

Knowledge and Reality

19/20

Semester 2

This course is an introduction to epistemology and metaphysics. Its aim is to introduce some main topics in contemporary epistemology and metaphysics, in a form suitable for students with little or no prior background in epistemology and metaphysics, and to develop students' ability to think critically about these topics.

Course Organiser:

Dr Bryan Pickel

bryan.pickel@ed.ac.uk

Office: 4.04b, Dugald Stewart Building

Office Hours: TBA

Weeks 1-5

Lecturer:

Dr Joshua Thorpe

jthorpe@exseed.ed.ac.uk

Office: 5.05 Dugald Stewart Building

Office Hours: TBA

Weeks 6-10

Course Secretary:

Alison Lazda

philinfo@ed.ac.uk

Lecture Times and Location

Monday	13.10-14.00	Lecture Theatre G.03, 50 George Square
Thursday	13.10-14.00	Lecture Theatre G.03, 50 George Square
Friday	11.10-12.00	Lecture Theatre G.03, 50 George Square

Lecture Topics and Readings

Week (Beginning)	Topic	Core Reading
Week 1 (14 January)	Personal Identity (Pickel)	<i>A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality</i> , John Perry
Week 2 (21	Material Objects	Judith Jarvis Thomson (1998). "The Statue

January)	(Pickel)	and the Clay". Noûs 32 (2):149-173. NOTE: Read §§1-2 only. Hawley, Katherine (2001), <i>How Things Persist</i> , Chapter 1 §§1.0-1.3. Bonevac and Phillips, <i>World Philosophy</i> §7.3.1, <i>Questions to King Milinda</i>
Week 3 (28 January)	Universals and Particulars (Pickel)	"The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika Theory of Universals", Kisor Chakrabarti, <i>Journal of Indian Philosophy</i> 3 (1975): 363-382. "The World of Universals", Chapter IX of <i>Problems of Philosophy</i> , Bertrand Russell (http://www.gutenberg.org/files/5827/5827-h/5827-h.htm) Sections 1 and 2 of "Three Versions of the Bundle Theory", James van Cleve, <i>Philosophical Studies</i> 47 (1985): 95 - 107.
Week 4 (4 February)	Modality and Essentialism (Pickel)	Chapter 1, 'Identity and Necessity' in <i>Philosophical troubles: collected papers</i> , Volume 1 - Saul A. Kripke 2011 Kripke, Saul (1972/2001), <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Ma. Pages:110-118. Penelope Mackie, SEP Entry "Transworld Identity" http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-transworld/
Week 5 (11 February)	Social Metaphysics (Pickel)	Katherine Ritchie (2013). What Are Groups? <i>Philosophical Studies</i> 166 (2):257-272 Natalie Stoljar (2011). Different Women. Gender and the Realism-Nominalism Debate. In Charlotte Witt (ed.), <i>Feminist Metaphysics</i> . Springer Verlag 27-46
Break (18 February)		
Week 6 (25 February)	What is Knowledge (Thorpe)	Jennifer Nagel. 2014. <i>Knowledge: A Very Short Introduction</i> . Oxford University Press, chapters 1 and 4.

		<p>Edmund Gettier. 1963. 'Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?' <i>Analysis</i>: 121-3.</p> <p>Williamson, Timothy. 2011. 'Knowledge First Epistemology.' In Sven Bernecker and Duncan Pritchard, eds. <i>The Routledge Handbook to Epistemology</i>. Routledge: 208-18.</p> <p>McGlynn, Aidan. 2014. <i>Knowledge First?</i> Palgrave MacMillan: chapter 1.</p>
Week 7 (4 March)	Scepticism (Thorpe)	<p>Jennifer Nagel. 2014. <i>Knowledge: A Very Short Introduction</i>. Oxford University Press, chapters 2, 3, and 7.</p> <p>Richard Bett. 2011. 'Pyrrhonian Skepticism.' In Sven Bernecker and Duncan Pritchard, eds. <i>The Routledge Companion to Epistemology</i>. Routledge: 403-413.</p> <p>Hilary Putnam. Chapter 1 of <i>Reason Truth and History</i> (1981), Cambridge University Press edition.</p>
Week 8 (11 March)	Internalism and Externalism (Thorpe)	<p>Jennifer Nagel. 2014. <i>Knowledge: A Very Short Introduction</i>. Oxford University Press, chapter 5.</p> <p>Ernest Sosa. 1997. 'Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles,,' <i>Journal of Philosophy</i> 94 (8):410-430.</p> <p>Richard Feldman & Earl Conee. 2001. 'Internalism Defended.' <i>American Philosophical Quarterly</i> 38 (1):1 - 18.</p>
Week 9 (18 March)	Social Epistemology (Thorpe)	<p>Jennifer Nagel. 2014. <i>Knowledge: A Very Short Introduction</i>. Oxford University Press, chapter 6.</p> <p>Bryan Frances. 2011. 'Disagreement.' In Sven Bernecker and Duncan Pritchard, eds. <i>The Routledge Companion to Epistemology</i>. Routledge: 68-74.</p> <p>Alvin Goldman. 2001. 'Experts: Which Ones</p>

		Should You Trust?', <i>Philosophy and Phenomenological Research</i> 63: 85-110.
Week 10 (25 March)	Applied Epistemology (Thorpe)	Rachel McKinnon. 2016. 'Epistemic Injustice'. <i>Philosophy Compass</i> . David Coady and Richard Corry. 2013. <i>The Climate Change Debate</i> . Palgrave Pivot, chapters 1, 2, and 3.
Week 11 (1 April)	Review Week	

Lecture notes and other materials will be available on [Learn](#).

Further advice on Readings

Encyclopaedias are a very good source of extra reading. Avoid Wikipedia (it is often inaccurate on philosophy) but there are good internet encyclopaedias that can be useful:

[The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy \(SEP\)](#)

[The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy \(IEP\)](#)

Websites

We also recommend the following as starting points for your research:

[PhilPapers](#)

[Philosophy Compass](#)

[The Diversity Reading List](#)

You will need to know how to track down sources, including electronic journals, using the library search engine [DiscoverED](#).

Tutorials

In addition to three course lectures per week, you will have weekly tutorials. These give you a chance to further discuss topics and issues in the course and its lectures. Tutorials will take place, at times and places to be arranged, during weeks 2 through 11 of the semester.

Attendance at tutorials is compulsory for all students on this course. The class tutor will maintain a register of attendance. Unexplained absences will be brought to the attention of your Personal Tutor.

You will be allocated a suitable tutorial group by the Timetabling Department based on your timetable. Should you wish to change the group you have been allocated to,

you will need to fill in the *Group Change Request Form* on the Timetabling Department's webpage. This form will be open until the end of Week 3 – if you wish to change groups after this time please contact the Teaching Office directly (philinfo@ed.ac.uk).

Please inform your tutor and the Teaching Office of any absences. Students who miss tutorials may be required to do additional written work.

Assessment

This course is assessed by five short assignments (1% each), a midterm essay (25%), and a final exam (70%). Exam information will be provided during the course.

<i>Short Assignments:</i> Small exercises to develop your philosophy skills. Each are worth 1% of the final mark.	
Assignment 1 - Friday 31st January by 12pm	Online Exercise on Learn
Assignment 2 - Friday 7th February by 12pm	Online Exercise on Learn
Assignment 3 - Friday 14th February by 12pm	Outline Frame. Instructions Available on Learn .
Assignment 4 - Monday 9th March by 12pm	Online Exercise on Learn
Assignment 5 - Wednesday 18th March	Online Exercise on Learn

<i>Midterm Essay:</i> (Max. 1500 Word Essay). This essay is worth 25% of Course Mark.	
Wednesday 26th February by 12pm	Essay Topics available on Learn

You should submit your mid-term essay via Turnitin on the Learn page. Please contact the Course Secretary if you are having problems uploading your essay.

The word count of your essay, including footnotes but excluding bibliography, must not exceed the specified word limit. The precise word count must be written on the coversheet. Overlong essays will be penalised according to the following rule: 1% of the maximum obtainable mark will be deducted for every 100 words, or part thereof, over the word limit. So, exceeding the word limit by 1-100 words incurs a deduction of 1%; exceeding by 101-200 words incurs a deduction of 2%; and so on.

The Semester 2 exam diet takes place from 27th April – 22nd May 2020 (including Saturday 2nd, 9th and 16th May). It is the student's responsibility to ensure they are available for the whole of the exam diet.

Exact details of the date, time and location of the exam will be announced later in the semester.

Resit

The resit takes place in August and is 100% exam. It is the student's responsibility to check the resit timetable on the Student Administration website, find the time and location of the resit exam and ensure they are present for that resit. No formal registration is necessary and students will not be individually notified of the resit date and location of resit exams.

Visiting undergraduates

The assessment arrangements for visiting undergraduates are the same as for other students.

Mark Schemes

For Philosophy-specific marking guidelines go here:

[Grade-related marking guidelines for Philosophy](#)

For the University's general marking scheme go here:

[Common Marking Scheme](#)

Learning Resources

Learn

You should regularly check your university email and check for announcements on the course *Learn* page.

The course *Learn* page will provide information concerning:

- General information and announcement about the course
- Lecture notes and slides
- Tutorial arrangements
- Information about assessment arrangements

University of Edinburgh Library

The library's hard-copy and online resources can be searched online via *DiscoverEd*.

Exemplar essays

Anonymised exemplar essays will be on the Learn pages. These are essays written by past students that they have kindly agreed for us to use. We encourage you to read

these essays in conjunction with the Philosophy-specific marking guidelines. In doing so think about the strengths and weaknesses of the essay, why the essays fell into their grade-band, and how they could have been improved.

There are many ways for an essay to fall into a particular grade-band. The Philosophy-specific marking guidelines provide explanation of the many, diverse, ways in which an essay can be a 1st, 2.i, 2.ii, and so on. The exemplar essays only show one way to achieve a certain grade; it is not the only way.

Autonomous Learning Groups

Each course has dedicated Autonomous Learning Groups. It is up to you, the members of the ALG, to organise the meetings. You decide how often to meet and what to do in your ALG. ALGs are designed to help you learn and get to know your classmates; they are not a formal requirement of the course. It is important to note that assessment in your courses is non-competitive: you aren't competing against your classmates, only against the general grade criteria. It is in your interests to help each other.

You could use ALG meetings to:

- Read and discuss the papers together
- Discuss essay-writing and time-management techniques
- Constructively critique draft essays or plans
- Work on presentations or discussion posts that the class may involve
- Share tips on career advice

Please email the Course Organiser if you feel that it would be useful for the group if they joined one of your sessions. Please contact the course secretary if you find it necessary during the semester to transfer into a different group.

Getting in Touch

If you have a question regarding lecture content you should ask it in your tutorial group and/or visit the relevant lecturer to discuss it during their office hour.

For other specifically academic matters you can contact the Course Organiser.

If you have questions not specifically about lecture content, you should contact the Course Secretary.

Prizes

Students who perform with excellence in Knowledge and Reality are eligible for the James Hutchison Stirling Prize.

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