

# HPSC2020: Philosophy of Medicine

## Course Syllabus

2013-14 session | Dr Brendan Clarke | [b.clarke@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:b.clarke@ucl.ac.uk)

### Course Information

This module provides students with an overview of the exciting 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. The teaching will be a mixture of lectures, giving topic overviews, critical reading of philosophical and medical sources, and seminar activities, intended to allow students to autonomously develop their analytical skills. This module has no pre-requisites.

This course is intended to be complimentary to a number of other courses running in this department, including HPSC2003: Topics in the Philosophy of Science and HPSC3028: Advanced Topics in Philosophy of Medicine.

### Basic course information

Course website:	<a href="https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/staff/clarke/clarke-teach/2020">https://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/staff/clarke/clarke-teach/2020</a>
Moodle Web site:	search 'HPSC2020'
Assessment:	one piece of coursework (50%) and one exam (50%)
Timetable:	<a href="http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/hpsc">www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/hpsc</a>
Prerequisites:	No prerequisites
Required texts:	No required texts
Course tutor:	Dr Brendan Clarke
Contact:	<a href="mailto:b.clarke@ucl.ac.uk">b.clarke@ucl.ac.uk</a>   t: 020 7679 7132
Web:	<a href="http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/staff/clarke">http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/staff/clarke</a>
Office location:	22 Gordon Square, Room 2.1
Office hours:	Monday 2-3pm; Tuesday 12-1pm

## Module schedule

UCL	Topic	Dates	Reading
6	<b>Introduction</b>	30/9 and 2/10	Caplan 1992
7	<b>Discovery</b>	7/10 and 9/10	Kuhn 1962
8	<b>Causality I</b>	14/10 and 16/10	Evans 1976
9	<b>Causality II</b>	21/10 and 23/10	Williamson 2011
10	<b>Causality III</b>	28/10 and 30/10	Russo and Williamson 2007
11	<b>Reading week – no lectures</b>		
12	<b>Models I</b>	11/11 and 13/11	Morrison and Morgan 1999
13	<b>Models II</b>	18/11 (in Grant Museum) and 20/11	Ankeny 2007; Griesemer 2004
14	<b>Models III</b>	25/11 and 27/11	Leonelli 2008
15	<b>Complexity</b>	2/12 and 4/12	Mitchell 2004
15	<b>Essay deadline: 11.59pm, 06/12/13</b>		
16	<b>Testing, testing...</b>	9/12 and 11/12	Guyatt et al 1992

## Assessments

### Summary

	Description	Deadline	Word limit
<b>Essay</b>	Essay	11.59 pm, Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2013	3 000
<b>Exam</b>	Unseen exam	Term 3	n/a

### Assignments

Select a topic, and investigate it in a research essay of about 3000 words. Essay topics can either come from the list (below), or supplied by you. You are encouraged to discuss your ideas with the course tutor well in advance of the final deadline. Further guidance on essay writing will be given early in the term.

The essay is due no later than **11.59 pm, Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013**. It must be submitted through the Moodle service. In extremis, the essay may be submitted via email to <b.clarke@ucl.ac.uk> as

an attachment. Your essay must be compatible with MS Word 2003 or Adobe Acrobat 7.0.

This project contributes fifty percent to the final course mark. No rewriting is available. In order to be deemed 'complete' on this module students must attempt both the essay and the exam.

### **Criteria for assessment**

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

### **Aims & objectives**

This module provides an introduction to analytic philosophy of medicine. As such, the aims of the module are:

1. to note that there is a degree continuity of philosophy of medicine with general philosophy of science.
2. to argue that careful consideration of historical and pragmatic factors are generally a significant part of doing good philosophy of medicine.
3. to prepare students for further study of this subject.

By the end of this course students will:

1. understand the major issues in the five philosophical topics covered in the course
2. appreciate the role of historical and pragmatic factors in shaping philosophical discourse
3. develop appropriate critical, reading, writing, and presentation skills

### **Reading list**

These are available via the college Reading List service [<http://readinglists.ucl.ac.uk>] and on the module moodle site. They will be updated during the term: students are expected to check for updates frequently.

### **Course expectations**

You are expected to attend the lectures and seminars. There will be reading(s) set for each topic: you will be expected to be familiar with this in advance of the seminar. To ensure that this is the case, you will be required to submit one question about the reading(s) before each seminar via moodle. Further instructions about this will be given in the first lecture.

### **Important policy information**

---

Details of college and departmental policies relating to modules and assessments can be found in the STS Student Handbook [www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/handbook](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/handbook)

All students taking modules in the STS department are expected to read these policies.