COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

NOTE: ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

Academic School	General Education	
Programme:	General Education	
FHEQ Level:	3	
Course Title:	Scientific Reasoning	
Course Code:	GEP 3140	
Course Leader:	Mary Robert	
Student Engagement Hours: Lectures & Discussion: Seminar / Tutorials: Study Visit Independent / Guided Learning:	120 24 16 5 75	
Semester:	Fall/Spring/Summer	
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits	

Course Description:

What do you consider when you consider your carbon footprint? How do you evaluate the quality and conclusions of a double blind trial? This core course aims to provide a means by which the student can effectively communicate an understanding and appreciation of the impact of science on everyday life and academic enquiry. Scientific areas to be explored range from ethics to evolution, physics to physiology, climate change to conservation, and trials and testing to thinkers and innovators. This core course teaches students to reflect critically on information so that they may make informed personal decisions about matters that involve science and understand the importance of science in other areas of their studies.

Prerequisites: None

Aims and Objectives:

The primary aim of this course is to develop an understanding and appreciation of the impact of science on everyday life so that students may take part confidently in discussions with others about issues involving science. Students will be taught to critically read and understand the essential points of media reports about matters that involve science. This should lead students to reflect critically on the information included in or omitted from, such reports so that they may make informed personal decisions about matters that involve science, such as health, diet, use of energy resources, climate change.

Programme Outcomes:

A3, A4, A5, A6, A7 B7, B11

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key scientific concepts including the scientific method
- Demonstrate the ability to describe, explain and predict natural phenomena
- Demonstrate the ability to make informed personal decisions about science, including the ability to critically assess and evaluate the information included in and omitted from media reports
- Communicate, both orally and in writing, an understanding of science as presented in popular media (e.g., at the level of *Horizon* (TV) *In Our Time* (radio) or *The New Scientist/Scientific American*).

Indicative Content:

- Scientific Method
- Turning Points in science
- Scientific Thinkers and innovators (across a range of scientific areas including Physics)
- Ethics and Science including genetic modification
- Clinical Trials
- Climate change
- Conservation
- Evolution
- Nutrition and Health
- Science as it relates to public policy
- Population and Reproduction

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Learning and Teaching Policy Committee found at: http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-affairs/academic-standing.aspx.

Teaching Methodology:

Lectures, small group discussion, study visit(s) to relevant site(s) eg. Science Museum, Richmond Park, Bletchley Park, The Wellcome Collection

Bibliography:

See syllabus for complete reading list

Indicative Text(s):

No set text; course utilises popular science books, journals, broadcasts, press media.

Journals

See syllabus

Web Sites

See syllabus for full list www.wellcomecollection.org www.sciencemuseum.org.uk

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus

Change Log for this CSD:

Major or	Nature of Change	Date Approved &	Change
Minor		Approval Body (School	Actioned by
Change?		or LTPC)	Academic
			Registry