

**The University of Calgary
Department of Philosophy
Philosophy 461 Lec 01
Epistemology
Fall 2009
COURSE OUTLINE**

Instructor: Reid Buchanan
Office: SS1252
Phone: 220-3168
Office Hours: MW 3:00 – 4:00
E-mail: buchanar@ucalgary.ca

Lectures: MW 5:30 – 6:45
Location: SB 105

REQUIRED TEXT:

Epistemology: An Anthology, Ernest Sosa and Jaegwon Kim (eds.), (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2000)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES: We will examine some of the most central issues in epistemology (the study of the nature, source, content and scope of human knowledge) through the lens of philosophical scepticism (the view that knowledge is impossible). As a way to focus traditional and contemporary developments and debates concerning, e.g., the nature and conditions of knowledge (such as the “Internalist/Externalist” debate) or the structure of knowledge (such as the “Foundationalist/Coherentist” debate) it is instructive to explore such issues in terms of the extent to which they are motivated by, and the extent to which they avoid, the threat of scepticism. The primary objective of the course is to provide exposure to the depth, complexity (and often perplexity) of epistemological inquiry, and to equip students with the skills to engage in such inquiry.

COURSE WORK AND EVALUATION: The course work will consist of 2 in-class exams, a quiz and a term paper (6-8 pages). There will be no Registrar-scheduled final exam.

The weight for each requirement is as follows:

<u>Item</u>	<u>% of Course Grade</u>	<u>Date</u>
Exam 1	30	Wednesday, October 14
Exam 1	30	Monday, November 16
Quiz	10	Wednesday, December 2
Paper	30	Monday, December 7

ASSIGNMENT OF LETTER GRADES:

Letter grades will be assigned in accordance with the following scale:

0-45	F	71-75	B-
46-50	D	76-80	B
51-55	D+	81-85	B+
56-60	C-	86-90	A-
61-65	C	91-95	A
66-70	C+	96-100	A+

COURSE POLICIES: I expect that the course will proceed in accordance with the course schedule.

However, unforeseen contingencies, e.g., particular difficulty or ease with a section of the course, may necessitate changes in the content covered on the dates listed on the schedule.

Attendance

Attendance is not mandatory, but I do expect you to make every effort to be present at each session. Excepting extraordinary circumstances, I expect advance notice that you will be unable to attend class for an exam or to submit an assignment by the due date.

How to Contact Me

You can see me during my office hours or make an appointment to see me at some other time. If you wish to make an appointment, please contact me directly by telephone or E-mail. Perhaps the best way to reach me is through E-mail, which I typically check a number of times each day. I should also mention that I encourage you to offer me feedback about any aspect of the course — it is important for me to know how you think things are going, and to be flexible enough to adjust to your needs.

Missed and Late Course Work

Medical or other formal documentation will be required for a missed exam. Without suitable documentation, you will not be permitted to re-schedule the exam, and you will receive a grade of zero. Late take-home finals will lose 25% of their value each day (or portion of the day) that they are late unless accompanied by medical or other documentation. After four days, late take-homes without documentation will not be accepted and you will receive a score of zero.

Intellectual Honesty

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. As a result, cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offence, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. The University Calendar states that plagiarism exists when:

- the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test;
- parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;
- the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source; and/or
- a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

Academic Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

Student's Union Representative

The Humanities Representative is Britney Luimes, MSC 251, humanitiesrep@su.ucalgary.ca or 220-3913.