



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
Department of Philosophy

PHIL 264 Lec 1
How Do We Know?
Winter 2021

COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor Name: C. Kenneth Waters

Email: ckwaters@ucalgary.ca, please include "Phil 264" in the subject heading of all email messages concerning this course. Messages will be returned within two week days.

Office Hours: Wednesdays 2 – 3:15 pm. These will be conducted via Zoom. You can find the link to that Zoom meeting in the Class Zoom Information document in the Content Folder of D2L.

Teaching Assistant Name: To be announced

Email: To be announced, please include "Phil 264" in the subject heading of all email messages concerning this course. Messages will be returned within two week days.

Office Hours: To be announced. These will be conducted via Zoom. You can find the link to that Zoom meeting in the Class Zoom Information document in the Content Folder of D2L.

COURSE DELIVERY INFORMATION

Lectures: Synchronous; Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30 – 1:45 pm

Tutorials: Synchronous; Tutorial Section 1: Fridays 9 – 9:50 am; Tutorial Section 2: Fridays 10 – 10:50 am;

Tutorial Section 3: Fridays 1 – 1:50 pm; Tutorial Section 4: Fridays 2 – 2:50 pm.

These will be conducted via Zoom. You can find the link to these Zoom meetings in the Class Zoom Information document in the Content Folder of D2L.

PREREQUISITE(S)

There are no prerequisites for this course.

COURSE INFORMATION

Living well depends on having accurate beliefs and making good choices. We often live our lives without thinking about how we should acquire our beliefs or how we should make decisions. Evidence from cognitive psychology shows that we often do so poorly, especially when the beliefs or decisions are very important to us. This course concerns how we should acquire beliefs and how we should make decisions. Or to put it in philosophical terminology, this course concerns how we should reason. It will draw upon the branch of philosophy called epistemology (theory of knowledge) as well as logic, cognitive psychology, statistics, and decision theory. It will cover informal reasoning in everyday life and also more formal reasoning in contexts that involve science.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Broad knowledge of philosophical ideas about how we should acquire beliefs
- Understanding of how to avoid biases that impede our acquisition of accurate beliefs
- Appreciation of the weak basis of conspiracy theories
- Basic knowledge of how disinformation spreads and the ability to identify disinformation
- Ability to use basic decision theory
- Ability to critically digest, interpret, and analyze complex sources
- Ability to engage in constructive, respectful, oral and written discussion

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND READINGS

Required Interactive Textbook: *Reason Better: An Interdisciplinary Guide to Critical Thinking* by David Manley. Students are required to use Top Hat (www.tophat.com) to access this digital interactive textbook. For instructions on how to create a Top Hat account and gain access to the textbook, please consult [University of Calgary's Top Hat's Getting Started Guide](#). Further instructions can be found on the course D2L site. The cost of the textbook is \$30 and will be applied at checkout when enrolling in the Top Hat course site. Please note: The textbook content will be revised by the instructor. The revised content will be made available chapter by chapter throughout the semester.

Additional Readings: There will be several additional readings. Links or PDFs of these readings will be made available on the course D2L site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly reading exercises (each of 13 weeks): the interactive textbook includes questions which students are required to answer as they read each chapter. Supplementary exercises will be distributed on D2L for the additional readings. TopHat will record answers, and the results will automatically be sent to the instructors.

Weekly questions (each of 13 weeks): students are required to submit at least one question about the required reading each week. These can take the form of remedial questions about the material; identification of concepts, passages or sections one finds confusing; or questions about the context or possible implications of something in the week's reading. Questions will be submitted via D2L.

Four quizzes: quizzes will be used to assess students' understanding of each of the four sections of the course (quizzes are not cumulative). Quizzes will be conducted via D2L.

Two essays: Topics will be assigned for each essay. The first essay should be about 700 words (750 word limit). The second essay should be about 800 words (850 word limit).

Meet and Greet with course professor: each student will meet for 10 minutes (individually) with Ken Waters by zoom.

No Registrar scheduled final will be given.

COURSE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Important Dates and Point Distribution

Assignment	Due date	Points
Weekly reading exercises	Due by midnight every Wednesday	100 points total (10 points each; lowest 3 scores dropped)
Weekly question	Due by midnight every Wednesday	50 points total (5 points each; lowest 3 scores dropped)
Quiz 1	Made available by 5 pm on January 29, must be completed before class on February 2	100 points
Quiz 2	Made available by 5 pm on February 26, must be completed must be completed before class on March 2	120 points
Quiz 3	Made available by 5 pm on March 19, must be completed before class on March 23	120 points
Quiz 4	Made available after class on April 13, must be completed before class on April 14	120 points
Essay 1	Due before class on February 11	140
Essay 2	Due before class on April 8	200
Meet and Greet	Must be completed by March 24	50 points

Distribution and due dates of quizzes and essays may be adjusted due to unanticipated circumstances.

Late work will not be accepted without an appropriate excuse. Students who cannot complete a quiz or essay on time for a legitimate reason must contact the professor by email as soon as possible and *before* the test if possible (ckwaters@ucalgary.ca, please include “Phil 264” in the subject heading of any email message concerning this course).

Course Grade Calculation

The following scale will be used to determine final course grades:

960-1000 = A+	750-790 = B	550-590 = C-
900-950 = A	700-740 = B-	500-540. = D+
850-890 = A-	650-690 = C+	450-490. = D
800-840 = B+	600-640 = C	below 450 = F

Completion Requirement: Students must complete all four quizzes and both essays to pass this course.

D2L and Email: Class information will be posted on D2L. Students will be sent class announcements through email and the email account used will be the one given to the University Registrar. So please check that account.

Tutorials: A teaching assistant will lead tutorials. The teaching assistant will clarify course material and will highlight which course material is most important for quizzes and essays. The teaching assistant will also answer questions.

IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Academic Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. The student accommodation policy can be found at ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf. Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a protected ground other than disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

Absence or Missed Course Assessments

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.

Student Support and Resources

Full details and information about the following resources can be found at ucalgary.ca/Registrar/registration/course-outlines

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success Centre
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

Academic Advising

If you are a student in the Faculty of Arts, you can speak to an academic advisor in the Arts Students' Centre about course planning, course selection, registration, program progression and more. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at arts.ucalgary.ca/advising for contact details and information regarding common academic concerns.

For questions specific to the philosophy program, please visit phil.ucalgary.ca. Further academic guidance is available by contacting David Dick (Undergraduate Program Director dgdict@ucalgary.ca) or Jeremy Fantl (Honours Advisor jfantl@ucalgary.ca). If you have questions regarding registration, please email Rebecca Lesser (Undergraduate Program Administrator phildept@ucalgary.ca).

Writing Assessment and Support

The assessment of all written assignments—and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses—is based in part on writing skills. This includes correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.), as well

as general clarity and organization. Research papers must include a thorough and accurate citation of sources. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services for assistance. For more information, and other services offered by the Student Success Centre, please visit ucalgary.ca/ssc.

Required Technology

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone.

Responsible Use of D2L

Important information and communication about this course will be posted on D2L (Desire2Learn), UCalgary's online learning management system. Visit ucalgary.service-now.com/it for how-to information and technical assistance.

All users of D2L are bound by the guidelines on the responsible use of D2L posted here: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/commitment-to-the-responsible-use-of-d2l/>. The instructor may establish additional specific course policies for D2L, Zoom, and any other technologies used to support remote learning. Instructional materials, including audio or video recordings of lectures, may not be posted outside of the course D2L site. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the [University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy](#).

Media Recording

Please refer to the following statement on media recording of students: https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP_FINAL.pdf

Academic Misconduct/Honesty

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which will be an F on the assignment or an F in the course, and possibly a disciplinary sanction such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html.

Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about referencing, please consult your instructor.

University Policies

The Instructor Intellectual Property Policy is available at ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act, as outlined at ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip. The instructor (or TA) must return graded assignments *directly* to the student UNLESS written permission to do otherwise has been provided.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html).