

## The Role of Contexts in Societal Change

<b>Course code</b>	<i>HUM166</i>
<b>Compulsory in the programmes</b>	
<b>Level of studies</b>	<i>Undergraduate</i>
<b>Number of credits and</b>	<i>6 ECTS (48 contact hours + 6 consultation hours, 106 individual work hours)</i>
<b>Course coordinator (title and name)</b>	<i>Dr. Joe Milburn</i>
<b>Prerequisites</b>	<i>None</i>
<b>Language of instruction</b>	<i>English</i>

### THE AIM OF THE COURSE:

The Societal Contexts course introduces students to societal contexts that affect social behaviour and societal change. This knowledge is crucial for better understanding how we, as humans, are influenced by numerous areas of social life and how they inform our actions. The course looks at topics as varied as science, human nature-nurture debate, religion, history, culture, law, and others. By looking at specific examples the course will extend the participants' knowledge, allowing to make better informed decisions whether when engaging public information, carrying study or research activities, or under other circumstances.

### MAPPING OF COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES) WITH DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES (See Annex), ASSESMENT AND TEACHING METHODS

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Degree level learning objectives (Number of LO)	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. Students will understand how different societal contexts affect societal change.	ELO1.2.	Midterm exam, final exam, course paper	Lectures, seminars, course paper
CLO2. Students will learn to identify arguments about causality.	ELO1.2.	Midterm exam, final exam, course paper	Lectures, seminars, course paper
CLO3. Students will be able to relate knowledge from various behavioural sciences.	ELO1.2.	Midterm exam, final exam, course paper	Lectures, seminars, course paper
CLO4. Students will understand how understanding different societal context can help improve understanding individual disciplines.	ELO1.2.	Midterm exam, final exam, course paper	Lectures, seminars, course paper
CLO5. Students will learn to use information from across different behavioural sciences in carrying out research.	ELO4.1., ELO4.3.	Midterm exam, final exam, course paper	Lectures, seminars, course paper
CLO6. Students will engage in discussions on the ethics of research, including economic.	ELO2.1.	Midterm exam, final exam, course paper	Lectures, seminars, course paper

## ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism are fully applicable and will be strictly enforced in the course. Academic dishonesty, and cheating can and will lead to a report to the ISM Committee of Ethics. With regard to remote learning, ISM remind students that they are expected to adhere and maintain the same academic honesty and integrity that they would in a classroom setting.

## COURSE OUTLINE

Topic	In-class hours	Readings
<b>Introduction</b> Scope and aims of the course. Modernity as a social context. Ideas of progress and modernity; criticisms of modernity.	4	Required Reading, Taylor, "Three Malaises of Modernity" in <i>The Ethics of Authenticity</i>
<b>Ethical Frameworks of Modernity</b> Understanding social frameworks; understanding modernity as an ethical project. Is the ethical project of modernity undeveloped or wrongheaded?	4	Required Reading, Taylor "The Inarticulate Debate" in <i>The Ethics of Authenticity</i>
<b>Science, Scientism, and Ethical Subjectivism</b> The common distinction between Facts and Opinions; an introduction to epistemic scientism; scientism and ethics.	4	Required Reading, Hubbard, "The Fact – Opinion Dichotomy", "Leimer-Hendel, "Facts and Opinions".
<b>Scientism and Ethical Subjectivism Continued</b> Richard Taylor on the Meaning of life; subjective vs. objective values; various meanings of objective vs. subjective.	4	Required Reading, "The Meaning of Life", R. Taylor
<b>Problems for Ethical Subjectivism</b> , Wiggins's critiques of ethical subjectivism; Taylor's conception of "strong evaluation"; can we avoid strong evaluations?	4	Required Reading, Taylor "Inescapable Horizons".
<b>Scientific Ethics:</b> The idea of scientific ethics; reasons for being doubtful such ethics can exist.	4	Required Reading, Appiah, "Science Knows Best".
<b>Midterm</b>	4	–
<b>Problems for Scientism</b> The fundamental argument against scientism defended; being anti-scientism is not being anti-science.	4	Required Reading, Peels, "The Fundamental Argument Against Scientism".
<b>Science, Philosophy, and Reason:</b> Instrumental vs. non-instrumental practical reasoning; alternative models of reason.	4	Required Reading, Taylor "An Iron Cage?"
<b>Platonism vs. Postmodernism</b> Introduction to the Platonic triad; is a broadly Platonic view compatible with the Ethical Framework of Modernity? Does it provide a viable alternative to post-modern Ethics.	4	Required Reading, Kaufmann, "The Traditional Theory of Human Nature".
<b>Soul talk and Science:</b> The conflict between science and ethical viewpoint: real or imaginary? Case study: free-will and moral responsibility.	4	Required Reading, Smith, "Neuroscience vs. philosophy: Taking aim at Free-Will"
<b>Final overview</b> Conclusion from the course	4	

	<b>Total: 48 hours</b>	
CONSULTATIONS	6	
FINAL EXAM	2	

**FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION**

Type of assignment	%
<i>Group Components 30%</i>	
Research paper	30%
<i>Individual Components 70%</i>	
Midterm exam	30%
Final exam	40%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100</b>

**DESCRIPTION AND GRADING CRITERIA OF EACH ASSIGNMENT**

*(Provide short descriptions and grading criteria of each assignment)*

- 1. Midterm exam.** The midterm exam will be held in week 7 of the term, during the lecture. It will be an open-book test, and will include open questions. It will count towards 30% of the final grade. The midterm test will be based on topics 1-5.
- 2. Course paper.** Students (in small groups) will be assigned to write a research paper that will count towards 30% of the final grade. Students can choose their own topic under the scope of the course.
- 3. Final exam.** The final exam will count towards 40% of the final grade. It will be an open-book test, including open questions. The exam will be based on topics 7-12.
- 4. Retake exam.** The retake exam will replace the marks for the midterm and the final exams ( a total of 70%). It will be an open-book test, including open questions. The exam will cover all topics of the course.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "Science Knows Best." *The New York Times*, October 1, 2010, sec. Books.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/03/books/review/Appiah-t.html>.

Kaufman, Whitley R. P. "The Traditional Theory of Human Nature" in *Human Nature and the Limits of Darwinism*. Springer, 2016.

Lammer-Heindel, Christoffer. "Facts and Opinions" *Philosophy Now* (August 1, 2016): 23–25.

Peels, Rik. "The Fundamental Argument against Scientism." In *Science Unlimited?*, edited by Maarten Boudry and Massimo Pigliucci. University of Chicago Press, 2017.

PhD, Ryan Hubbard. "The Fact-Opinion Dichotomy." *A Philosopher's Stone* (blog), January 6, 2020.

<https://medium.com/the-philosophers-stone/the-fact-opinion-dichotomy-b7801901672b>.

Smith, Kerri. "Neuroscience vs Philosophy: Taking Aim at Free Will | Nature." Accessed January 20, 2023.  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/477023a>.

Taylor, Charles. *The Ethics of Authenticity*: Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018.

**ANNEX**

**DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

**Learning objectives for the Bachelor of Business Management**

*Programmes:  
International Business and Communication,  
Business Management and Marketing,  
Finance,  
Industrial Technology Management,  
Entrepreneurship and Innovation*

<b>Learning Goals</b>	<b>Learning Objectives</b>
Students will be critical thinkers	BLO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the business disciplines
	BLO1.2. Students will be able to conduct a contextual analysis to identify a problem associated with their discipline, to generate managerial options and propose viable solutions
Students will be socially responsible in their related discipline	BLO2.1. Students will be knowledgeable about ethics and social responsibility
Students will be technology agile	BLO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	BLO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	BLO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	BLO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	BLO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper

**Learning objectives for the Bachelor of Social Science**

*Programmes:  
Economics and Data Analytics,  
Economics and Politics*

<b>Learning Goals</b>	<b>Learning Objectives</b>
Students will be critical thinkers	ELO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the key economics disciplines
	ELO1.2. Students will be able to identify underlying assumptions and logical consistency of causal statements
Students will have skills to employ economic thought for the common good	ELO2.1. Students will have a keen sense of ethical criteria for practical problem-solving
Students will be technology agile	ELO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	ELO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	ELO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	ELO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	ELO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper