



PHIL*3190 Epistemology

Fall 2019

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - August 30, 2019

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

This course is an advanced introduction to the central issues in epistemology, such as the nature of knowledge and how it differs from mere true belief. Possible topics include skepticism, theories of justification and rationality, self-knowledge and the sources of belief.

Pre-Requisites: 1.50 credits in Philosophy or 7.50 credits

1.2 Course Description

Epistemology is a very lively area of contemporary philosophy, centering both on new solutions to longstanding problems (e.g. scepticism about knowledge) and on new problems (e.g. probabilistic reasoning, psychological biases in reasoning). We will read an excellent textbook, *Epistemology* by Alvin Goldman and Matthew McGrath, as well as some current influential articles. Students will write several short essays responding to the readings.

1.3 Timetable

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

1.4 Final Exam

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

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor:	Mark McCullagh
Email:	mmcculla@uoguelph.ca
Office:	332 MacKinnon Building

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resources

Textbook (Textbook)

Epistemology by Alvin Goldman and Matthew McGrath.

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Analyze and evaluate major historical and/or conceptual developments in epistemology.
 2. Identify and critically evaluate the practical significance of major developments in epistemology.
 3. Read and comprehend complex original source materials in the history and problems of philosophy.
 4. Write clearly and cogently on advanced problems in philosophy.
 5. Be skilled in the use of key tools for sound justification and rational persuasion, including the gathering of empirical evidence, and the balanced judgment of conflicting interpretations.
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5 Teaching and Learning Activities

5.1 Lecture

Topics:

Monday, Sept 9 Introduction
 Wednesday, Sept 11 The structure of justification (3-14)
 Monday, Sept 16 Basic justification (14-23)
 Wednesday, Sept 18 Evidence and reliability (25-42)
 Monday, September 23 Internalism and externalism (42-49; Conee and Feldman 236-38)
 Wednesday, September 25 Defining knowledge: JTB and Gettier (51-61)
 Monday, September 30 Responses to Gettier 1 (61-69)
 Wednesday, October 2 Responses to Gettier 2 (69-76)
 Monday, October 7 The sceptical challenge (81-91)
 Wednesday, October 9 Responses to the challenge (91-102)
 Wednesday, October 16 Argument for contextualism about "knows" (107-116)
 Monday, October 21 Pragmatic encroachment (116-127)
 Wednesday, October 23 Nagel on knowledge ascriptions (Jennifer Nagel, "Knowledge ascriptions and the psychological consequences of thinking about error" 2010)
 Monday, October 28 Experience and justification (131-46)
 Wednesday, October 30 Formulating the sceptical challenge regarding experience (James Pryor, "The skeptic and the dogmatist," pages 517-32)
 Monday, November 4 The dogmatist account of how experience justifies (Pryor, pages 532-41)
 Wednesday, November 6 An objection to dogmatism (146-53)
 Monday, November 11 Experimental philosophy and epistemology (161-82)
 Wednesday, November 13 The status of "intuitions" in epistemology (184-200)
 Monday, November 18 Testimony; expertise; peer disagreement (205-23)
 Wednesday, November 20 Collective belief and justification (224-36)
 Monday, November 25 Epistemology and democracy: the Condorcet Jury Theorem (236-46)

Wednesday, November 27 Probability and Bayes' Theorem (251-57; handout about Bayes' Theorem)
 Friday, November 29 Applications of probability theory in epistemology (269-77)

6 Assessments

6.1 Marking Schemes & Distributions

It is important to do the readings before coming to class. They are not long, but they do introduce concepts and arguments which will be the focus of your writing. The point of lecture is to elaborate on, solidify and raise questions about those points rather than to "go over" them repetitively.

In addition to that your work will be:

- five brief (1,000 words) essays, on topics of your own choosing. Due dates:
 - September 20
 - October 4
 - October 25
 - November 8
 - November 22
- A final exam (sit-down, not take-home; on date determined by Registrar)

Item	Value
Writings (all 5 are graded, best 4 count)	4 x 15 = 60
Final exam	40

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>
