



# PHIL\*2240 Knowledge and Belief

Fall 2019

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - September 03, 2019

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## 1 Course Details

### 1.1 Calendar Description

This course is an introduction to epistemology, which is the study of the nature, scope, and limits of knowledge. This course will examine a number of the central questions in epistemology, such as: what can we know? What is the nature of knowledge? And what is the difference between knowledge and true belief?

**Pre-Requisites:** 2.00 credits or (1 of PHIL\*1000, PHIL\*1010, PHIL\*1030, PHIL\*1050)

**Equates:** PHIL\*2250

### 1.2 Course Description

In this course we will explore a number of fundamental questions in the field of epistemology, or theory of knowledge. In our advanced digital age, it is relatively easy to get information, and as a result we think we know a lot about a lot of different things. But what, precisely, is knowledge? And how is it different from mere opinion? What role does truth play in demarking the difference? And do true beliefs need to be backed up by evidence? These questions have been debated since Ancient times, and we will examine them while also considering some emerging questions in social epistemology, feminist epistemology and the epistemology of ignorance.

### 1.3 Timetable

Lectures: T/TH 11:30 – 12:50, McKinnon 228

Timetable is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

## 1.4 Final Exam

Wednesday December 11, 2019, 11:30pm - 1:30pm, Room TBA

Exam time and location is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

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## 2 Instructional Support

**Instructor:** Karyn Freedman

**Email:** karynf@uoguelph.ca

**Office:** 354 MacKinnon

**Phone:** 519-824-4120 x.53232

**Office Hours:** Thursday, 1:00 - 3:00, or by appointment

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## 3 Learning Resources

### 3.1 Required Resources

**Textbook (Textbook)**

**Duncan Pritchard**, What is this Thing Called Knowledge? 4th ed. (Routledge, 2018).

**Selected readings** (identified on the syllabus as ARES) will be made available to you online through the library's ARES E-Course Reserve System: <https://ares.lib.uoguelph.ca/ares/>

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## 4 Learning Outcomes

### 4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Understand, explain and assess major conceptual developments in epistemology, including theories of justification, skepticism, and social epistemology.
  2. Identify and critically evaluate the practical significance of central issues in epistemology.
  3. Read and comprehend original source materials in the history and problems of philosophy.
  4. Write clearly and cogently on basic problems in philosophy.
  5. Argue successfully for your own view and be able to identify and critically evaluate patterns of argumentative reasoning in the work of others.
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## 5 Teaching and Learning Activities

September 5	Class mechanics; Introduction	Pritchard Ch. 1
September 10	Value of Knowledge	Pritchard Chapter 2
September 12	Defining Knowledge; Gettier	Pritchard Chapter 3; E. Gettier ARES
September 17	The Structure of Knowledge	Pritchard Chapter 4
September 19	Rationality	Pritchard Chapter 5
September 24	Virtues and Faculties <b>Quiz #1</b>	Pritchard Chapter 6
September 26	Perception	Pritchard Chapter 7

October 1	Testimony and Memory	Pritchard Chapter 8
October 3	A Priority and Inference	Pritchard Chapter 9
October 8	The Problem of Induction	Pritchard Chapter 10
October 10	<b>Midterm</b>	
October 15	Study Day – no classes	
October 17	Politics	Pritchard Chapter 17
October 22	Epistemic Injustice <b>*Essay topic handout</b>	M. Fricker ARES
October 24	Scientific Knowledge	Pritchard Chapter 11
October 29	Religious Knowledge	Pritchard Chapter 12
October 31	Moral Knowledge	Pritchard Chapter 13
November 5	Technology <b>*Essay due</b>	Pritchard Chapter 14
November 7	Scepticism About Other Minds	Pritchard Chapter 18
November 12	<b>Quiz #2</b>	
November 14	Radical Scepticism	Pritchard Chapter 19
November 19	Truth and objectivity	Pritchard Chapter 20
November 21	White Ignorance	C. Mills ARES
November 26	<b>Final exam review</b>	

## 6 Assessments

### Evaluation

**1. Midterm test: 30%.** This will be an in-class test. It may include some definitions, true/false questions, short answer and long answer questions.

**Note:** Students unable to write the mid-term test for medical reasons will be required to submit a medical certificate. Students who miss the test for medical or religious reasons will be given one opportunity to do a rewrite.

**2. 2 in-class quizzes (2 x 5%): 10%.** These quizzes will be given in the second half of class and will consist of one or two long answer questions. You will be tested only on material that we have covered in class prior to the quiz. You will earn a grade of 3/5 if you complete the quiz and show some understanding of the material; you will earn a grade of 4/5 if you show good understanding of the material; you will earn a grade of 5/5 if you demonstrate very good understanding of the material. You will get a 0/5 if you don't do the quiz or get it entirely wrong.

**3. One 5-page essay: 25%.** Topics for the essay will be handed out 2 weeks prior to the due date.

**Note:** Due to fairness considerations, late essays will be penalized 2% per day unless accompanied by a medical certificate.

**Note:** The philosophy department does not accept late essays at the front office and I do not accept emailed essays. Essays must be handed in to me, in person, either in class or during my office hours.

**4. Final exam: 35%.** This will take place during the Final Exam Period as scheduled by the College of Arts. The exam may include some definitions, true/false questions, short answer and long answer questions.

**Note:** Students who are unable to write the final exam due to medical or religious reasons must follow the guidelines set out in the Undergraduate Calendar.

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## 7 University Statements

### 7.1 Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

### 7.2 When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or

compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/index.shtml>

### 7.3 Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

### 7.4 Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

### 7.5 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance and not later than the 40th Class Day.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website  
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website  
<https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm>

## 7.6 Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community-faculty, staff, and students-to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff, and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that encourages academic integrity. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct  
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct  
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

## 7.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

## 7.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars  
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>

