



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 461 Lec. 01 “Epistemology”

Lectures: T/R 12:30-1:45
Room: SA 247

Instructor: Jeremy Fantl
Office: SS 1238
Phone: 403-220-5022
Email: jfantl@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-3:30

Course Description

The course opens with a selection of readings on two traditional epistemological questions: what is knowledge, and how much of it do we have. We’ll then move into a discussion of ways in which our situatedness in specific contexts and social roles might impact the intellectual status of our beliefs. Finally, we’ll look at the extent to which our ignorance of moral and other truths might lessen our degree of culpability when acting badly.

Required Texts

Selected online articles.

Course Requirements

- Two *papers*, the first 3-5 pages long (worth 25%), due October 20th in class, the second 4-6 pages long (worth 25%), due in class on the last day, December 8th.
- A 20 minute, completely stress free, oral *midterm exam* (worth 25%), held in my office during the week of October 26th-October 30th, at a mutually agreed upon time.
- A *Registrar-scheduled final exam* (worth 25%).

Letter Grade Conversion Table

A+: 98.33	B+: 88.33	C+: 78.33	D+: 68.33	F: 55
A+/A: 96.67	B+/B: 86.67	C+/C: 76.67	D+/D: 66.67	
A: 95	B: 85	C: 75	D: 65	
A/A-: 93.33	B/B-: 83.33	C/C-: 73.33	D/D-: 63.33	
A-: 91.67	B-: 81.67	C-: 71.67	D-: 61.67	
A-/B+: 90	B-/C+: 80	C-/D+: 70		

Final Grades are computed by rounding to the nearest recognized letter grade.

Policy on Late Assignments

You get a no-questions-asked extension on one and only one take-home assignment, as long as you clear it with me at least a day in advance of the due date. ***All unexcused late assignments lose the equivalent of 1/3 full letter grade for each day the assignment is late, to a maximum of the equivalent of 4 full letter grades. Missing assignments receive a zero.***

Syllabus

I. The Nature and Extent of Knowledge

9/8, Tues: Intro	
9/10, Thurs: The JTB Account	Plato, Theaetetus, selection
9/15, Tues: Counterexamples to the JTB Account	Edmund Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?"
9/17, Thurs: Cartesian Skepticism	Marie McGinn, "The Problem of Scepticism"
9/22, Tues:	BUFFER DAY
9/24, Thurs: Inference to the best explanation	Jonathan Vogel, "Cartesian Skepticism and Inference to the Best Explanation"
9/29, Tues: What do skeptical scenarios entail?	Sherrilyn Roush, "Closure on Skepticism"
10/1, Thurs: Tracking and closure	Robert Nozick, "Knowledge and Skepticism"
10/6, Tues:	BUFFER DAY
10/8, Thurs: Contextualism	David Lewis, "Elusive Knowledge"
10/13, Tues: Can we trust skeptical intuitions?	Jennifer Nagel, "Mindreading in Gettier Cases and Skeptical Pressure Cases"
10/15, Thurs:	BUFFER DAY
10/20, Tues: Paper #1 Due	FUN PARADOX DAY

II. Individualism and Epistemic Dysfunctions

10/22, Thurs: Anti-Individualism	Lynn Hankinson Nelson, "Epistemological Communities"
10/27, Tues: A Defense of Individualism	Louise Antony, "Sisters, Please!, I'd Rather Do It Myself: A Defense of Individualism in Feminist Epistemology"
10/29, Thurs: An epistemic way of wronging our conversational partners	Miranda Fricker, "Testimonial Injustice"
11/3, Tues:	BUFFER DAY
11/5, Thurs: One source of testimonial injustice	Miranda Fricker, "Prejudice in the Credibility Economy"
11/10, Tues: A hidden cost of racism	Tamar Gendler, "On the Epistemic Costs of Implicit Bias"
11/17, Tues:	BUFFER DAY

III. Ignorance and Culpability

11/19, Thurs: An argument that non-culpable moral ignorance excuses	Gideon Rosen, "Culpability and Ignorance"
11/24, Tues: An argument that cultural context doesn't excuse	Michelle Moody-Adams, "Culture, Responsibility, and Affected Ignorance"
11/26, Thurs: An argument that non-culpable moral ignorance does not excuse	Elizabeth Harman, "Does Moral Ignorance Exculpate?"
12/1, Tues: An argument that moral ignorance can be a form of bad will	Elinor Mason, "Moral ignorance and blameworthiness"
12/3, Thurs:	BUFFER DAY
12/8, Tues: Paper #2 Due	EXAM REVIEW

Academic Honesty

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, an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw from the University. See the relevant sections on 'Academic Misconduct' in the current University Calendar. 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 correct referencing, consult your instructor.

Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. The full policy on student accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf

D2L Help

Desire2Learn is the University of Calgary's online learning management system. Go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/it/services/d2l> for help.

Student Advising and Information Resources

- General Academic Concerns and Program Planning— Have a question but not sure where to start? The Arts Students' Centre is your information resource for everything in the Faculty of Arts. Drop in at SS102, call 403-220-3580, or email ascarts@ucalgary.ca. Advisors in the ASC can also provide assistance and advice in planning your program through to graduation. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> for detailed information on common academic concerns.
- **Advice on Philosophy Courses** - You may find answers to your more specific questions about a philosophy degree on the Department of Philosophy's website <http://phil.ucalgary.ca> or contact one of Philosophy's current Undergraduate Advisors (see below)
- **Registration Overload/Prereq Waivers** – If you are seeking to register in a Philosophy course that is full or to get permission to waive the prereqs for a course, email the instructor of the course.

Protection of Privacy

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor or teaching assistant.

Safewalk

Call 403-220-5333 (24/7/365) for a Safewalk volunteer to accompany you safely to your destination on campus including parking lots, housing, and the LRT station or use a Campus Help Phone.

PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

The Department of Philosophy is located on the 12th floor of the Social Sciences Building and on the web at www.phil.ucalgary.ca

PHILOSOPHY UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM ADVISORS FOR FALL 2015:

Jeremy Fantl (Undergrad Director) jfantl@ucalgary.ca

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For assistance with registration issues in Philosophy courses, contact Merlette Schnell (schnell@ucalgary.ca)