

## PHI 3820 Epistemology 2021-22 T1

### A Preliminary Syllabus

#### ***Topics:***

1. Introduction
2. The Tripartite Analysis of Knowledge
3. The Gettier Problem
4. The Structure of Knowledge: Foundationalism
5. The Structure of Knowledge: Coherentism
6. The Externalism-Internalism Debate and Reliablism
7. Skepticism I: Descartes, Certainty, and Fallibilism
8. Skepticism II: Closure and Contextualism: causal theory, Truth Tracking, Reliablism

Important points to note:

- Tutorials: *mandatory*, five 2-hour sessions.
- Though no attendance will be taken, you are expected to attend all lectures. You are also required to read the assigned readings for each topic.
- *Examination questions* will cover the lectures (not just the notes), readings, and tutorial materials.

#### ***Assessment (tentative):***

Course grading will be based on the following:

1. Continuous assessment (class participation but mainly tutorials): tutorial presentations, discussion, synopses, and post-tutorial reports. Guidelines on tutorials will be given in the first, briefing session of tutorials.)
2. Tests
3. Essay

#### ***Major Texts:***

1. Sosa, E. & Kim, J., *Epistemology: An Anthology*
2. Feldman, R., *Epistemology*
3. Bonjour, L., *Epistemology*
4. Dancy, J., *Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology*

## Reading Lists (Required and Further)

- ‘#’ means “available for online access at CUHK Library”.
- *Required* items not accessible online at Library can be downloaded from Blackboard.
- Items marked with ‘\*’ in ‘Further Readings’ can be downloaded from Blackboard.

### Abbreviations

[Audi]: Robert Audi, *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*.

[Bernecker & Dretske]: Sven Bernecker & Fred Dretske, *Knowledge: Reading in Contemporary Epistemology*.

[Chisholm]: Roderick Chisholm, *Theory of Knowledge* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)

[Dancy & Sosa]: J. Dancy; M. Steup, *A Companion to Epistemology* (1993)#

[Dancy]: Jonathan Dancy, *Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology*

[Feldman]: Richard Feldman, *Epistemology*

[Greco & Sosa]: *Blackwell Guide to Epistemology* #

[Huemer]: M. Huemer *Epistemology: Contemporary Readings*

[Lehrer]: Keith Lehrer, *Theory of Knowledge* (2nd ed.)

[Moser]: Paul Moser, *The oxford Handbook of Epistemology*. #

[SEP] *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (online)

[Sosa & Kim]: *Epistemology: An Anthology*

[Step & Sosa]: *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology*.

[Williams]: Michael Williams, *Problems of Knowledge*.

## Required Readings

### I. & II Introduction and Traditional Analysis of Knowledge

1. [Feldman]: Chs. 1-2.
2. [Chisholm]: Ch.1
3. L. Zagzebski; ‘What is Knowledge’ (Section 1-3), in [Greco] pp. 92-104

### III. The Gettier Problem

1. [Feldman]: chapter 3. Chapter 5: 5.1
2. K. Lehrer and T. Paxson, Jr. “Knowledge: Undefeated Justified True Belief”, *Journal of Philosophy*, Vo. 66, No. 8 (1969), pp. 225-237. You may read only the first 2 parts (225-231).
3. [Dancy] Ch. 2.

### IV. Foundationalism

1. The entry ‘Externalism/Internalism’ (written by Bonjour) in [Dancy & Sosa]
2. [Feldman]: Ch. 4 (‘Evidentialist Theories of Knowledge and Justification’).

3. [Dancy] Ch. 4 ('Foundationalism').
4. Alan Goldman's entry on "Given, the" in [Dancy & Sosa].

#### **V. Coherentism**

1. [BonJour]: Chapter 9, 'Foundationalism and coherentism'.
2. [Chisholm]: Chapter 10: 'Foundationalism and the coherence theory'. (Chisholm's book is a good example of pithy writing. This chapter is only 5 pages only.)

#### **VI. Externalism**

1. [BonJour]: Chapter 10, 'Internalism and externalism'.
2. [Feldman]: Chapter 5, 'Non-evidentialist theories of knowledge and Justification'.

#### **VII. Skepticism**

1. [Feldman]: Chapter 6, 'Skepticism I'.
2. [Bonjour]: Chapter 12, 'Skepticism'.
3. Peter Kline, 'Skepticism', in [Moser] (at least 341-348.)

### **Further Readings**

#### **I. & II Introduction and Traditional Analysis of Knowledge**

1. \*[Williams]: Ch. 1
2. E. Gettier, 'Is justified true belief knowledge', reprinted [Sosa & Kim]. Original journal version: *Analysis* 23 (1963): 121-3.

#### **III. The Gettier Problem**

1. M. Steup, "Analysis of Knowledge" in [SEP] (This webpage is a comprehensible survey of the Gettier problem and related issues. Its bibliography is a good guide to more advanced material.)
2. \*[Lehrer]: Chapter 1-2. [Lehrer] is an excellent introduction to epistemology. There is a section "Introduction to Literature" at the end of each chapter. You will find this feature of the book very useful as a guide to further readings.
3. Robert Shope 'Conditions and Analyses of Knowledge' in [Moser]
4. \*G. Harman, Selection from *Thought*, in [Sosa and Kim]

#### **IV. Foundationalism**

1. R. Fumerton, 'Theories of justification' in [Moser]
2. J\*ames Pryor, 'There is immediate justification' in [Steup & Sosa].

3. W. Alston, 'Has foundationalism been refuted?' *Philosophical Studies* 29 (1976): 287-305.# Reprinted in [Huemer]
4. \*L. Bonjour, Excerpt from *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge*, in [Huemer]
5. R. Fumerton, 'Inferential justification and empiricism,' in *Journal of Philosophy*, 73. Also reprinted in [Huemer].

*On the "Myth of the Given"*

6. W. Sellars 1963, *Empiricism and the philosophy of mind*. In this classic work, Sellars launches his well-known, vigorous attack on the 'Given'.
7. \*Sellars, 'Does empirical knowledge have a foundation?', in [Bernecker & Dretske]: ch. 19.
8. Section 4 'Epistemology' of the entry 'Wilfred Sellars' (by W. deVries) in [SEP].
9. \*R. Chisholm, "The Myth of the Given", *Philosophy*, 1964, pp. 261-86. [Sosa and Kim].
10. Robert Brandom, 'Overcoming a Dualism of Concepts and Causes: The Basic Arguments of "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind"' (*The Blackwell Guide to Metaphysics*, edited by R. Gale, 2002)#. Highly recommended. This article provides a short but highly accessible summary of Sellars' argument in his article.
11. W. Alston, 'Sellars and the "Myth of the Given"', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vo. 65 (2002), pp. 69-96. [Alston argues that Sellars' arguments in has failed to eliminate a view of perception according to which there is a nonconceptual but cognitive mode of "given" in our awareness of objects that is fundamental to conscious perception.]#

#### **V. Coherentism**

1. Bonjour, 'The dialectic of foundationalism and coherentism', in [Greco & Sosa].
2. The two article by C. Elgin and J. van Cleve, in Chapter 6 'Can beliefs be justified through coherence alone' of [Steup & Sosa]. (See also M. Williams' response to Pryor in the same book.\*
3. Susan Haack: *Evidence and Inquiry*, ch.2 'Foundationalism undermined', ch. 3 'Coherentism discomposed', and ch. 4 'Foundherentism articulated.'
4. [Lehrer]: Chapters 5-7. (Ch. 5 discusses in details an important construal of coherence, e.g., coherence as explanation. Ch.6 discusses the Lottery Paradox. See also ch. 7)\*

#### **VI. Externalism**

1. [Dancy]: Chapter 3, 'The conditional theory of knowledge'.\*
2. McGinn, 'The concept of knowledge', in his *Knowledge and Reality*.#
3. R. Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations*, chapter 3. Selections from Keith DeRose and Ted A. Warfield, eds., *Skepticism: A Contemporary Reader*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 156-79.\*

#### **VII. Scepticism**

1. Barry Stroud, Chapter I of *The Significance of Philosophical Skepticism*, Oxford University Press, 1984. (This chapter is quite long. But Stroud's writing is extremely accessible. Chapter 2 further strengthens Stroud's arguments for scepticism, read it if you can.)#
2. Descartes, *Meditations* 1&2; any version.
3. Peter Klein, 'Skepticism' in [Moser]\*

4. G. E. Moore, 'Proof of an external World', 'Four forms of scepticism' and 'Certainty', in [Sosa and Kim] \*
5. Peter Unger, 'A defense of skepticism', *Philosophical Review* 80 (1971), 198-219. Reprinted in [Bernecker & Dretske].
6. Dretske, 'The Case Against Closure' and Hawthorne 'The Case for Closure' and Dretske Reply to Hawthorne'. In [Steup & Sosa] pp. 13-46.\*
7. Keith DeRose, "Contextualism and knowledge attributions", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 52 (1992). Also in [Heumer].
8. Dretske, F., 1970, 'Epistemic Operators,' *Journal of Philosophy*, 67, 1007-1023.
9. Cohen, S., 1987, "Knowledge, Context and Social Standards," *Synthese*, 73, 3-26.
10. Oswald Hanfling, 'The paradox of skepticism', *Philosophy and Ordinary Language*, Routledge 2000. Chapter 7.

#### Special Notes on Closure.

The Closure Principle has been one of the most widely debated topics in epistemology in the past two decades. The following list of further reading is adapted from a list of readings on Closure from Richard Feldman's website:

[http://www.ling.rochester.edu/~feldman/philosophy502/closure\\_readings.html](http://www.ling.rochester.edu/~feldman/philosophy502/closure_readings.html)

#### *Initial Criticisms of Closure and a Response*

1. Dretske, Fred. 1970, "Epistemic Operators," *Journal of Philosophy* 67: 1007-1023.
2. -----, 1971, "Conclusive Reasons," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 49: 1-22.
3. Fred Dretske, 'The pragmatic dimension of knowledge', *Philosophical Studies* 40 (1981): 363-78. Also in [Huemer]
4. Nozick, Robert. 1981, *Philosophical Explanations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Vogel, Jonathan. (1990): "Are there Counterexamples to the Closure Principle?", in M.D. Roth and G. Ross, eds., *Doubting*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 13-27.

#### *Formulating a Closure Principle*

6. Hales, Hales (1995) "Epistemic Closure Principles," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 33: 185-201.
7. Feldman, Richard "In Defense of Closure," *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 45, No. 181. (Oct., 1995), pp. 487-494. (See also Audi's response: "Deductive Closure, Defeasibility and Skepticism: A Reply to Feldman" *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 45, No. 181. (Oct., 1995), pp. 494-499.

#### *Closure and Skepticism*

8. Brueckner, Anthony. 1985. "Skepticism and Epistemic Closure," *Philosophical Topics* 13: 89-117.

9. Warfield, Ted A. 2004. "When epistemic closure does and does not fail: a lesson from the history of epistemology." *Analysis* 64, 35-41.
10. Peter Klein, "Skepticism and closure", *Philosophical Topics* 23 (1995). Also in [Huemer].
11. Brueckner, Anthony. 2004. "Strategies for refuting closure for knowledge." *Analysis* 64, 333-35.
12. Klein, Peter. 2004. "Closure Matters: Academic Skepticism and Easy Knowledge." *Philosophical Issues* 14, 165-84.
13. Warfield, Ted, and David, Marian. 2008 "Knowledge-Closure and Skepticism", in *Epistemology: New Essays*, (ed.) Q. Smith, Oxford Scholarship Online Monograph.#

*Recent Developments*

14. Articles by Dretske and Hawthorne in [Steup & Sosa]

*Encyclopedia Articles*

15. Luper, Steven. Stanford Encyclopedia  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/closure-epistemic/>
16. Brueckner, Anthony. 1998. "Deductive closure principle." In E. Craig (Ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. London: Routledge.