



Course Guide (2020/21)

PHIL10072: Themes in Epistemology

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Contents

1. Course Aims and Objectives
2. Intended Learning Outcomes
3. Seminar Times and Locations
4. Seminar Content
5. Readings
6. Assessment

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1. Course Aims and Objectives

This course will introduce students to a number of major ideas and themes in epistemology. We will examine traditional debates over the nature of knowledge, the nature of justification and the threat of scepticism, and also cover topics of contemporary interest such as contextualism, pragmatic and moral encroachment, epistemic injustice, knowledge first epistemology and evidence in the law.

2. Intended Learning Outcomes

To further develop philosophical skills, and to extend and deepen the philosophical knowledge acquired in previous philosophy courses.

3. Lectures and Tutorials

Please note that in addition to the lectures themselves, student will attend weekly tutorials which will involve more focussed small group discussion on the week's topic. Information about class timing and format will be available on the LEARN page for the course.

4. Lecture Content

Week 1: Uncertainty

Core Reading:

- Descartes, R. (1640) *Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans by John Cottingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), meditations I and 2 [E-book available through the library]
- Lemos, N. (2007) *An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge* (Cambridge University Press), chapter 1 [E-book available through the library].

Further Reading:

- Unger, P. (1978/2002) *Ignorance* (Oxford University Press), chapter 3 [E-book available through the library]

Week 2: The Gettier Problem

Core Reading:

- Lemos, N. *An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*, Cambridge University Press, 2007), chapter 2 [E-book available through the library].

- Nagel, J. (2014) *Knowledge: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), chapter 4 [On short loan in the library]
- Pritchard, D., *Knowledge*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), chapters 2-3. [E-book available through the library].

Further Reading:

- Gettier, E. (1963) 'Is justified true belief knowledge?' *Analysis* v23(6) [available through JSTOR] [included in the Bernecker and Dretske volume].
- Clark, M. (1963) 'Knowledge and grounds: A comment on Mr. Gettier's paper' *Analysis* v24(2) [available through JSTOR].
- Lycan, W. (2006) 'The Gettier problem problem' in Hetherington, S. ed. *Epistemology Futures* (Oxford University Press) [available online - <http://www.unc.edu/~ujanel/Gettier.htm>]
- Zagzebski, L. (1994) 'The inescapability of Gettier problems' *Philosophical Quarterly* v44, pp65-73 [available online - <http://philpapers.org/rec/ZAGTIO>]

Week 3: Putting Knowledge First

Core Reading:

- McGlynn, A. *Knowledge First?*, chapter 1 [E-book available through the library].
- Williamson, T. (2010) 'Knowledge first epistemology', Bernecker, S. & Pritchard, D. eds. *Routledge Companion to Epistemology* (Routledge). [E-book available through the library].

Further Reading:

- Nagel, J. (2013) 'Knowledge as a mental state' *Oxford Studies in Epistemology* v4, pp275-310 (E-book available through the library)
- Williamson, T. (2000) *Knowledge and its Limits*, introduction, chapter 1 (Oxford University Press) [E-book available through the library].

Week 4: Relevant Alternatives and Closure

Core Reading:

- Vogel, J. (1999) 'The new relevant alternatives theory' *Philosophical Perspectives* v13 [available through JSTOR].

Further Reading:

- Blome-Tillmann, M. (2015) 'Solving the Moorean puzzle' *Philosophical Studies* v172(2), pp493-514 [Available through PhilPapers]
- Dretske, F. (1970) 'Epistemic operators' *Journal of Philosophy* v67 [Available through JSTOR]

- Gardiner, G. (forthcoming) 'Relevance and risk: How the relevant alternatives framework models the epistemology of risk' *Synthese* [Available online - <https://philpapers.org/archive/GARRAR-14.pdf>]
- Gardiner, G. (2019) 'The reasonable and the relevant: Legal standards of proof' *Philosophy and Public Affairs* v47(3) [available online - <https://philpapers.org/archive/GARTRA-9.pdf>]
- Dretske, F. (2014) 'The case against closure' in Sosa, E., Steup, M. and Turri, J. eds. *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology 2nd ed.*, Wiley-Blackwell [E-book available through the library].
- Hawthorne, J. (2014) 'The case for closure' Sosa, E., Steup, M. and Turri, J. eds. *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology 2nd ed.*, Wiley-Blackwell [E-book available through the library].

Week 5: Contextualism

Core Reading:

- Rysiew, P. 'Epistemic contextualism' entry in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* URL = <http://www.seop.leeds.ac.uk/entries/contextualism-epistemology>
- Stine, G. (1976) 'Scepticism, relevant alternatives and deductive closure' *Philosophical Studies* v29, pp249-261 [Available through JSTOR]

Further Reading:

- Lewis, D. (1996) 'Elusive knowledge' *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* v74, pp549-567 [Available through JSTOR] [included in the Bernecker and Dretske volume].
- Nagel, J. (2014) *Knowledge: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), chapter 7 [On short loan in the library]
- Stanley, J. (2004) 'On the linguistic basis for contextualism' *Philosophical Studies* v119, pp119-146 [available online]

Week 6: Pragmatic Encroachment

Core Reading:

- Fantl, J. and McGrath, M. (2009) *Knowledge in an Uncertain World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), Introduction and chapter 2. [E-book available through the library].
- Brown, J. (2013) 'Experimental philosophy, contextualism and subject-sensitive invariantism'. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* v86, pp233-261 [available through JSTOR]

Further Reading:

- DeRose, K. (2005) 'The ordinary language basis for contextualism and the new invariantism' *Philosophical Quarterly* v55, pp172-198 [available through JSTOR]
- Fantl, J. and McGrath, M. (2014) 'Practical matters affect whether you know' in Sosa, E., Steup, M. and Turri, J. eds. *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology 2nd ed.*, (Wiley-Blackwell) [E-book available through the library].
- Reed, B. (2014) 'Practical matters do not affect whether you know' in Sosa, E., Steup, M. and Turri, J. eds. *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology 2nd ed.*, (Wiley-Blackwell) [E-book available through the library].

Week 7: Moral Encroachment

Core Reading:

- Gendler, T. (2011) 'The epistemic costs of implicit bias' *Philosophical Studies* v156, pp33-63 [Available online through JSTOR]
- Basu, R. and Shroeder, M. (2019) 'Doxastic wrongings' in Kim, B. and McGrath, M. eds. *Pragmatic Encroachment in Epistemology* (Routledge) [available online - <https://philpapers.org/archive/BASDW.pdf>]

Further Reading:

- Basu, R. (2019) 'The wrong of racist beliefs' *Philosophical Studies* v176(9), pp2497-2515 [available online – <https://philpapers.org/archive/BASTWO-3.pdf>]
- Basu, R. (forthcoming) 'A tale of two doctrines: Moral encroachment and doxastic wrongdoing' in Lackey, J. ed. *Applied Epistemology* (Oxford University Press) [available online – <https://philpapers.org/archive/BASATO-3.pdf>]
- Fritz, J. (2017) 'Pragmatic encroachment and moral encroachment' *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* v98, pp643-661 [journal available online]
- Gardiner, G. (2016) 'Evidentialism and moral encroachment' in McCain, K. ed. *Believing in Accordance with the Evidence: New Essays on Evidentialism* (Springer) [available online – <https://philpapers.org/archive/GAREAM-3.pdf>]
- Moss, S. (2018) 'Moral encroachment' *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* v118(2), pp177-205
- Stroud, S. (2006) 'Epistemic partiality in friendship' *Ethics* v116(3), pp498-524 [available through JSTOR]

Week 8: Justification, Knowledge and Probability

Core Reading:

- Buchak, L. (2014) 'Belief, credence and norms' *Philosophical Studies* v169 [available online - <http://philpapers.org/rec/BUCCBA.pdf>]

- Smith, M. (2010) 'What else justification could be' *Noûs* v44 [available online - <http://philpapers.org/rec/SMIWEJ.pdf>]

Further Reading:

- Enoch, D., Fisher, T. and Spectre, L. (2014) 'Statistical evidence, sensitivity and the legal value of knowledge' *Philosophy and Public Affairs* v40 [available online]
- Gardiner, G. (2019) 'The reasonable and the relevant: Legal standards of proof' *Philosophy and Public Affairs* v47(3) [available online - <https://philpapers.org/archive/GARTRA-9.pdf>]
- Smith, M. (2016) *Between Probability and Certainty: What Justifies Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), chapters 2 and 3 [E-book available through the library]
- Thomson, J. (1986) 'Liability and individualized evidence' *Law and Contemporary Problems* v49, pp199-219 [available online - <http://scholarship.law.duke.edu/lcp/vol49/iss3/12/>]

Week 9: Assertion

Core Reading:

- Lackey, J. (2007) 'Norms of assertion', *Noûs* v41, pp594-626. [Available through JSTOR].
- McGlynn, A. *Knowledge First?*, chapter 5, pages 82-124. [E-book available through the library].

Further Reading:

- Weiner, M. (2005) 'Must we know what we say?' *Philosophical Review* v114, [Available online - <http://philpapers.org/rec/WEIMWK>]
- Williamson, T. (1996) 'Knowing and asserting', *Philosophical Review* v105, pp489-523. [Available through JSTOR].

Week 10: Internalism and Externalism

Core Reading:

- Lemos, N. *An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), chapters 5 and 6.

Further Reading:

- Alston, W. (1988) 'An internalist externalism' *Synthese* v73 [available through JSTOR] [included in the Bernecker and Dretske volume].

- Cohen, S. 'Justification and truth' *Philosophical Studies* v46 [available through JSTOR]
- Feldman, R. (2014) 'Justification is internal' in Sosa, E., Steup. M. and Turri, J. eds. *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology 2nd ed.*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2014 [E-book available through the library].
- Greco, J. (2014) 'Justification is not internal' in Sosa, E., Steup. M. and Turri, J. eds. *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology 2nd ed.*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2014 [E-book available through the library].

Week 11: Revision

No Readings

5. Readings

Course Textbooks

The following books provide a good introduction to many of the topics we will cover:

- (i) Lemos, N. (2007) *An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge* (Cambridge University Press)
- (ii) Nagel, J. (2014) *Knowledge: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press)
- (iii) Pritchard, D. (2009) *Knowledge* (Palgrave Macmillan)

Both of these are available as E-books through the library. Other useful texts, also available as E-books, include:

- (i) Sosa, E., Steup. M. and Turri, J. eds. (2014) *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology 2nd ed.*, (Wiley-Blackwell) [E-book available through the library].
- (ii) Bernecker, S. & Pritchard, D. eds. (2010) *Routledge Companion to Epistemology* (Routledge). [E-book available through the library].

Another book which is very useful background reading:

- (i) Pritchard, D. (2006) *What Is This Thing Called Knowledge?* (Routledge)

Some of the classic papers listed as readings can be found in this volume, which is available on short loan through the library:

- (i) Bernecker, S. and Dretske, F. eds. (2000), *Knowledge: Readings in Contemporary Epistemology* (Oxford University Press)

Apart from these texts, the readings for this course are drawn from a range of places. In most cases, listed readings will be either freely available online or accessible online through the library.

Three online encyclopedias of philosophy worth knowing about are the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://www.seop.leeds.ac.uk/contents.html>, the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/> and the online edition of the Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy (find it in the library catalogue).

The PhilPapers website (<http://philpapers.org/>) provides a comprehensive directory of philosophical books and articles that are available online, organised by topic.

Google scholar (<http://scholar.google.com/>) is also worth a look.

If you have any problems getting hold of readings, then please let the course organiser know. If you would like recommendations for additional readings for a particular topic, then please don't hesitate to get in touch.

6. Assessment

This course is assessed by two essays and a participation component.

1. A 1500 word midterm essay, due at 12 noon on **Thursday the 22nd of October** (40%).
2. A 2500 word final essay, due at 12 noon on **Thursday the 10th of December** (55%).
3. Participation (5%).

All essays must be submitted via LEARN – for any problems or queries concerning essay submission please contact the course secretary. A list of essay questions, for both the midterm and final essays will be made available on LEARN. The participation mark will be based on tutorial engagement and/or presentations. More details about this will be provided at the beginning of the course.