [edu@unsw.edu.au](mailto:edu@unsw.edu.au)
- **UNSW Learning Centre** ([www.lc.unsw.edu.au](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au))  
Academic skills support services, including workshops and resources, for all UNSW students. See website for details.
- **Library training and search support services:**  
<http://info.library.unsw.edu.au>
- **UNSW IT Service Desk:** Technical support for problems logging in to websites, downloading documents etc. Library, Level 2; Ph: 9385 1333.  
Website: [www.its.unsw.edu.au/support/support\\_home.html](http://www.its.unsw.edu.au/support/support_home.html)
- **UNSW Counseling Service** (<http://www.counselling.unsw.edu.au>)



Free, confidential service for problems of a personal or academic nature, and workshops on study issues such as 'Coping With Stress' and 'Procrastination'.  
Office: Level 2, Quadrangle East Wing ; Ph: 9385 5418

- **Student Equity & Disabilities Unit**

(<http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au>)

Advice regarding equity and diversity issues, and support for students who have a disability or disadvantage that interferes with their learning.

Office: Ground Floor, John Goodsell Building; Ph: 9385 4734

## 10. COURSE SCHEDULE

The schedule below is indicative of the topics and timing. Given the flexible nature of the course, and to encourage open and critical learning, the course schedule may be varied to accommodate appropriate material. The classes from Weeks 1-8 will follow schedule. However, it is most likely that the presentations of the final work will be held closer to the last week of May and be done with one full day session or two half-day sessions so as to provide equal time to all students to prepare their final assignment.

Week	Date	Topic	Who?
		(1) INTRODUCTION	
1	2/03	Course Introduction; Philosophy of (Social) Science	LD
2	9/03	Philosophy of (Social) Science; Science & Pseudoscience	LD
		(2) EPISTEMOLOGY	
3	16/03	Induction; Falsification	Students
4	23/03	Paradigms & Programs; Anarchistic Theory	Students
5	30/03	Bayesianism; Experimentation	Students
		(3) ONTOLOGY	
6	13/04	Causation, Explanation & the Laws of Nature	Students
7	20/04	Realism and Rationalism	Students
8	27/04	Functionalism & Individualism; Hermeneutics & Critical Theory	Students
9	4/05	(4) CONCLUSION & Instructions for Assignment 2	LD & PM
		(5) DISCIPLINARY APPLICATION AND INTERPRETATION	
10		No class	
11		No class	
12	25/05 (tentative)	Economics, Finance & Accounting* Law & Society; Marketing* Management*	Students

## READINGS LINKED TO SECTIONS

### (1) INTRODUCTION

#### **Philosophy of (Social) Science**

Fay, B. and D. Moon (1977), "What would an adequate philosophy of social science look like?" *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 7(3), 209–227.

Kuhn: "The nature and necessity of scientific revolutions"; "Objectivity, value judgment, and theory choice" in C & C.

McMullin: "Rationality and paradigm change in science" in C & C.

Longino: "Values and objectivity" in C & C.

Kincaid: "Issues and arguments"; "Challenges to scientific rationality".

#### **Science and Pseudoscience**

Popper: "Science: Conjectures and refutations" in C & C.

Kuhn: "Logic of discovery or psychology of research?" in C & C.

Lakatos: "Science and pseudoscience" in C & C.

Thagard: "Why astrology is a pseudoscience" in C & C.

Ruse: "Creation-science is not science" in C & C.

### (2) EPISTEMOLOGY

#### **Induction**

Chalmers: "Science as knowledge derived from the facts of experience"; "Observation as practical intervention"; "Experiment"; "Deriving theories from facts: Induction".

Lipton: "Induction" in C & C.

Popper: "The problem of induction" in C & C.

#### **Falsification**

Chalmers: "Introducing falsificationism"; "Sophisticated falsificationism, novel predictions and the growth of science"; "The limits of falsificationism".

#### **Paradigms and Programs**

Chalmers: "Theories as structures I: Kuhn's paradigms"; "Theories as structures II: Research Programs".

#### **Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge**

Chalmers: "Feyerabend's anarchistic theory of science"; "Methodical changes in method".

#### **Bayesianism & Probability**

Chalmers: "The Bayesian Approach".

Glymour: "Why I am not a Bayesian" in C & C.

W. Salmon: "Rationality and objectivity in Science or Tom Kuhn meets Tom Bayes" in C & C.

#### **Experimentation**

Chalmers: "The new experimentalism".

Duhem: "Physical theory and experiment" in C & C.

Quine: "Two dogmas of empiricism" in C & C.

Gillies: "The Duhem thesis and the Quine thesis" in C & C.

Laudan: "Demystifying underdetermination" in C & C.

### (3) ONTOLOGY

#### **Causation, Explanation and the Laws of "Nature"**

Chalmers: "Why should the world obey laws?"

Kincaid, "Causes, confirmation and explanation".

Humphreys, P. (1986), "Causation in the Social Sciences: An Overview," *Synthese*, 68(1), 1–12.

Ayer: "What is a law of nature?" in C & C.

Dretske: "Laws of Nature" in C & C.

Mellor: "Necessities and universals in natural laws" in C & C.

Cartwright: "Do the laws of physics state the facts?" in C & C.

#### **Realism and Rationalism**

Chalmers: "Realism and anti realism".

Van Fraassen: "Arguments concerning scientific realism" in C & C.

Musgrave: "Realism versus constructive empiricism" in C & C.

Boyd, R. (1989) "What realism implies and what it does not," *Dialectica*, 43(1-2), 5–29.

Friedman, M. (1953) "The methodology of positive economics", in *Essays in Positive Economics*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 3–43.

Simon, H. (1978) "Rationality as process and as product of thought," *American Economic Review*, 68(2), 1–16

Kincaid, H. (2000) "Formal rationality and its pernicious effects on the social sciences," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 30(1), 67–88.

#### **Functionalism and Individualism**

Kincaid: "Functionalism defended"; "The failures of individualism".

#### **Hermeneutics and Critical Theory**

Kincaid: "A science of interpretation".

Habermas, J. and Ben-Habib, S. (1981) "Modernity versus postmodernity," *New German Critique*, 22(Winter), 3–14.

Habermas, J. and Cronin, C. (1996) "On the cognitive content of morality," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, New Series*, 96, 335–358.

### (4) CONCLUSION

Davis, M. (1971) "That's interesting! Towards a phenomenology of sociology and a sociology of phenomenology," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1(4), 309–344.

Lamont, M. (1987) "How to become a dominant French philosopher: The case of Jacques Derrida," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 93(3), 584–622.

Blaug, M. (2001) "No history of ideas, please, we're economists," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 15(1) 145–164.

Van de Ven, A. (2007). "Engaged scholarship in a professional school"; "Philosophy of science underlying engaged scholarship"; "Practicing engaged scholarship," in *Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## (5) DISCIPLINARY APPLICATION AND INTERPRETATION

### **Economics, Finance and Accounting**

Kincaid: "Economics: A test case".

McCloskey, D. (1983) "The rhetoric of economics," *Journal of Economic Literature*, 31, 481–517.

Gibbard, A. and Varian, H. (1978) "Economic Models," *Journal of Philosophy*, 75(11), 664–677.

Gul, F. and Pesendorfer, W. (2008) "The case for mindless economics"; Camerer, C. (2008) "The case for mindful economics"; Hausman, D. (2008) "Mindless or mindful economics: A methodological evaluation," all in A. Caplin and A. Schotter (Eds.), *The Foundations of Positive and Normative Economics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Watts R, and Zimmerman, J. (1990) "Positive accounting theory: A ten year perspective," *The Accounting Review*, 65(1), 131–156.

Frankfurter, G. and McGoun, E. (2001) "Anomalies in finance: What are they and what are they good for?" *International Review of Financial Analysis*, 10(4), 407–429.

### **Law & Society**

Leiter, B. (2001) "Legal realism and legal positivism reconsidered," *Ethics*, 111(2), 278–301.

Hardin, R. (1992) "The morality of law and economics," *Law and Philosophy*, 11(4), 331–384.

Little, D. (2000) "Explaining large-scale historical change," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 30(1), 89–112.

Fuchs, S. and Ward, S. (1994) "What is deconstruction, and where and when does it take place? Making facts in science, building cases in law," *American Sociological Review*, 59, 481–500.

Gibbons, M. (2006) "Hermeneutics, political enquiry, and practical reason: An evolving challenge to political science," *American Political Science Review*, 100(4), 1–9.

### **Management**

Bourgeois, J.L. III (1984) "Strategic management and determinism," *Academy of Management Review*, 9(4), 586–596.

Powell, T. (2001) "Competitive Advantage: Logical and Philosophical Considerations," *Strategic Management Journal*, 22(12), 875–888. Plus the follow up commentary and reactions: Durand R. (2002) "Competitive advantages exist: A critique of Powell," *Strategic Management Journal*, 23(9), 867–872; Powell (2002) "The philosophy of strategy," *Strategic Management*

*Journal*, 23(9), 873–880; Powell (2003) “Strategy without ontology,” *Strategic Management Journal*, 24(3), 285–291.

Donaldson, L. (2003) “A critique of postmodernism in organizational studies,” in E. Locke (Ed.) *Postmodernism and Management: Pros, Cons and the Alternative*, *Research in the Sociology of Organizations*, 21, 171–204.

Astley, A. and Zammuto, R. (1992) “Organization science, managers and language games”; Donaldson, L. (1992) “The Weick stuff: Managing beyond games”; Beyer, J. (1992) “Metaphors, misunderstandings and mischief: A commentary” all in *Organization Science*, 3(4), 443–474.

### **Marketing & Operations**

Calder, B. (1977) “Focus groups and the nature of qualitative marketing research,” *Journal of Marketing Research*, 14(3), 353–364.

Hunt, S. (2005) “For truth and realism in management research,” *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 14(2), 127–138.

Tadajewski, M. (2004) “The philosophy of marketing theory: Historical and future directions,” *The Marketing Review*, 4(3), 307–340.

Kleindorfer, G., O’Neill, L. and Ganeshan, R. (1998) “Validation in simulation: Various positions in the philosophy of science,” *Management Science*, 44(8), 1087–1099.

Meredith, J. (2001) “Reconsidering the philosophical Basis of OR/MS,” *Operations Research*, 49(3), 325–333.

Henrickson, L. and McKelvey, B. (2002) “Foundations of “new” social science: Institutional legitimacy from philosophy, complexity science, postmodernism, and agent-based modeling,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 99(10, Supplement 3), 7288–7295.