

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2018**

PHIL3501G: Epistemology

Fall Term 2018

Tues. 1:30-2:30 p.m.; Thurs. 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Physics and Astronomy Bldg. Room 106

Instructor: Jacqueline Sullivan

4151 Stevenson Hall

Office hours: Tues. 3-4:00 p.m.; Thurs. 4-5:00 p.m.

Best way to reach me: jsulli29@uwo.ca

DESCRIPTION

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy directed at understandi

In this course, we will consider representative examples of each of these four types of approaches to understanding what knowledge is and how we acquire it. While we will concern ourselves primarily with assessing the merits and failings of paradigmatic examples of each approach, our ultimate goal is to use the fruits of our analyses to answer for ourselves the questions of what knowledge is and when, if ever, we are justified in claiming that we have it.

TEXTS

- (1) Williams, Michael. *Problems of Knowledge: A Critical Introduction to Epistemology*.

student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus

Tentative Schedule of Classes
(Reading assignments will likely be changed slightly on final syllabus)

Sept 27 (Th) – **Confronting the Classical and Cartesian Skeptics: Is Knowledge Even Possible?**

Williams, Chapter 5&6, pp. 58-80

Optional readings:

Excerpts from Sextus Empiricus [OWL]

Excerpts from Descartes' *Meditations*[OWL]

Excerpts from Hume's *Enquiries*[OWL]

Oct 2 (T) – **How does Foundationalism respond to the Skeptical Challenge?**

Roderick Chisholm (1964) "The Myth of the Given" [OWL]

*****Possible paper topics posted on OWL*****

Oct 4 (Th) – **How does Foundationalism respond to the Skeptical Challenge? (cont'd)**

Williams, Chapter 7-8, pp. 81-104

Oct 8-14 FALL STUDY BREAK

Oct 16 (T) – **Is Foundationalism a satisfactory response to the Skeptical Challenge?**

Williams, Chapter 9, pp. 105-116

Oct 18 (Th) – **How does Coherentism respond to the Skeptical Challenge?**

Williams, Chapters 10-12, pp. 117-145

Optional reading:

Donald Davidson (1989) "A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge"
[OWL]

Oct 23 (T) – Diagnosing Skepticism and Responses to It

Williams, Chapter 13 pp. 128-137

Oct 25 (Th) – **Contextualism's response to Classical Skepticism**

Williams, Chapters 11, pp. 138-145 & Chapters 13-14, pp. 146-172

Optional reading:

Williams, Chapter 15

Oct 30 (T) – Exam 1 Review

Tentative Schedule of Classes
(Reading assignments will likely be changed slightly on final syllabus)

Nov 1 (Th) - Exam 1 (in class)

Nov 6 (T) - **What is Naturalized Epistemology?**

Quine, W.V, "Epistemology Naturalized" (1969) [OWL]

Optional Reading:

Jaegwon Kim "What is "Naturalized Epistemology"?"(1988) [OWL]

Nov 8 (Th) - **Reliabilism**

Alvin Goldman, "What is Justified True Belief?" (1976) [OWL]

Alvin Goldman, "Epistemic Folkways and Scientific Epistemology"
(1992)

Nov 13 (T) –

Tentative Schedule of Classes
(Reading assignments will likely be changed slightly on final syllabus)

Nov 29 (Th) –Replication and the Replicability Crisis in Psychology

Deborah Mayo (1991) “Novel Evidence and Severe Tests”, *Philosophy of Science* 58: 523-552. [OWL]

Nancy Cartwright (1991) “Replicability, Reproducibility, and Robustness: Comments on Harry Collins”, *History of Political Economy* 23:1. [OWL]

FINAL PAPER DUE

Dec 4 (T) – Review for Exam 2

Dec 6 (Th) – Exam 2