

HPSC3028 Advanced Topics in Philosophy Of Medicine

Course Syllabus

2012-13 session | Brendan Clarke [|b.clarke@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:b.clarke@ucl.ac.uk)

Course Information

This module will be a reading group. The first half of the term will be structured around Ludwig Fleck's seminal 1935 work *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*, as well as critical articles examining this work. As well as presenting some fascinating insights into the development of scientific medicine, the book makes several broader claims for the role of cultural conditioning in shaping science in general. It therefore anticipated many philosophical approaches more usually associated with later twentieth century philosophy of science. Focused, informal, teaching sessions during class time will be given in support of these core philosophical issues. The second half of the term will then look to develop the kinds of influence that this work has had in the years since its publications. These sessions will therefore each be structured around a single reading, selected by participating students, that illuminates these connections. Throughout the term, students will be expected to work collaboratively, including giving presentations on the readings at the weekly seminars.

This module has no pre-requisites, and is intended to act as an introduction to research in history and philosophy of science.

Basic course information

Moodle :	search 'HPSC3028'
Assessment:	Two pieces of coursework, each of 3,000 words, and each contributing 50% of the total grade for the module.
Timetable:	www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/hpsc
Prerequisites:	This module has no pre-requisites, and is intended to act as an introduction to research in history and philosophy of science.
Required texts:	Fleck, Ludwig. 1981(1935). <i>Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Course tutor(s):	Brendan Clarke
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Office location:	22 Gordon Square, Room 2.1
Office hours:	2-3pm, Monday; 12-1pm Tuesday

Schedule

UCL Week	Topic	Date	Activity
20	Introduction	08-01-13	Please read Fleck's 1936 paper (available on Moodle) in advance of this session.
21	Reading Fleck 1981 (1935).	15-01-13	Reading Fleck 1981 (1935).
22		22-01-13	
23		29-01-13	
24		05-02-13	
24	Essay 1 deadline	11.59pm, 06-02-13	
25	Reading Week	12-02-13	
26	Reading the followers of Fleck	19-02-13	Readings to be set by the group
27		26-02-13	
28		05-03-13	
29		12-03-13	
30		19-03-13	
30	Essay 2 deadline	11.59pm, 20-03-13	

Assessments

Summary

	Description	Deadline	Word limit
Essay 1	Essay on Fleck 1981 (1935)	11.59 pm, Wed 06-02-13	3000
Essay 2	Essay on the followers of Fleck	11.59 pm, Wed 20-02-13	3000

Assignments

These are designed to follow the differing aims in the two halves of the course. Essay one must engage with the substance of Fleck's argument(s) as developed in Fleck 1981 (1935). Essay two, on the other hand, should be about the impact and influence that this work has had subsequent to its publication. More guidance regarding essays will be given during the course of the module.

Essays must be submitted via Moodle. In order to be deemed 'complete' on this module students must attempt both essays.

Criteria for assessment

The departmental marking guidelines for individual items of assessment can be found in the STS Student Handbook.

Aims & objectives

The aims of this module are twofold. First, to develop an appreciation of the role played by Fleck in shaping subsequent research in philosophy and sociology of science. Second, to develop skills in

participating in the environment of a reading group.

By the end of this course, students will therefore:

- understand and critique the arguments made in Fleck 1981 (1935)
- be capable of showing how these arguments have been subsequently interpreted, critiqued, and re-used
- have developed their presentation and discussion skills such that they would be confidently capable of participating in reading groups in future
- have developed their generic research skills by autonomously engaging with an unfamiliar body of literature on Fleck

Reading list

Fleck, Ludwig. 1981(1935). *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

For week 1, the required reading will be:

Fleck, L. 1936. The Problem of Epistemology. in Cohen, R.S. and Schnelle, T. (eds). 1986. *Cognition and Fact: Materials on Ludwig Fleck*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel. 79-112

This is available on Moodle.

Other readings will be set during the module. These will be posted on the module reading list site: <http://readinglists.ucl.ac.uk/modules/hpsc3028.html>

Course expectations

Students are expected to attend the seminars having done the expected reading in advance. Student participation in seminars is essential. Further instructions about this will be given in the first lecture.

Important policy information

Please refer to the HPSC Syllabus Supplement available on Moodle.
