



Program cultivates critical thinking

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A new program on Sac State's campus that cultivates both critical and creative thinking as it bridges multiple fields of study has begun to evolve.

A new program has started to build momentum on Sacramento State's campus. [History and Philosophy of Science](#) was started fall 2014 as an initiative and continues to unfold this spring semester as an official program.

HPS was made specifically with students in mind. It aims to aid students who may have taken courses in the past that have raised questions but were never answered because the material extended past course guidelines for the class.



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Dr. Michael Epperson, research professor and director of CPNS, teaching his History of the Physical Sciences course in Douglass Hall, Room 206 on March 18.

The HPS program was set in motion by Michael Epperson, research professor and director of the [Center for Philosophy and Natural Sciences](#) in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. HPS allows students to further ask questions and take the subject matter deeper, while also working with other faculty members who are funded to do related research, and is a joint program of CPNS and the Department of History.

Epperson said HPS has been a long time coming and spoke about how the request was made evident from Sac State students.

"In my 10 years at Sac State, I've encountered a steadily growing number of students interested in the intersection of science and the humanities,... but didn't have an opportunity to study these questions in their regular courses," Epperson said.

HPS is intended to facilitate this kind of creative thinking.

Christopher Keys, a senior physics major, is a [student coordinator for CPNS](#) and has also taken history of ancient science with Epperson.

Keys said the HPS program acts as a bridge between science and philosophy, while also educating students in depth on the history of each.

Keys also said the program is something to keep an eye on as it develops through the years.

"This may sound like an exaggeration, but I view what this program is trying to do is vital to our future," Keys said. "Since the first half of the last century, philosophers and physicists have parted ways. Before then, the title 'natural philosopher' carried serious weight in society as these were individuals that could both collect an understanding of the universe, as well as logically reason through it,... I believe that joining these two mindsets back together is important to both fields and society on a whole."

Aaron Cohen, chair of the history department, said the HPS program still has more opportunities to unfold.

"We are also going to have a pathway through GE next year in which students will be able to take a bundle of related courses and will introduce a minor sometime next year," Cohen said.