

# University of Waterloo

## Department of Philosophy

### Philosophy 350

### Theories of Knowledge

Fall 2015 | MW 1:00-2:20 PM | RCH 206

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#### **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Wesley Buckwalter

**Office:** 325 Hagey Hall

**Office Hours:** MW 2:30-3:30 PM (or by appointment)

**Instructor Email:** [wesleybuckwalter@gmail.com](mailto:wesleybuckwalter@gmail.com)

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Knowledge is essential for culture and civilization. Knowledge also impacts important things that we care about in our everyday lives. This course studies how. We will survey the role of knowledge in deciding what to say or how to act, determining whom to trust, living virtuous lives, holding and forming beliefs, evaluating evidence, maintaining objectivity, overcoming bias, and the origins of human cognition. Through these connections, several theories of knowledge in epistemology will be discussed and challenged. Readings will be drawn from contemporary epistemology and cognitive science.

#### **COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon completion of this course, students should:

- Be familiar with leading theories of knowledge in epistemology
- Understand influential views philosophers have held on these topics
- Make key connections between knowledge and practical decisions

- Improve ability to identify and critically analyze the main arguments of a reading assignment, passage, or position
- Improve communication skills through clear, focused, and structured argumentation in writing and speech

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

There are no required textbooks for this course. All readings will be available through the course's LEARN site, University of Waterloo library holdings, or are publically available online.

### **RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

John Turri, [Epistemology A Guide](#) (paperback)

Matthias Steup, [Epistemology](#) (online source: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

David A. Truncellito, [Epistemology](#) (online source: Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT**

Evaluation for this course will be through (1) **Critical Responses**, (2) a **Term Paper**, and (3) a **Final Exam**:

**(1) Critical Responses.** You must write four critical responses (CRs) to readings assigned during the course, each worth 10% of your grade. They should each be 1 page (approximately 300 words long) maximum in length. CRs are due no later than midnight on **September 30, October 21, November 4, and November 25.**

In your critical response you should briefly summarize the argument of one of our reading assignments and then offer your own response to that argument. Responses can be in the form of criticism, constructive extensions, or applications of an idea to a new area of research. You may choose any reading assignment you like, but you can only do one critical response per reading. You should choose a reading that interests you assigned on or before the date that each CR is due. Your CR will be evaluated according to the quality of your writing (spelling, grammar, and organization count), accuracy to the reading, and the quality of your argument. Submit CRs through the course LEARN site. *Absolutely no late responses will be accepted.*

**(2) Term Paper.** You must write one term paper for this course, worth 30% of your grade. It should be 6-10 pages long (approximately 2000-2500 words) including notes and bibliography.

The term paper must have the following sections. In the first section, "Introduction" you should briefly introduce a question of central importance in the course, and directly state a thesis, or the position that you will eventually take on answering this question. In the second section, "Theories" you should state potential answers to the question that can be taken on your question, supported by research and references. In the third section, "Argument" you should argue for the answer to your question that you think is the best one among the potential answers you identified in light of the research you have conducted. Lastly, your paper must also include a "References" section in which you site at least five references beyond those papers included on the syllabus. *Your paper must include sections with these titles.*

Your term paper will be evaluated according to the relevance of question to course topic (please check with me if you are unsure), use of sources during research (at least five outside sources), representation of competing answers, quality of writing (spelling, grammar, and organization count), and the quality of your argument.

The paper is due on **December 2**. Submit this through the course LEARN site. You may request an extension of 1 week if you wish. If you request this extension the paper will be "late" but you will not be penalized. *Absolutely no papers will be accepted after the extended deadline.*

**(3) Final Exam.** You must take a final exam for this course, worth 30% of your grade. This will be a closed-book test consisting of short and long essay questions drawn from readings, lectures, and class discussion during the course. The date and time of the final exam will be announced during the exam period. Make-up tests will not be issued due to travel or, in the case of illness, without proper illness documentation. A review session for the exam is scheduled for the last day of class, December 2. Attendance on the review day is optional.

The dates and weighting of these evaluations are as follows:

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Critical Response 1	September 30	10%
Critical Response 2	October 21	10%
Critical Response 3	November 4	10%
Critical Response 4	November 25	10%

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Term Paper	December 2	30%
Final Exam	TBA during Exam Period	30%
Total		100%

### PROVISIONAL COURSE OUTLINE

This is a tentative schedule and it is subject to change. Readings marked “(M)” must be completed by the Monday class session for the week it is listed. Readings marked “(W)” must be completed by the Wednesday session. **You must complete readings before the class they are assigned and be prepared to discuss them.**

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	September 14-16	Introduction, Naturalism	(W) Quine “Epistemology Naturalized” (W) Kim “What is epistemology naturalized?”
2	September 21-23	Assertion	(M) Kvanvig “Why should inquiring minds want to know?” (M) Lackey “Norms of assertion” (W) Turri “The test of truth”
3	September 28-30	Action <b>(CR1 DUE)</b>	(M) Hawthorne & Stanley “Knowledge and action” (M) Fantl & McGrath “Evidence, pragmatics, and justification” (W) Turri & Buckwalter “Descartes’s Schism, Locke’s Reunion” (W) Buckwalter & Turri “Telling, showing and knowing”
4	October 5-7	Testimony	(M) Fricker “Against gullibility” (M) Lackey “Testimonial knowledge and transmission” (W) Hazlett “Towards social accounts of testimonial asymmetries”

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
5	October 14 (*No Class October 12*)	Memory	(W) Huemer "The problem of memory knowledge"
6	October 19-21	Knowledge and Belief <b>(CR2 DUE)</b>	(M) Myers-Schutz & Schwitzgebel "Knowing that p without believing that p" (M) Murray, Sytsma & Livengood "God knows (but does God believe?)" (W) Buckwalter, Rose & Turri "Belief through thick and thin"
7	October 26-28	Justification	(M) Feldman & Conee "Internalism defended" (M) Goldman "Internalism exposed" (W) Cohen "Justification and truth"
8	November 2-4	Virtue <b>(CR3 DUE)</b>	(M) Zagzebski "Virtues of the mind" (M) Greco "Virtues and vices" (W) Elgin "True enough"
9	November 9-11	Epistemic Responsibility	(M) Hieronymi "Responsibility for believing" (M) Alston, "The deontological Conception of epistemic justification" (W) Turri, Rose & Buckwalter "Choosing and Refusing" (W) Buckwalter & Turri "Inability and obligation"
10	November 16-18	Abilities	(M) Snowdon "Knowing How and Knowing That" (M) Cath "Knowing how without knowing that" (W) Bengson, Moffett & Wright "The folk on knowing how" (W) Stanley "Knowing (How)"
11	November 23-25	Bias and Objectivity <b>(CR4 DUE)</b>	(M) Longino "Subjects, power and knowledge" (M) Okruhlik "Gender and the

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
			biological sciences” (W) Brownstein “Implicit Bias”
12	November 30- December 2	Animal Knowledge (Term Paper Due)	(M) Call & Tomasello “Does the chimpanzee have a theory of mind?” (M) Drayton & Santos “Insights into rhesus macaque social cognition” (W) Review session for final exam

## **POLICIES**

**Communication:** The best way to contact me outside of the classroom and office hours is through my email address. I receive hundreds of emails per week, but as a student in PHIL 350 your email takes priority. In order to ensure a prompt reply, be sure to include “PHIL 350” in the subject line of your email. Please do not hesitate to email with questions or concerns about the course, assignments, and readings. However this is not a substitute for attending lectures (and I cannot and will not be able to reiterate the content of a lecture you missed in an email). I usually return emails within a couple of business days.

**Information on Plagiarism Detection:** Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course. The penalty for plagiarism is an “F” for the course.

**Electronic Device Policy:** You are not allowed to use any electronic devices (such as laptops, tablets, cellphones, etc.) for anything unrelated to the content of course (such as browsing, social media, texting, etc.) in the classroom. Recording devices are not allowed unless I have given you prior approval to use them. Absolutely no electronic devices are permitted during the final exam without prior approval.

**Attendance Policy:** Regular attendance is required in order to succeed in this course. It is your responsibility to get yourself to class on time.

**Style Guide:** You may use MLA, APA, or CMS style guide when citing sources, however you must be consistent. For a useful reference on these guides see [The Purdue OWL: Citation Chart](#).

**Illnesses:** To reschedule assignments you missed during injury or illness you must use the official [documentation of illness form](#). Rescheduling will not be allowed without a signed illness verification form.

### **Cross-listed course**

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

### **Academic Integrity**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#).

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

### **Other sources of information for students**

[Academic integrity](#) (Arts) [Academic Integrity Office](#) (uWaterloo)

### **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

**Note for students with disabilities:** The [AccessAbility Services office](#), located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.