

**PHIL3820**  
**Epistemology 知識論**

**Course Outline**

<b>Time: H 3:30pm-6:15pm</b>	<b>Location: ICS L1</b>
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**Course overview (as shown on CUSIS)**

This course examines the main issues and theories in the theory of knowledge and cognition, including the structure and elements of knowledge and justification; the role of sensation, perception, and conceptual thinking (empirical and logical); the realm of possible knowledge; and internalism and externalism.

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

**Learning outcomes (as shown on CUSIS)**

1. Demonstrate familiarity with a range of problems, concepts, and theories in the theory of knowledge and cognition.
2. Enhanced ability to research independently on the issues taught.

**Topics**

1. The concept of knowing
2. Skepticism
3. The problem of induction
4. A priori knowledge
5. The structure of justification
6. Epistemic internalism vs externalism
7. Epistemic contextualism
8. Formal epistemology
9. Social epistemology

**Learning activities**

1. Interactive lectures
2. Tutorial presentations and discussions
3. Reading assignments and in-class quizzes based on reading questions

**Assessment scheme as prescribed on CUSIS (revise if necessary)**

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Tutorial participation	Attendance and contributions to discussion	10%
Tutorial presentation	Presentation on an assigned paper	10%
In-class quizzes	One-question quizzes, mostly based on reading questions.	15%
Midterm essay	1000-word essay	25%
Final essay	2500-word essay	40%

**Grade Descriptor**

Please refer to: [http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade\\_descriptors.pdf](http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade_descriptors.pdf)

**Course schedule**

<u>Weekly Course Schedule and Reading Assignment:</u>		
Week/Date	Topic	Required readings/other requirements
1	Overview	BonJour (2010), chapter 1 Descartes (1641), Meditations I-III
2	The analysis of knowing and the Gettier problem	BonJour (2010), chapter 3 Gettier (1963) Klein (1971)
3	Skepticism and perceptual knowledge	Russell (1912), chapter 2 Chalmers (2005) Excerpts from Berkeley (1710)
4	Inductive skepticism	Excerpts from Salmon (1966) Hume (1748), section 4
5	Skepticism regarding memory and testimony	BonJour (2010), chapter 8 Pritchard (2004) Russell (1921), lecture 9
6	A priori knowledge	BonJour (2010), chapter 5 Devitt (2005) Jenkins (2014)
7	The structure of justification: foundationalism vs coherentism	BonJour (2010), chapter 9 Haack (1999)
8	Epistemic externalism (vs internalist evidentialism)	BonJour (2010), chapter 10 Feldman and Conee (1985)
9	Contextualism (vs invariantism)	Cohen (1986) Stanley (2004)
10	Credence and probabilism	Hacking (2001), chapters 13 and 14
11	A sample of Bayesian epistemology	Excerpts from Weisberg (2021)
12	A sample of social epistemology	Goldman (1991) Jackson (2021)
13	A sample of feminist epistemology	Bergin (2002) Seller (1988)

Required readings and other recommended readings:

**Main textbook:**

Laurence Bonjour (2010) *Epistemology: Classic Problems and Contemporary Responses*, 2nd ed., Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC.

**Other readings:**

Lisa A. Bergin (2002) 'Testimony, Epistemic Difference, and Privilege: How Feminist Epistemology Can Improve Our Understanding of the Communication of Knowledge', *Social Epistemology* 16(3): 197-213.

George Berkeley (1710) *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (rendering by Jonathan Bennett at <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/>)

David Chalmers (2005) 'The Matrix as Metaphysics', in C. Grau (ed) *Philosophers Explore the Matrix*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. (<https://consc.net/papers/matrix.html>)

Stewart Cohen (1986) 'Knowledge and Context', *The Journal of Philosophy* 83: 574-83.

René Descartes (1641) *Meditations on First Philosophy* (translation by Jonathan Bennett at <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/>)

Michael Devitt (2005) 'There Is No A Priori', in M. Steup and E. Sosa (eds) *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 105-15.

Richard Feldman and Earl Conee (1985) 'Evidentialism', *Philosophical Studies* 48: 15-34.

Edmund Gettier (1963) 'Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?', *Analysis* 23(6): 121-3.

Alvin Goldman (1991) 'Epistemic Paternalism: Communication Control in Law and Society', *The Journal of Philosophy*, LXXXVIII(3): 113-31.

Susan Haack (1999) 'A Foundherentist Theory of Empirical Justification', in L. Pojman (ed.) *The Theory of Knowledge: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, pp. 283-93.

Ian Hacking (2001) *An Introduction to Probability and Inductive Logic*, Cambridge University Press.

David Hume (1748) *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (rendering by Jonathan Bennett at <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/>)

Elizabeth Jackson (2021) 'What's Epistemic about Epistemic Paternalism', in J. Matheson and K. Loughheed (eds.) *Epistemic Autonomy*, Routledge, pp. 132-50.

Carrie Jenkins (2014) 'What Can We Know A Priori?', in R. Neta (ed.) *Current Controversies in Epistemology*, New York: Routledge.

Peter Klein (1971) 'A Proposed Definition of Propositional Knowledge', *The Journal of Philosophy* 68(16): 471-82.

Duncan Pritchard (2004) 'The Epistemology of Testimony', *Philosophical Issues*, 14: 326-48.

Bertrand Russell (1912) *The Problems of Philosophy* (<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/5827/5827-h/5827-h.htm>)

Bertrand Russell (1921) *The Analysis of Mind* (<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2529/2529-h/2529-h.htm>)

Wesley Salmon (1966) *The Foundations of Scientific Inference*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Anne Seller (1988) 'Realism versus Relativism: Towards a Politically Adequate Epistemology', in M. Griffiths and M. Whitford (eds), *Feminist Perspectives in Philosophy*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Jason Stanley (2004) 'On the Linguistic Basis for Contextualism', *Philosophical Studies*, 119: 119-146.

Jonathan Weisberg (2021) 'Formal Epistemology', in E. N. Zalta (ed) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2021/entries/formal-epistemology/>.

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

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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/academic\\_honesty/](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academic_honesty/)

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.