

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: **The History of Scientific Thought**

Course Number and Section

HISTSCI

2200E 550

Instructor Name(s): Emerson Doyle

Instructor Email(s): edoyle9@uwo.ca

Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL Brightspace is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

This course is a survey of the physical and biological sciences from pre-history to the 20th century. Our focus will be an understanding of the landmark theories in these sciences as informing issues in the foundations and philosophy of science. We will engage questions of scientific methodology, the sources/reliability of scientific knowledge, the prevalence of various goals for, and attitudes toward, science, and the relationships between science, religion, culture, society, and the individual.

Learning Outcomes: one outcome per entry

Deepen understanding of what western science is, its methods, and why it has been an important aspect in the development of civilization.

Gain an understanding of multiple scientific theories, both historical and contemporary, and acquire an appreciation for why scientific methods continue to be so useful.

Practice and improve writing and general communication skills, especially with regard to writing from various perspectives and evaluating arguments and ideas in their relevant contexts.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

- Required: Lindberg, D.C. (2007) The Beginnings of Western Science, 2nd Ed. UC Press.
- Suggested: McGrew, T. (ed.)(2009) Philosophy of Science: An Historical Anthology.
- Suggested: Okasha, S. (2002) Philosophy of Science: A Very Short Introduction. OUP.
- Suggested: Henry, J. (2011) A Short History of Scientific Thought. Palgrave Macmillan.

Note that all non-Lindberg reading assignments will be made available freely on OWL, but the suggested texts are still worth a look for the wealth of additional resources they contain.

Methods of Evaluation: one assignment per entry

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Active Learning	Weekly	20

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Guided Essay	10/28/26	10
Scholar's Profile	12/02/26	10
Research Essay	Various Dates (Winter Semester)	30
Midyear Exam	Fall Exam Period	15
Final Exam	Winter Exam Period	15

Tuesday, August 11, 2026

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In-course Costs \$042.00

For Textbooks and Course Materials (below), you are required to include the cost of each textbook or other learning material.

Note whether there are any restrictions that would prevent a student from using a second-hand copy. Here is some suggested text:

- Required textbook: [author, title, edition, publisher, date]. Cost: [insert amount].
 - Or include the weblink of the textbook’s publisher site that includes the cost information.
- Students need to purchase this edition. Second-hand or older editions will not be sufficient.
- OR Students are welcome to purchase second-hand or earlier editions of this textbook.
- This course has an optional field trip that costs [insert amount].
- This course has a required field component that costs [insert amount].

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.