

PHIL3820
Epistemology 知識論

Course Outline

Time :	M 14:30-16:15	Location :	FYB UG01
	Tutorial time to be arranged		

Course overview

This course will provide you with an introduction to Epistemology, as it has been practiced in the context of continental philosophy. Epistemology is a branch of philosophy concerned with knowledge and cognition. What is knowledge? What is the connection between knowledge and truth? Are there different types of knowledge or just one? Such are the fundamental questions that belong to this branch of philosophy. In the first part of the course, we will address these questions by turning to classical epistemology, especially to Descartes and Kant. In the second part, we will turn to Nietzsche and Husserl. We will thereby address the birth of continental epistemology and see how it emerges on the basis of a critique that is directed against classical epistemology. In the third and final part of the course, we will see how continental epistemology has been further articulated in critical theory, hermeneutics and (post)structuralism.

Advisory to Majors: to be taken in year 2 or above.

Learning outcomes

1. Demonstrate familiarity with a range of problems, concepts, and theories in the theory of knowledge and cognition.
2. Enhance the ability to research independently on the issues taught.
3. Enhance the ability to interpret and evaluate classical texts
4. Learn how to clearly articulate the basic concepts, problems, and arguments employed in continental epistemology.
5. Learn how to conduct independent research on writing projects.

Topics

I. Introduction: Classical Epistemology

1. Descartes and the Foundations of Knowledge
2. Kant and the Transcendental Turn

II. The Birth of Continental Epistemology

3. Nietzsche's Critique of Classical Epistemology: The Will to Power
4. Husserl's Critique of Classical Epistemology: Intentionality and the *Epoche*

III. Further Continental Perspectives

5. Critical Theory (Habermas): The Social and Political Dimensions
6. Hermeneutics (Gadamer and Ricoeur): Different Types of Knowledge
7. (Post)Structuralism (Foucault): Knowledge and Power

Learning activities

In this course, you are expected to

- read and think about the assigned readings;
- develop the skills mentioned in the course outcomes through philosophical discussion and writing (final essay and reflective summaries of the readings);
- attend *all* lectures/tutorials and participate in discussion.

Activities and workload:

In-class (mandatory):

Lecture/Seminar Discussion: 3 hours each week.

Out-of-class (average workload per week):

1. Reading: 3–4 hours on the basic and suggested readings each week.
2. Writing Assignments: About 2 hours each week on preparing and writing essay assignments throughout the term. You should try to design a schedule that allows you to apportion more time on writing and discussing your essay with your teacher two to three weeks before the first and the second essays are due.

Assessment scheme

Since a major aim of this course is to develop your ability to interpret, analyze, and generate philosophical arguments through discussion and writing, the assessment methods are designed to encourage participation and learning through argumentative writing.

Task nature	Description	Weight
Tutorial Presentation	Formal Presentation	20%
Participation	Discussion	10%
Two Reflective Summaries	Around 500 words each	20%
Final Essay	Around 2500-3000 words	50%

Remarks:

1. Tutorial presentation: You will need to make a formal 15 minute-long presentation on an assigned topic.
2. You will also need to participate actively in the Q/A sessions during the tutorials. Your active participation will also be required in the lectures. *Absence will damage your grades.*
3. Reflective Summaries: Your task to submit one single-spaced typewritten page. In these assignments, you are supposed to a) provide a 1-2 paragraph long summary of the assigned readings, b) identify what you consider to be the weakest part of the work (philosophically, with argumentation) and explain why (one paragraph), c) identify what you consider the strongest part of the work (philosophically, with argumentation) and explain why (1 paragraph), d) come up with some good questions for discussion in class. Your summaries should be approximately 500 words long.

The final essay: You may choose to write on any philosophical problem addressed in this course. You will be asked to submit a preliminary statement on a chosen topic three weeks before the essay is due. You will be expected to do some independent research, to formulate a central thesis as well as to develop arguments in support of it.

Recommended learning resources

1. René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Hackett Publishing Company, 1993.
2. Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*. Hackett Publishing Company, 2002.
3. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. Vintage, 1989.
4. Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*. Springer, 1980.
5. Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*. Beacon Press, 1982.
6. Paul Ricoeur: *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essay on Language, Action and Interpretation*. Cambridge University Press, 1981.
7. Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*. Vintage, 1982.

Course schedule

Week	Topics	Required reading	Tutorials	Remarks
1	Introduction			
2	Classical Epistemology	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i>		
3	Classical Epistemology	Kant, <i>Prolegomena</i>		
4	Nietzsche's Critique of Classical Epistemology	Nietzsche, <i>Beyond Good and Evil</i>		Tutorial 1
5	Husserl's Critique of Classical Epistemology	Husserl, <i>The Idea of Phenomenology</i>		
6	Husserl's Critique of Classical Epistemology	Husserl, <i>The Idea of Phenomenology</i>		Tutorial 2
7	Husserl's Critique of Classical Epistemology	Husserl, <i>The Idea of Phenomenology</i>		
8	Critical Theory	Habermas, <i>Knowledge and Human Interest</i>		Tutorial 3
9	Critical Theory	Habermas, <i>Knowledge and Human Interest</i>		
10	The Hermeneutical Perspective	Ricoeur, <i>Understanding and Interpretation</i>		Tutorial 4
11	The Hermeneutical Perspective	Ricoeur, <i>Understanding and Interpretation</i>		
12	The (Post)Structuralist Perspective	Foucault, <i>The Archeology of Knowledge</i>		Tutorial 5
13	The (Post)Structuralist Perspective	Foucault, <i>The Archeology of Knowledge</i>		
14	Conclusion			

Details of course website

Relevant announcements and course documents will be posted on Blackboard.

Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)

Teacher	
Name:	Geniusas Saulius
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Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed [declaration](#) that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.