

# PHIL 3015 PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

**Credit Points** 10

**Legacy Code** 102493

**Coordinator** Jennifer Mensch ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Jennifer Mensch/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Jennifer%20Mensch/))

**Description** What is History? This question has been an object of inquiry as much for philosophers as for historians themselves. Large historical forces were at work in the Enlightenment—both in the sciences and in politics—and philosophers like Rousseau and Kant sought to understand these movements philosophically. For Rousseau, the lens was genealogical as he worked to produce a "natural history" of politics and society; for Kant, the historical lens was teleological as he narrated instead a philosophical history full of notions of progress and improvement. In the 19th century, philosophers like Hegel and Marx were concerned to think about history as a dialectical movement, while Nietzsche applied Darwin's new theory of evolution to his understanding of history and morals alike. The great shockwaves wrought by the two World Wars of the 20th century brought new philosophical writers to the problem of history, though now with an eye back toward the seemingly failed vision of inevitable progress so successfully peddled by the Enlightenment. This philosophical tradition and its changing approaches to history will be the focus of this unit.

**School** Humanities & Comm Arts

**Discipline** Philosophy

**Student Contribution Band** HECS Band 4 10cp

Check your HECS Band contribution amount via the Fees ([https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current\\_students/fees/](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/fees/)) page.

**Level** Undergraduate Level 3 subject

**Restrictions** Successful completion of 60 credit points of study in currently enrolled program.

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this subject, students should be able to:

1. Identify major philosophical approaches to history
2. Analyse primary texts from the philosophy of history
3. Understand the major concepts at work in the philosophy of history
4. Apply basic philosophical analyses to historical events and issues

## Subject Content

The claims of philosophical world history

The idea of world historical individuals

The moral advancement of humankind

Teleological approaches to the rise and decline of cultures

Hermeneutical issues with respect to interpreting the past

## Assessment

The following table summarises the standard assessment tasks for this subject. Please note this is a guide only. Assessment tasks are regularly updated, where there is a difference your Learning Guide takes precedence.

Item	Length	Percent	Threshold	Individual/ Group Task
Short Answer	1 hour	20	N	Individual
Intra-session Exam	1,500 words	40	N	Individual
Essay	2,500 words	40	N	Individual

Prescribed Texts

- Subject Reader

Teaching Periods