



PHIL*4360 Current Debates in Epistemology

Fall 2019

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - September 03, 2019

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

An examination of central problems concerning the nature of knowledge. In some offerings the selection will emphasize problems in the Philosophy of Language.

Pre-Requisites: 1 of (1.00 credits in Philosophy at the 3000 level, 12.50 credits, PHIL*3190)

1.2 Course Description

In this course we are going to examine a specific form of ignorance which we might call a motivated non-knowing, in which false beliefs are cultivated and sustained in order to maintain systems of dominance and privilege. We will read recent work in this emerging field by Miranda Fricker, Charles Mills, and others, looking at ignorance from the perspective of race and gender, with an eye to determining the different ways in which active ignorance is produced and maintained. A central concern of ours will be on questions of responsibility, complicity, and culpable ignorance.

1.3 Timetable

Lecture: Tuesdays 2:30-5:20, Crop Science 403

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

1.4 Final Exam

There is no final exam for this course.

2 Instructional Support

Instructor: Karyn Freedman

Email: karynf@uoguelph.ca

Phone: 824-4120 x 53232

Office: 354 MacKinnon

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

3 Learning Resources

All readings for this course will be available through the library's ARES online course reserves:
<https://ares.lib.uoguelph.ca/ares/>

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Orally Articulate and Defend a position on a philosophical topic, either in class discussion or in a formal presentation, that is clear, accurate and well-reasoned.
2. Develop research methods for gathering a wide range of primary and secondary source materials, and synthesize these materials and evaluate their credibility.
3. Demonstrate Independence in articulating an original approach to a significant

philosophical topic.

4. Write clearly and cogently on complex problems in philosophy.

5. Read extensively and systematically in a specialized area of philosophical research.

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

Schedule of Readings

(Note: readings marked with an * are designated for presentations.)

September 10 **Class Mechanics; Introduction to Knowledge as JTB**

Edmund Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?"

September 17 **Standpoint Epistemology & Testimony**

Lorraine Code, "Taking Subjectivity into Account"

C.A.J. Coady, "Testimony and Observation"

September 24

Epistemic Injustice and Hermeneutical Injustice

Miranda Fricker, "Epistemic Injustice and a Role for Virtue in the Politics of Knowing"

* Miranda Fricker, "Powerlessness and Social Interpretation"

October 1

Motivated Ignorance

Peggy McIntosh, "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"

* Charles Mill, "White Ignorance"

October 8

Motivated Ignorance as Willful Ignorance

Rebecca Mason, "Two Kinds of Unknowing"

* Kristie Dotson, "Tracking epistemic violence, tracking patterns of silencing"

October 15

Study Day – No Classes

October 22

Hermeneutical Injustice and White Ignorance

José Medina “Hermeneutical Injustice and Polyphonic Contextualism: Social Silences and Shared

Hermeneutical Responsibilities”

Miranda Fricker, “How is hermeneutical injustice related to ‘white ignorance’? Reply to José Medina’s “Hermeneutical Injustice and Polyphonic Contextualism: Social Silences and Shared Hermeneutical Responsibilities””

Charles Mill, “White Ignorance and Hermeneutical Injustice: A Comment on Medina and Fricker”

***First Essay Due**

October 29

Epistemic Injustice and White Ignorance

Miranda Fricker, “Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance”

* Miranda Fricker and Katherine Jenkins, “Epistemic Injustice and Trans Experience”

November 5 Theorizing Ignorance

Pierre Le Morvan and Rik Peels, "The Nature of Ignorance: Two Views"

* Michelle Moody-Adams, "Culture, Responsibility, and Affected Ignorance"

November 12 Culpable Ignorance

Rik Peels, "What Kind of Ignorance excuses? Two Neglected Issues"

* René van Woudenberg, "Ignorance and Force: Two Excusing Conditions for False Beliefs"

November 19 Ignorance and Complicity

Barbara Applebaum, "White Privilege/White Complicity: Connecting "Benefiting From" to "Contributing to"

* Barbara Applebaum, "Needing Not to Know: Ignorance, Innocence, Denials, and Discourse"

November 26 White Ignorance and White Shame

Samantha Vice, "How do I live in this strange place?"

* Marzia Milazzo, "On White Ignorance, White Shame, and Other Pitfalls in Critical Philosophy of Race"

November 28 White Ignorance and Racial Sensitivity

José Medina, "Ignorance and Racial Insensitivity"

Cynthia Townley, "Toward a reevaluation of Ignorance"

***Second Essay Due**

6 Assessments

6.1 Marking Schemes & Distributions

1. 10 critical summaries (10%). Each week you will be required to hand in a one-page critical summary on one of that week's readings (the choice of which one is yours). The summary will

not be graded, but you will receive 1% for doing the work.

There will be 11 opportunities to hand in a summary, so you can come to class empty-handed once and still receive full marks. Note, I will not accept critical summaries that are handed in late, nor will I accept emailed summaries.

2. Seminar Presentation (20%). You will be required to give a short (30 minute) presentation on one of the readings (readings available for presentation are marked with an *). Your presentation may form the basis for one of your papers. As part of this assignment you must prepare a handout to give the class, to help them follow along with your presentation. Your handout will count as your 1% for that week's critical summary (which means that you do **not** also need to do a critical summary that week).

Because of the number of students in the class, we will have 2 students presenting on the same article. One student will do an exegetical summary of a paper, and the other will give a critical analysis of the same paper and lead us into a discussion.

3. One 5-page paper (30%) on a topic of your choice, which you should discuss with me in advance.

Note: I do not accept emailed essays.

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

4. One 8-page paper (40%) on a topic of your choice, which you should discuss with me in advance.

(same notes as above)

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>
