

HPSC0070

Eugenics in Science and Culture

Syllabus

v2

Session	2020-21
Module tutor	Professor Joe Cain

1. Description

Eugenics combined science and politics to create social policies intent on “improving the stock” of some human groups at the expense of others. This module investigates eugenics as a history of science and technology operating in cultures around the world. It considers eugenics as a history of people creating, interpreting, rejecting, and suffering from decisions grounded in scientific (and pseudo-scientific - this boundary is important) practices supported by eugenics campaigners. Importantly, this module presents eugenics through the intersection of categories such as gender, race/ethnicity, ableism, class, nationalism, and political philosophy. Eugenics is a subject with strong local (UCL) connections, and it is a subject with diverse global involvements and impacts. Ultimately, this module explores the history of eugenics to better answer far-reaching questions about the role of science in policy development, about the power of science in public understanding, and about rival approaches to expertise in the knowledge economy.

In the 2020-21 session, we focus specifically on the subject of the history of eugenics research and advocacy at UCL and in other London institutions.

1.1 Important notice

In this module you will encounter offensive views of many kinds. These are presented in the context of historical analysis and interpretation. Do not imply advocacy from reference. The module has several mechanisms for safe spaces that allow students to discuss their reactions to the material and their reflections about its relevance to issues today. Students also are reminded that the tutor, the department, and the university have a zero tolerance policy on discriminatory behaviours, and we are governed by clear codes of conduct. Respect is mandatory.

Any student who wishes to note something they believe violates these policies can do so directly to the [module tutor](#) in the first instance, the [STS Heads of Department](#) in the second instance, or through [UCL Report and Support](#).

1.2 Getting started

Students wanting an overview of the topic are directed to several sources. Levine (2017) is a very good “short” introduction to eugenics as a topic across the twentieth century. Another excellent introduction is Paul (1995), which is predominantly American in focus. If either inspires you to want more, Kevles (1985) probably is the most widely read general history of eugenics as it developed in Anglophone countries. The content is rich. As a historian’s book, it shows the strengths and weaknesses of a large class of historical writing on eugenics.

Darwin (1928) is an example of an inexpensive trade book widely read about 1930. The author, Leonard Darwin, was important in the English eugenics movement. As a text, it demonstrates the shifting landscape of public interpretation of science and public appropriation of scientific knowledge.

2. Key Information

2.1 Digital resources

Type	Location
Moodle	moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=20645 (link)
Timetable	ucl.ac.uk/timetable <i>or</i> tinyurl.com/hpsc0070 (link)
Reading List	ucl.ac.uk/library/teaching-learning-services-tls/readinglistsucl <i>or</i> tinyurl.com/read0070 (link)

2.2 Module tutor

Tutor	Professor Joe Cain
Email	J.Cain@ucl.ac.uk
Telephone	+44 (0) 207 679 3041
Web	ucl.ac.uk/sts/cain (link)
Office location	In STS: 22 Gordon Square, room 4.3
Office hours	Book via MSBookings . For 2020-21 Term 1 all meetings will be online

3. Aims and Objectives

3.1 Aims

HPSC0070 aims include:

- equip students to critically question and analyze the social, political and ethical aspects of ongoing science and technology
- integrate key themes in history and philosophy of science, science communication, and science policy
- develop analytical and interpretative skills using relatively commonplace elements of science and technology
- think more about the history of eugenics and develop mature views as to its sources, impacts, and legacy for universities, science, and culture

3.2 Objectives

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

1. describe key elements in the history and philosophy of science as they relate to eugenics
2. describe key elements of science communication found in the activities of eugenics advocates, organizations, and critics
3. describe key elements of science policy as they relate internationally to eugenics campaigning
4. critically analyze the social, political and ethical aspects of eugenics
5. relate key insights from HPS and STS to research about eugenics, with particular attention to intersectionality and the importance of alternative voices in history
6. demonstrate an ability to research HPS and STS questions, producing substantial packages of information, well organized and clearly focused
7. effectively communicate their views

The course will improve:

1. ability to interpret events
2. ability to work in an interdisciplinary fashion
3. ability to apply abstract models to particular instances
4. ability to integrate social, cultural, political, industrial and economic contexts of science
5. ability to communicate ideas clearly in ways appropriate to the context
6. ability to communicate ideas effectively

For students in other degree programs, the course will increase:

1. awareness of the evolving and complex role of STM in public policy, past and present; likewise, the relations between STM and the State more generally, and STM and values
2. awareness of the influence of culture on scientific ideas, practices, resources and opportunities; that STM sometimes shows distinct differences when undertaken by different people in different cultures
3. awareness that the understanding and use of STM information and knowledge changes in different settings and can vary between different groups

Improving writing skills – the production of prose that is clear, deliberate, and to the point – is an ancillary objective of the assessment.

4. Assessment

4.1 Summary

Code	Weight	Type	Detail
CW	100%	Project	Research paper

The research paper will be divided into three sections.

Code	Weight	Type	Detail	Due date (12:00)
	25%	Essay part A (1000 words)	review of biographies	28 Oct 2020 (list) 25 Nov 2020 (draft)
	25%	Essay part B (1000 words)	essential bibliography	11 Nov 2020 (draft)
	50%	Essay part C (2000 words)	historical analysis	14 Dec 2020 (draft)
		Complete Project		06 Jan 2021 (due)

* - draft essay parts submitted by the individual due dates will receive prompt feedback for use as formative assessment; drafts submitted after the dates will receive feedback only at the discretion of the module tutor. This is not to be mean, but I have a lot of marking commitments in Term 1 and a limited amount of time to get it done properly. These due dates fall in windows I've planned specifically to give attention to you and 0070. Outside those windows, 0070 has lower priority.

4.2 Assignment

This year's offer focuses on eugenics research and advocacy at UCL and in other London institutions. Students will produce original historical research about individuals who were associated with eugenics research and advocacy while employed by those institutions. Elements of this assignment combine (1) data collection and sifting, (2) analysis of interpretation and perspective, and (3) original research and synthesis.

For 2020-21, the criteria for assessment will take into account limitations students will experience in accessing archives and libraries.

Students will focus their attention on one person and their corpus of work related to eugenics research and advocacy. The research paper for this assignment will be divided into three sections:

1. **review of biographies:** students should locate biographical materials for the person they research and produce a critical analysis of those biographies, including analysis of voice, perspective, emphasis, omission, and context for interpretation. The model is an essay review in a peer-reviewed journal, such as *Isis*. The range of coverage will be narrow: solely focusing on how commentators have assessed contributions to eugenics.
2. **essential bibliography:** the individuals we research produced a large number of publications over their careers. This section will sift and organize that volume to guide readers and identify key materials in the construction of that person's persona as a eugenics researcher and advocate.
3. **historical analysis:** students will interpret the biography and bibliography of their research subject against historical themes of their own choosing, such as in relation to an analytical frame developed in this module or their degree, or in relation to wider historical research, or to develop a theme of special interest.

4.3 Style guide

Students are expected to use [ProfJoeCain's style guide for HPSC modules](#).

4.4 Criteria for assessment

Specific criteria for assessment will be made available for each project element. These will be distributed via Moodle. The general focus of these criteria emphasize:

- depth of scholarship and use of resources beyond those in lecture and required reading
- ability to identify both major and subtle points of the subject
- extent of your critical assessment
- evidence you provide for having reflected on and extended module content and themes
- general scholarly presentation of the work performed

My most frequent criticisms on student essays relate to:

- too much description/summary of readings and not enough analysis
- not developing your own argument
- no evidence of independent research
- poor organisation and poor referencing techniques
- poor choice of sources (such as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* or *Wikipedia*)

5. Module Plan

The 2020-21 offer of HPSC0070 will be delivered via remote technologies. Activities will be divided into several categories: asynchronous content, synchronous content, and independent study.

5.1 Asynchronous content

Asynchronous content will be posted on Moodle, with instructions for when and how this material should be engaged. This content will provide content, peer dialogue, individual activities, and source materials. The purpose of this content is to present new content, introduce students to alternative perspectives, engage key source materials, and identify possible answers to core issues. Content is constructed around specific themes and questions.

5.2 Synchronous content

This module has a 1x2hour time structure for face-to-face engagement. For simplicity, we shall refer to these sessions as “seminars”. Seminars will be held via Zoom. There will be no option for face-to-face sessions during Term 1.

Instructions for how to prepare for seminars will be provided on Moodle. In general, seminars will be used to discuss asynchronous materials and essential readings as well as for students to raise questions for discussion and to provide additional materials. Most seminar sessions will be concentrated into the first hour of the timetabled 2-hour slot. All seminars will be recorded, with the recordings posted on Moodle shortly thereafter. Students are expected to **attend** the seminar sessions live online. They also will be **expected to complete** associated synchronous materials **prior to** the live session. Attendance will be recorded.

During the second hour of seminar time, the tutor will be available to answer questions and to

assist with assignments. This second hour will be optional and casual; no special preparation is required. This contact time will not be recorded. When discussion is completed, the Zoom call may be ended. Or, students are welcome to raise other topics in this additional time.

Some of ProfJoeCain's bookable office hours will follow the 2-hour seminar block. Students seeking one-to-one discussion or private consultation should book time during an office hour.

5.3 Independent study

Students are expected to make time for independent research and self-directed reading related to the modules they study. This should include approximately 4 hours of independent reading per week and 4 hours of research per week associated with their assignments.

Material relating eugenics and many subjects is available through UCL Library's services. Significant general resources are noted on Moodle.

The modules will have a set of **essential readings** for each session. We'll also post selected **additional reading** to help guide this additional study.

5.4 Additional opportunities for discussion and engagement

Class time will be focused on specific learning objectives. Experience shows the subject of this module provokes far more attention, and far more diverse attention, than can be encompassed within the strict confines of the formal timetable. To expand capacity and to foster independent learning, additional opportunities for engagement will be provided. Students are encouraged to use the Moodle forum to discuss themes of interest to them.

Students with particular interests in a subject should raise this with the module tutor, and options will be considered. Some possible activities, such as visits to London sites, are not possible during requirements for physical distancing. Other possible activities, such as guest presentations and roundtables will be considered if students show interest and organizational zeal.

6. Schedule

Treat this schedule as provisional. Inevitably, our schedule will change this year as we adapt to new events and to the pace of your work in the module. Follow those changes on Moodle.

Activities for the scheduled week are posted on Moodle. Students are expected to complete the asynchronous activities prior to the session and to come to the live session prepared to discuss.

UCL Week	Date	Seminar Topic	Essential Readings and Recommended Readings
6	09 Oct	Introduction	<i>Essential:</i> three recent articles are posted on ReadingLists@UCL for this module: tinyurl.com/read0070
7	16 Oct	A quick history of eugenics at UCL	<i>Essential:</i> Farrall (2019 [1969]: 103-179)
8	23 Oct	Two traditions of eugenics as science	<i>Essential:</i> Paul (1995: 50-71) Soloway (1995: 226-258)
9	30 Oct	Eugenics as popular science	<i>Essential:</i> Wiggam (1927) Farrall (2019 [1969]: 203-249) <i>Recommended:</i> Larson (1991) Vance Dorey (1999: 25-39)
10	06 Nov	What is the history of eugenics a history of?	<i>Essential:</i> Bonnett (2008) and read <i>one</i> other: Agar (2012: 1-6, 44-62) Freedon (1979) Saraiva (2016: 1-16) Pauly (1993)
11		Reading Week	

UCL Week	Date	Seminar Topic	Essential Readings and Recommended Readings
12	20 Nov	Disability, "lives not worth living"	<i>Essential:</i> Gosney and Popenoe (1929: v-xvi, 48-69, 116-135) Proctor (1988: 177-222)
13	27 Nov	Race, immigration, class	<i>Essential:</i> Mosse (1978: 77-93) Garrard (1971: TBC) <i>Recommended:</i> Huxley (1944: 163-180)
14	04 Dec	Women's health and the regulation of women's behaviour	<i>Essential:</i> Carey (2012) Ladd-Taylor (1994: 1-14) <i>Recommended:</i> Williams (2011) Stopes (1921: 233-252)
15	11 Dec	Empire, population growth, and international interventions	<i>Essential:</i> Searle (1976: 34-44) Blacker (1952: 151-185) Bangham and Chadarevian (2014) <i>Recommended:</i> Kellogg {, 1913 #116}
16	18 Dec	Galton and Galtoniana	<i>Essential:</i> Compare: Pearson (1924) with Darwin (1914) Barauer (2009) <i>Recommended:</i> Kevles (1985: 3-19)

7. Plan for Each Week

Moodle is the central organising tool for learning in this module. We meet through Zoom. Links will be provided on Moodle to the Zoom sessions.

Students are expected to undertake several activities each week for this module, focusing on the theme identified as the session topic:

1. **live class session** (1 hour per week identified in the UCL Timetable; 2 hours preparation time) - The purpose of this class time is for tutors to present content associated with the week's theme and to offer help sessions supporting the projects.
 - a. In most weeks, tutors will deliver live face-to-face presentations or lead class discussions during this scheduled hour, and attendance is expected from students.
 - b. Moodle will list work expected before, during, and after the live class sessions. Prior to the scheduled face-to-face session, students are expected to complete any asynchronous learning activities prescribed by the tutor in the weekly instructions.
2. **engagement on projects** (4 hours per week) - students are expected to make time to read and reflect upon relevant material supporting their essay writing. This means going beyond simple regurgitation of information or trite analysis. Also, time for revision is essential for producing polished, readable, and insightful writing.
3. **independent reading** (4 hours per week) - students are expected to undertake independent reading in subjects associated with this module. Tutors will offer suggestions for additional reading, and peers can offer supplements. Finding relevant material is an essential professional skill and should not be taken lightly. Students are encouraged to share their growing understanding via forums on Moodle. You also should be reading *New Scientist* each week as a core element of your degree programme. This will support your projects; it also will contribute to open-ended discussions.
4. **participate in Moodle forums** (1 hour) - physical isolation can be frustrating for many reasons. One is the potential to lose social interaction with peers. Forums are provided as one alternative. Students are expected to scan forum discussions and to participate where they believe they can make an active, positive contribution. Forums are monitored by module tutors and by the Convenor.

Reading Week is scheduled for UCL Week 11 and UCL Week 25, which are the sixth week of formal teaching in the teaching terms. During these weeks, no tutor-led activities are scheduled. Instead, students are given time to catch-up where needed and to read more widely in their subject, using the wide variety of resources available to them as members of the UCL community. Students are encouraged to use online forums to discuss their discoveries as they might do through other social media. Students are expected to be pursuing their studies during this week. It is not intended as a holiday.

7.1 Content delivery

We must adapt the course plan in light of requirements for physical distancing. This requires some adaptation of content and activities. Term 1 will use online platforms: Moodle, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams

7.2 Required materials and additional materials

The historical literature on eugenics as an international phenomenon is voluminous. The literature offering analytical tools useful for interpreting eugenics is much larger still. Add to these an ever-expanding range of tertiary material and commentary. In this module, we sample; I feel this sample barely scratches the surface.

Essential materials should be read prior to the session they are associated with. I have tried to limit the amount of essential materials to the equivalent of two journal articles or book chapters

per week per topic.

Recommended materials add variety and depth. There's no expectation these will be read for class discussions, but they are offered for students with particular interests in the topic. Also, they serve as launching points for research in support of Projects.

Optional materials are posted knowing these will be of specific help for some student projects or they have been proposed by students to offer complementary perspectives and additional analytical frameworks. The module tutor welcomes recommendations.

8. Important Policy Information

Refer to the *STS Student Handbook*. As this is an HPSC module, we follow the rules of that handbook.

8.1 Essay extensions and mitigations

Information about extensions and mitigations is provided in the [STS Student Handbook](#). Individual tutors cannot grant extensions on their own initiative, so please do not ask.

8.2 Project feedback

Your feedback and first marks on each project will be accessible via Moodle, normally two weeks (15 working days) after the due date. Please note that first marks are provisional and might change after second marking and moderation by external examiners. Marks are confirmed and fixed in June at the STS Board of Examiners.

Please focus on the feedback provided by the first marker, which is what will allow you to improve in the next piece of coursework.

You should discuss all your feedback with your personal tutor with the aim of identifying weaknesses and possible routes for improvement.

8.3 Course communications

Module tutor communicating with you:

- Moodle Announcements: the principal means for communications in this module. You can set Moodle to "digest" communications (collecting all notices sent in one day into a single email sent once per day). I find "digest" helps keep me organized and avoids disruption hour-to-hour in my day.
- Moodle FAQ: the same questions tend to repeat, so I'll post on the Moodle FAQ those frequently-asked questions that keep coming up.
- Moodle Forums and Chat: I scan these most days, normally first thing in the morning, and you're likely to find answers to questions here, too.
- If I have a matter for you specifically, I'll communicate to your UCL email address. I don't use other email addresses. I'll put "0070" in the subject line to help you filter. If you want help managing email using filters, see UCL IS's "how-to" guides: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/isd/how-to-guides>

You communicating with the module tutor:

- office hours: you have dedicated time in my diary for office hours. That's time I'm available for face-to-face conversations online. Schedule an appointment via Moodle. I'll normally

meet students using Teams. I also will have drop-in times online, which operate on a queuing system.

- email: I have responsibilities for over 100 students, and I'm a slow typist. Please understand that email is not ideal for every communication. Please also prioritize: use email for confidential and personal matters (e.g., tell me about a SORA or if an accessibility obstacle exists that we need to sort), use it only after checking for information on Moodle. Please do not expect a response outside normal working hours (Monday–Friday (09:00–17:00 GMT), and be courteous in your communications with staff and fellow students.

9. Readings

ReadingLists@UCL has access routes to all essential and most recommended materials.

Agar, Jonathan. 2012. *Science in the Twentieth Century and Beyond*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bangham, Jenny, and Sorayade Chadarevian. 2014. Human heredity after 1945: Moving populations centre stage. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 47 (A):45-49.

Barauer, Fae. 2009. Framing Darwin: A Portrait of Eugenics. In *The Art of Evolution: Darwin, Darwinisms, and Visual Culture*, eds. Barbara Larson, and Fae Brauer, 124-154. Dartmouth: Dartmouth College Press.

Blacker, C. P. 1952. *Eugenics. Galton and After*. London: Gerald Duckworth and Co.

Bonnett, Alastair. 2008. Whiteness and the West. In *New Geographies of Race and Racism*, eds. Claire Dwyer, and Caroline Bressey, 17-28. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.

Carey, Jane. 2012. The Racial Imperatives of Sex: birth control and eugenics in Britain, the United States and Australia in the interwar years. *Women's History Review* 21 (5):733-752. doi:10.1080/09612025.2012.658180.

Darwin, Francis. 1914. Francis Galton, 1822-1911. In *Twelve Galton Lectures: A Centenary Selection with Commentaries*, eds. Steve Jones, and Milo Keynes, 1-24. London: Galton Institute.

Darwin, Leonard (Major). 1928. *What is Eugenics?* The Forum Series. London: Watts and Co.

Farrall, Lyndsay Andrew. 2019 [1969]. *The origins and growth of the English eugenics movement, 1865-1925*. STS Occasional Papers, vol. 9. London: UCL Department of Science and Technology Studies (STS).

Freedon, Michael. 1979. Eugenics and Progressive Thought: a Study in Ideological Affinity. *The Historical Journal* 22 (3):645-671. doi:10.1017/S0018246X00017027.

Garrard, John A. 1971. *The English and Immigration, 1880-1910*. London: Oxford University Press.

Gosney, E. S., and Paul Popenoe. 1929. *Sterilization for Human Betterment: A Summary of Results of 6,000 Operations in California, 1909-1929*. New York: Macmillan.

Huxley, Julian. 1944. *On Living in a Revolution*. London: Chatto and Windus.

Kevles, Daniel. 1985. *In the Name of Eugenics. Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ladd-Taylor, Molly. 1994. *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Larson, Edward J. 1991. The rhetoric of eugenics: Expert authority and the Mental Deficiency Bill. In *British Journal for the History of Science*.

- Levine, Philippa. 2017. *Eugenics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mosse, George L. 1978. *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism*. London: Dent.
- Paul, Diane. 1995. *Controlling Human Heredity: 1865 to the Present*. The Control of Nature. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press.
- Pauly, Philip J. 1993. The eugenics industry - growth or restructuring? *JHB* 26:131-145.
- Pearson, Karl. 1924. *Francis Galton, 1822-1922: A Centenary Appreciation*. Questions of the Day and of the Fray, vol. 11. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Proctor, Robert. 1988. *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Saraiva, Tiago. 2016. *Fascist Pigs: Technoscientific Organisms and the History of Fascism*. Inside Technology. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Searle, G. R. 1976. *Eugenics and Politics in Britain, 1900-1914*. Noordhoff: Leyden.
- Soloway, Richard A. 1995. *Demography and Degeneration: Eugenics and the Declining Birthrate in Twentieth-Century Britain (with a new preface by the author)*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press.
- Stopes, Marie. 1921. *Radiant Motherhood*. New York: Putnam.
- Vance Dorey, Annette K. 1999. *Better Baby Contests: The Scientific Quest for Perfect Childhood Health in the Early Twentieth Century*. Jefferson, NC, and London: McFarland and Company.
- Wiggam, Albert Edward. 1927. Shall I Marry This Man? *Good Housekeeping* 84 (June):28-29, 253-254, 257-258, 261-262, 265-266.
- The Guardian. 2011. Marie Stopes: a turbo-Darwinist ranter, but right about birth control. 02 Sep 2011.