Overview

This catalogue describes HPSC modules offered by UCL Department of Science and Technology Studies (STS) for the 2019-20 session. Detailed information, including sample syllabi, can be found on the department website: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.

The information in this catalogue is correct at the date of publication (see headers) but may alter. Please check the latest edition of the module catalogue and the on-line timetable prior to formally registering on modules.

Timetable information

We use the UCL online timetable, www.ucl.ac.uk/timetable. The online timetable provides information about module times and locations. Students should continue to check class locations regularly using the online timetable as rooms are subject to change without prior notice.

Before formally registering please check for timetable clashes between modules. Clashes are not an acceptable excuse for missing classes. It is the student’s responsibility to check carefully that they can attend all compulsory sessions for their modules.

The online timetable for the 2019-20 academic year will be published in August 2019.

Information for STS students

You can find more detailed information about individual modules in the STS Syllabus library, which can be found on the department website: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.

STS students must discuss their selections with their personal tutor. Module selections must be approved by personal tutors before they will be confirmed in Portico. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure they satisfy their degree requirements. These can be found on the Moodle parent page here: https://moodle-1819.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=10566.

Module tutors may be contacted directly: see https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/staff.

You will not be able to change your Term 2 module selection after 6 December. It is therefore essential that you make sure you research your module choices thoroughly before selecting them. If you want to make a change after you have confirmed your module choice, please consult your tutor.
Changes can be made by your teaching administrator and you will need to request any changes to your Term 2 module registrations in good time before the deadline.

Students from other departments

Students outside STS are welcome to register on most HPSC modules. This catalogue indicates where modules are not open to all UCL students. In some cases, pre-requisites apply and queries regarding these should be directed to the module tutor. Otherwise, registration for students from other departments is on a first-come, first-served basis by date selected in Portico.

Our modules attract students from many different departments and backgrounds. These modules offer opportunities for students to meet new people, meet students from many different degree programmes, and develop transferrable skills they might not otherwise build. Challenge yourself to mix it up. Try STS. As always, discuss module selections with personal tutors.

In 2018 we filmed a series of videos with our teaching staff. Looking for an introduction to what each module covers? Interested in the kind of material and assessment you’ll encounter? You can watch the 2018 videos here - be aware that some details may change for 2019 teaching: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqDGBZHFcMlnKb4CgPwyL51z53i9VEAdA.
# HPSC modules at-a-glance

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## Level 1 modules (introductory)

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Module information and syllabi are available at: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching).
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Module information and syllabi are available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.
# Level 1 introductory modules

**HPSC0003 History of Science: Antiquity to Enlightenment**

Surveys the origins and development of science from the ancient Greeks to 1800 and around the globe. Main themes are the origins of science in the ancient world, the nature of the scientific revolution and the spread of science during the Enlightenment. Attend all lectures plus one tutorial per week.

Tutor: Professor Andrew Gregory  
Teaching sessions: Term 1. Students attend two one-hour lectures and one one-hour tutorial per week.  
Assessment: 3 hour exam - 50% and essay (2500 words) - 50%  
External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt - University of Kent

**HPSC0008 Science Communication and Public Engagement**

Introduces the public dimensions of science and technology. It explores the relationship between the professional world of science and the social, cultural and personal spaces in which science contributes to the shaping of society. It also develops students’ critical analysis skills with respect to the communication of science in different public contexts including the news media, museums, fiction and online.

Tutor: Dr Simon Lock  
Teaching sessions: Term 1. Attend 2 x 1-hour lectures plus one tutorial per week  
Assessment: 3 hour exam - 50% and essay (2500 words) - 50%  
External Examiner: Dr Declan Fahy - Dublin City University

**HPSC0009 Revealing Science**

An engaging introduction to history, philosophy, and social studies of science, including key concepts in science and technology studies, public engagement with science, and science policy. Using contemporary scientific issues as its canvas, the focus of this module is to encourage students to develop their skills as interdisciplinary and publicly engaged scholars, working both in groups and individually. This course is intended as a foundation and sampler for later courses in science and technology studies.

Tutor: Dr Chiara Ambrosio  
Teaching sessions: Term 1. Students attend one lecture and one seminar per week.  
Assessment: Individual annotated bibliography (500 words) - 30%, individual essay (2500 words) - 40%, group piece (1500 words) - 30%.  
External Examiner: Dr Angela Cassidy – University of Exeter

**HPSC0011 STS Perspectives on Big Problems**

This module introduces students to the uses of STS in solving big problems in the contemporary world. Each year staff from across the spectrum of STS disciplines – History, Philosophy, Sociology and Politics of Science – will come together to teach students how different perspectives can shed light on these problems.

Module information and syllabi are available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.
light on issues ranging from climate change to nuclear war, private healthcare to plastic pollution. Students have the opportunity to develop research and writing skills, and assessment will consist of a formative and a final essay. Students also keep a research notebook across the course of the module.

Tutor: Dr Brendan Clarke
Teaching sessions: Term 1. 1 x 2-hour seminar per week.
Assessment: Essay (2500 words) – 100%
External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt - University of Kent

Level 2 intermediate modules

HPSC0012 Policy Issues in the Life Sciences
Provides a critical overview of policy issues arising from developments in the biological sciences. The module covers a variety of issues, including: medical research policy, biotechnology and public policy, debates about the social acceptability of recombinant DNA research, biology and its publics, controlling biological weapons research and animal experimentation. Attend all lectures and one seminar per week.

Tutor: Professor Brian Balmer
Teaching sessions: Term 1: Students attend 1 x 1-hour lecture and 1 x 1-hour seminar per week.
Assessment: Book review (1500 words) - 40%, essay (3000 words) - 60%
External Examiner: Dr Angela Cassidy – University of Exeter

HPSC0014 Philosophy of Science 2
Intensive exploration of some central, on-going debates in philosophy of science such as scientific realism and antirealism; the nature of scientific explanation; and the status of laws of nature. No pre-requisite philosophy of science knowledge required. However, if students have not completed HPSC0004 previously, they must secure the tutor's permission.

Tutor: Dr Brendan Clarke
Teaching sessions: Term 1. Students attend 2 x 1-hour seminar per week.
Assessment: 5 minute video - 10%, Essay (2500 words) - 50%, 2-hour Exam - 40%
External Examiner: Dr Ian Kidd – University of Nottingham

HPSC0022 Science and Religion
Examines the relations between science, religion and progress. Topics will include the relation between science and religion in the ancient world, in Islam and in China, the role of Christianity in the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century and some issues in the relation of religion and science today.

Tutor: Dr William MacLehose
Teaching sessions: Term 1. Students attend 1 x 2-hour seminar per week.
Assessment: 3-hour exam - 50% and essay (2500 words) - 50%.
External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt - University of Kent

Module information and syllabi are available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.
**HPSC0036 Engaging Public with Science**

This module focuses on the many different ways in which publics engage with science in face-to-face contexts. Teaching will particularly focus on how scientists can most effectively engage members of the public through direct interactions such as science festivals and museums, and on how specific public groups, such as patient and citizen groups get involved, and engage with, scientific and medical research. Alongside gaining a practical understanding of how to organize such activities, students will also critically reflect on the theory and context that underpins such activities such as models of publics and audiences, rationales for engagement in different contexts and the wider policy contexts and historical trends.

Tutor: Dr Simon Lock

Teaching sessions: Term 1. Students attend 1 x 2-hour seminar per week.

Assessment: Essay (2,500 words) - 50%, Group Project (2,500 word group word report) - 50%

External Examiner: Dr Declan Fahy - Dublin City University

**HPSC0105 Sociology of Science and Technology**

The aim of this course is examine the sociological contribution to the analysis of science and technology, mainly focussing on science. We explore the complex relationship between science, technology and society, including key sociological accounts of the processes by which knowledge is constructed and validated. The course introduces main currents of thought and important empirical studies that have been influential in sociology of science. The focus is equally on contemporary and historical cases. By the end of this module students should: (1) Have an understanding of how science works as a social process i.e. how technical knowledge is produced by communities, (2) Have a detailed knowledge of the main theories in the sociology of science, (3) Be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of a range of sociological approaches to the analysis of science and technology, and (4) Be able to make links between sociological analyses of science and broader debates in science policy, history of science and philosophy of science.

Tutor: TBC

Teaching sessions: Term 1. Students attend 1 x 2-hour session per week comprising a one hour lecture and one hour seminar discussion.

Assessment: 3-hour exam - 50% and essay (2500 words) - 50%

External Examiner: Dr Angela Cassidy – University of Exeter

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**Level 3 advanced modules**

**HPSC0039 Science, Warfare and Peace**

This module aims explore the relationships between science, war and the prevention of war. It will place military and security technologies within social, political, and historical contexts. There is particular emphasis on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and on weapons usually designated as ‘unconventional’ or ‘weapons of mass destruction’. In addition to thinking about how science, technology and warfare have shaped each other, this module also considers the changing role of the scientist in relation to the state, and considers broader themes such as the arms control, disarmament, ethics, and popular culture in relation to war. Students attend one 2 hour lecture seminar per week.

Tutor: Professor Brian Balmer

Teaching sessions: Term 1. Students attend 1x 2-hour lecture per week

Assessment: Essay (3000 words) – 60% and 2-hour Exam – 40%

External Examiner: Dr Angela Cassidy – University of Exeter

*Module information and syllabi are available at: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching).*
**HPSC0050 Philosophy of Natural Sciences**

This course explores topics in the philosophy of the natural sciences. In the philosophy of physics, we will address how quantum mechanics has changed our view of physical reality; and how particle physics has had an impact on philosophical debates about realism and antirealism in science, such as recent literature on structural realism. We will interrogate the philosophical literature on mechanisms and causality by considering astrophysical mechanisms. In the philosophy of chemistry, we will assess the periodic table as a system of classification and particular philosophical problems presented by molecular structure and shape and biomolecular visualisation. We will also discuss problems common to both physics and chemistry such as problems of data, simulation and modelling.

Tutor: Dr Emma Tobin

Teaching sessions: Term 1. Students attend 1 x 2-hour session per week.

Assessment: 2-hour exam – 50% and essay (3000 words) – 50%

External Examiner: Dr Ian Kidd – University of Nottingham

**HPSC0061 Governing Emerging Technologies**

This course goes inside technology to discuss its political and ethical dimensions. Technologies shape our future in powerful and largely unaccountable ways. Are they inevitable, or can we control the technologies that we get, anticipate their implications, prevent hazards and share their benefits? Why do we have iPads and space shuttles but we don’t all drive electric cars and have clean drinking water in the developing world? Were the Fukushima nuclear meltdown and the financial crisis just accidents? What could regulators have done to prevent them? As science introduces new risks and ethical dilemmas, what should governments do to control research, publication, patenting and innovation? The course will teach students to think and write clearly and critically about technology. It will be assessed through an essay and a series of short blog-posts.

Tutor: Dr Jack Stilgoe

Teaching sessions: Term 1. Students attend one 1-hour lecture and one 1-hour seminar per week.

Assessment: Coursework (2500 words) - 50%, Essay (3000 words) - 50%

External Examiner: Dr Angela Cassidy – University of Exeter

**HPSC0065 Philosophy of Information**

Information is now a vitally important scientific concept, while changes in information and communication technologies have rapidly altered our personal and working lives. This course examines these changes. It looks at philosophical approaches to information, and the implications of the ‘information revolution’ for such issues as society, personal identity, and scientific knowledge.

Tutor: Dr Phyllis Illari

Teaching Sessions: Term 1, students attend 1 x 2-hour seminar per week.

Assessment: Essay (4000 words) - 100%

External Examiners: Dr Ian Kidd – University of Nottingham

**HPSC0066 Science and Film Production**

Making films involves more than pointing a camera. In this module students gain skills across a wide range of activities related to film-making: scriptwriting, production (filming, lighting, sound recording, interview technique, presentation, narrative, documentary and docudrama genres) and post-production (paper, film and sound editing). The module is practical in design. It also has a theoretical dimension, establishing a social, cultural and intellectual context for production and offering a strong critical foundation for the effective realization of production work. Students will create film productions that will engage with real audiences on the web and other media platforms.

Tutor: TBC

*Module information and syllabi are available at: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching).*
Teaching sessions: Term 1, Students attend 1 x 2-hour seminar per week
Assessment: 5-minute Group Film - 80%, Essay (2000 words) - 20%
External Examiner: Dr Declan Fahy - Dublin City University

**HPSC0110 History of Medicine**

This course addresses the changes and developments in Western medicine from the Ancient Greek world to 1700. The course will discuss the varieties of theory and practice of medicine, the understandings of the body and illness, and the historical contexts in which medicine can be understood in the pre-modern world, including classical Greek and Roman society, medieval Islamic and Western cultures, and Renaissance and early modern periods.

Tutor: Dr Cristiano Turbil

Teaching sessions: Term 1. 1 x 2-hour lecture per week.
Assessment: Essay (3000 words) - 60%, 2-hour Exam - 40%
External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt – University of Kent
2019-20 Term 2

Level 1 introductory modules

**HPSC0004 Philosophy of Science 1**

This is an introductory module in the philosophy of science. The course is divided into two parts: (1) the epistemology of science and (2) the metaphysics of science. The first part of the course will focus on several central problems regarding the nature of scientific knowledge: how do scientists know if current scientific theories are true? Is science progressive? How do scientists test their theories and how are theories confirmed? Can science and pseudoscience be distinguished? How are sciences distinguished from one another? These questions will be discussed in the light of examples from science. During the course of discussing these problems, you will study some of the major positions that have been taken about scientific knowledge both in the history of philosophy and in the 20th century: Inductivism (Bacon), Logical Empiricism (Ayer and Quine), Falsificationism (Popper), Incommensurability (Kuhn) and Relativism (Feyerabend). What does it mean if more than two theories are consistent with the evidence (Quine/Duhem)? Philosophy of Science 1 will provide you with the background knowledge that you will need for other Philosophy courses that you will take in later years. You do not need prior knowledge of philosophy or science to do this course.

Tutor: Dr Emma Tobin

Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend 2 x 1-hour lectures and 1 x 1-hour tutorial per week.

Assessment: Critical Review – formative assessment (750 words), 3-hour exam - 50% and essay (2500 words) - 50%

External Examiner: Dr Ian Kidd – University of Nottingham

**HPSC0006 Science Policy**

Introduction to social and political thinking about the role of science and technology in society and the relationship between science and the state. Topics normally include: the role of the state in the promotion, regulation and shaping of science and technology, the idea of scientific autonomy, the moral responsibility of the scientist and the commercialization of science. The course will also focus on current case studies; previous years topics have been geoengineering and biometric technologies. Attend one lecture plus one tutorial per week.

Tutor: TBC

Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend 1 x 1-hour lectures and 1 x 1-hour tutorial per week.

Assessment: 3-hour exam - 50% and essay (2500 words) - 50%

External Examiner: Dr Angela Cassidy – University of Exeter

**HPSC0007 Investigating Sociology and Politics of Science**

Introduces research methods that underpin all elements of science and technology studies. Content includes basic research and scholarly writing techniques (including identifying appropriate sources, avoiding plagiarism, and writing a convincing argument), as well as qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. In addition to becoming familiar with underpinning theory and research context, students will also have the opportunity to apply data collection methods practically, for example by designing questionnaires and conducting interviews in real-world settings.

Tutor: Dr Tiago Mata

Teaching sessions: Term 2. 1x 2-hour workshop session every week.

Assessment: 2 x 2500 word coursework - 50% each

Module information and syllabi are available at: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching).


**HPSC0010 History of Modern Science**

This module provides an overview of the development of the sciences from 1850 to the present, with particular emphasis on the twentieth century. The development of science will be considered in its social, political and cultural contexts. Topics include science in different national contexts, science and war, the development of key new disciplines (such as quantum physics, relativity, genetics, particle physics) as well as the development of older ones. Emphasis will be on the physical and life sciences, with some comparative consideration of the social sciences.

Tutor: Professor Jon Agar

Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend 2 x 1-hour lectures and 1 x 1-hour tutorial per week.

Assessment: 3-hour exam - 50% and essay (2500 words) - 50%

External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt - University of Kent

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**Level 2 intermediate modules**

**HPSC0013 Science in Popular Culture**

An introduction to media studies for those interested in relations between science and the media. What science gets covered in print, on TV and online? How and why is that material selected? How can we investigate the effects of media coverage on public knowledge of or attitudes towards science? The module gives a short survey of relevant empirical and theoretical work in media studies, and public engagement with science.

Tutor: Dr Emily Dawson

Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend 1 x 2-hour seminar per week.

Assessment: 3-hour exam - 50% and Content/Media Analysis Project (2500 words) - 50%

External Examiner: Dr Declan Fahy - Dublin City University

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**HPSC0017 Science and Ethics**

Ethical issues of science and technology are constantly of interest to both scientists and the general public. This course covers core ethical theories, alongside at least nine current cases, which are selected by agreement among the students every year. Much of the teaching is discussion-based, with students analysing their chosen cases using the ethical theories. Students are assessed by written work, and they are encouraged to develop that on the case they personally choose, in discussion with the tutor. No prerequisites.

Tutor: Dr Phyllis Illari

Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend 1 x 1-hour lecture & 1 x 1-hour seminar per week.

Assessment: Research Project (4000 words) – 100%

External Examiner: Dr Ian Kidd – University of Nottingham

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**HPSC0035 Science and Empire**

What has been the relationship between the sciences, exploration and empire in history? Is there a connection between the discovery of new territories and the discovery of new facts? This module explores the importance of imperialism for the growth of modern science in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries and the ways science provided resources for imperial expansion in the same period. We consider the history of European empires and global exploration and commerce; the ways colonial knowledge challenged traditional pictures of the natural world in Europe; questions of

Module information and syllabi are available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.
cartography, navigation and the longitude problem; and the entanglement of science in questions of race and slavery.

Tutor: Dr Simon Werrett

Teaching sessions: Term 2. 1 x 2-hour session per week.

Assessment: 3-hour exam – 50%, essay (2500 words) – 50%

External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt - University of Kent

HPSC0038 Medicine and Society

An engaging introduction to history, philosophy, and social studies of the medical sciences, including key concepts in science and technology studies, public engagement with science, and science policy. Using case-studies drawn from contemporary medicine, focus of this module is to encourage students to develop their skills as independent, interdisciplinary and publicly engaged scholars.

Tutor: Dr Brendan Clarke

Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend 1 x 2-hour session per week.

Assessment: Group coursework 1 (1500 words) – 30%, individual coursework (2500 words) – 40% and group coursework 2 (1500 words) – 30%.

External Examiner: Dr Ian Kidd – University of Nottingham

HPSC0124 Science in Government

Whether we are talking about climate change, health or the economy, science is increasingly seen as a source of advice and evidence for policymakers throughout government. But what is the relationship between science and decision-making? Where does evidence come from and who are the experts? How are ideas converted into law, treaty and regulation and how are they implemented in within governments? These are some of the questions we consider this course. Drawing on real-life case studies, as well as the academic literature from STS and political science, we will look at how science is used in government, in parliament, at a local and international level, taking account of the many actors and processes that shape this work.

Tutor: Dr Melanie Smallman

Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend 1 x 2-hour session per week.

Assessment: Essay (1200 words) - 30% and Essay (2500 words) - 70%

External Examiner: Dr Angela Cassidy – University of Exeter

Level 3 advanced modules

HPSC0002 Disease in History

What is disease? How has our understanding of disease, and people's experiences of disease, changed over time? This course will give you some new and challenging ways to think about these questions. We will take specific diseases such as cholera, tuberculosis, smallpox, plague, malaria and AIDS, and examine their social and medical impact during the past couple of centuries. In doing so, we will trace the interplay of scientific, clinical, social and moral judgments invested in 'framing' a disease.

Tutor: Dr Cristiano Turbil

Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend two 1-hour sessions per week.

Assessment: Essay one (3500 words) - 80%, Essay two (800 words) - 20%

External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt - University of Kent

Module information and syllabi are available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.
HPSC0049 History of Astronomy and Cosmology

Charts mankind's changing conception of the universe from the ancient world to the current day. Issues examined will include the origins and development of astronomy, theories of the origin of the universe and of the nature of the universe, ideas of mankind's place within the universe.

Tutor: Professor Andrew Gregory

Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend 1 x 2 hour session per week.

Assessment: 2-hour exam – 50%, essay (2500 words) - 50%

External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt - University of Kent

HPSC0057 Investigating Contemporary Science

This course asks students to use – and develop further - these skills to investigate deeply, assess and present their findings on a chosen issue in the contemporary politics of science. As a third year module, this course has been designed to make most use of acquired skills and knowledge in a way that moves students towards the world of work. In particular, the kinds of capacities demonstrable in a successful completion course are similar to those needed by an investigative reporter or a researcher for a think tank. Through encouraging critical engagement with the political world, this course contributes to UCL STS’s Global Citizenship programme.

Tutor: Dr Melanie Smallman

Teaching sessions: Term 2. 1 x 2-hour lecture

Assessment: Evidence Report (2400 words) – 40% and Report (3000 words) – 60%

External Examiner: Dr Angela Cassidy – University of Exeter

HPSC0063 History of Social Sciences

This module is an historical examination of the social sciences in the long twentieth century. Although we know much about the history of individual disciplines - psychology, economics, sociology, political science -, we know comparatively little about how the sciences of society have cooperated and competed in both public and political spheres. This module investigates how social scientists sought to redraft the architectures of the state, of organizations and of mass culture. To guide our itinerary of twentieth century social science, we examine the problem of ‘inequality” has been conceptualized across time and across disciplines. Inequality has been understood as having racial, cultural, or political economic dimensions. These competing conceptions have animated programs of social change of lasting legacy to the present day. In this course we will also pay special attention to the social sciences of statistics and eugenics as developed at UCL.

Tutor: Dr Tiago Mata

Teaching sessions: Term 2, Students attend 1 x 2-hour seminar per week

Assessment: Coursework (3,500 words) – 80% and Presentation (15 minutes) – 20%

External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt - University of Kent

HPSC0066 Science and Film Production

This module combines critical theory of the representation of science in cinema and television with practical production that will enable students to gain skills in scriptwriting, production (filming, lighting, sound recording, interview technique, presentation, narrative, documentary and docudrama genres) and post-production (paper, film and sound editing). The module establishes a social, cultural and intellectual context for production, and offers a strong critical foundation for the effective realization of production work. Teaching enables students to engage collectively with narrative theory in a critical and analytical forum. Students will make productions that will engage with real audiences on the web and other media platforms

Tutor: TBC

Module information and syllabi are available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.
HPSC0068 Sleeping and Dreaming

This course is designed to explore the different ways sleeping and dreaming have been understood in the past, both distant and recent. We study the various understandings and experiences of sleep from ancient Mesopotamian dream interpretations to the modern world with its fascination with insomnia, sleep disorders and the neuroscience of sleep. We discuss historical understandings of the physiology of sleep, the interpretations of dreams, the material culture of resting, the drugs that produce artificial sleep, and the ways sleeping and dreaming have been used in art, literature and film.

Tutor: Dr Bill MacLehose
Teaching Sessions: Term 2, students attend 2 x 1 hour sessions per week.
Assessment: 2-hour Exam - 40%, Essay (3000 words) - 60%
External Examiner: Dr Rebekah Higgitt - University of Kent

HPSC0107 Science Journalism

A practical course in communicating science based around three key tasks: (1) writing science news and feature articles suitable for New Scientist or the science pages of the ‘quality’ press; (2) carrying out a radio interview, such as might be broadcast on Radio 4’s Science Now; (3) reporting on a piece of novel science to a committee of MPs who need to be aware both of the science content of the work and potential policy issues. Issues in the public understanding of science are discussed from this practical standpoint of communication. This module is time intensive and requires substantial group work.

Tutor: Dr Jean-Baptiste Gouyon
Teaching sessions: Term 2. 1 x 1-hour lecture, 1 x 2-hour practical session per week.
Assessment: News Article (500 words) - 10%, Feature Article (2500 words) - 50%, Group Work - 40%
External Examiner: Dr Declan Fahy - Dublin City University

HPSC0109 Philosophy of Medicine

This module provides students with an overview of the field of philosophy of medicine. Based on case-studies drawn from contemporary medical practice, the module will engage with six conceptual issues of major importance to medicine. In brief, these are the question of discovery (of diseases and treatments), with causation, with modelling, with complexity, with classification, and with evidence-based medicine.

Tutor: Dr Brendan Clarke
Teaching sessions: Term 2. Students attend 2 x 1-hour sessions per week.
Assessment: Essay (4000 words) - 80%, Write up of Class Presentation (1000 words) - 20%
External Examiner: Dr Ian Kidd – University of Nottingham

HPSC0111 Science, Art and Philosophy

This module explores the interactions between science and art from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Its philosophical focus is the notion of "representation", conceived as a crucial common link between scientific and artistic visual practices. Integrating the history and philosophy of scientific and artistic representations, the course will address a broad range of issues. These will include questions on the nature and role of visual representations in scientific and artistic practice, what counts as
"objective" and "accurate" representation, when and how images count as "evidence", and whether the relations between science and modernism contribute to overturn the common sense view that "art invents, science discovers".

Tutor: Dr Chiara Ambrosio

Teaching Sessions: Term 2, students attend 1 x 2-hour lecture, 1 x 1-hour seminar per week.

Assessment: Poster - 40%, Article (2500 words) – 40%, Presentation (10 minutes) – 20%

External Examiner: Dr Ian Kidd – University of Nottingham
Level 2 intermediate modules

HPSC0019 Human Sciences in Society

Science plays key roles in solutions to problems of global and local concern. But science never is the only force at work, and increasingly it faces stiff competition for influence. This module focuses on science when it is put to use in solutions. We concentrate on engagement between scientists and others within communities of interest coming together to solve problems. Think climate change, pandemics, earthquake prediction, or collapse of biodiversity as problems of global concern; or, air quality, water supply, nutrition, or pest control as problems of local concern. In this module, we explore the forces that can constrain and enhance science in these engagements. We investigate ways scientists can improve their effectiveness when engaging. We’ll ask if better engagement can circle around to improve science itself.

HPSC0019 is available only to Year 2 students in Human Sciences BSc.

Tutor: Dr Cristiano Turbil

Teaching sessions: Terms 1 and 2. 1 x 1-hour seminar per week.

Assessment: Coursework (100%); no exam; to be ‘complete’, students must submit all coursework and attend at least 70% of sessions, including the compulsory sessions.

External Examiner: Dr Angela Cassidy – University of Exeter

Level 3 advanced modules

HPSC0041 Dissertation

Students undertake a research project of their own design in the field of history and philosophy of science or science and technology studies. Students organise their own supervision (in consultation with staff), and discussion of research progress is undertaken during regular supervisions. Students submit a 10,000-word dissertation summarising their findings. They deliver presentations on their work. This is a full-year, one course unit research module for third-year students. This module is compulsory for all STS BSc students. It also is available, by permission, to students in other degree programmes.

Co-ordinator: Dr Cristiano Turbil

Meeting sessions: Terms 1 and 2. Fortnightly tutorials with supervisor.

Assessment: Presentation (15 minutes) - 20%, Plan/Proposal (1000 words) – 10%, Dissertation (10,000 words) - 70%.

HPSC0053 Research Project (iBSc)

This is a full-year, one course-unit module for students doing the Intercalated BSc in the Department of Science and Technology Studies. Students undertake a research project largely of their own design and direction in the field of science and technology studies. An appropriate supervisor is agreed with the course coordinator, and research is discussed during regular tutorials. Students submit a literature survey and a 10,000-word research paper summarising their finding. They also deliver an oral presentation describing their work-in-progress.

Co-ordinator: Dr Cristiano Turbil

Meeting Sessions: Terms 1 and 2 fortnightly tutorials with supervisor.

Module information and syllabi are available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/teaching.
Assessment: Coursework (1200 words) -10%, Presentation Term 2 (20 minutes) (15%), Dissertation (10,000 words) (75%)