

Read Syllabus and Note Due Dates

To-Do Date: Oct 14 at 11:59pm

Overview

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1. Course Information

Course Number: PHI 330

Course Title: Theory of Knowledge

Credits: 3

Prerequisites: ENG 102, 105 or 108 with C or better; Minimum 25 hours

Suggested Background

You will find this class very challenging if you have not previously taken a course in philosophy or critical thinking. If you're up for that challenge, make sure to pay attention to the optional materials which discuss key elements of logic and argumentation.

2. Faculty Information

Name: **Dr. Jeffrey Watson**

Office: COOR 3350 (Tempe); Online

Phone: (480) 727-4022

Email address: **DrWatson@asu.edu**. Please Post General questions to the **Community Forum**

Office hours: For Availability and Appointments to go **links.asu.edu/watson**

I am a Lecturer in the School of Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies at Arizona State University. My research focuses on accounts of the metaphysics of emergent properties, but I have other interests in ethics and philosophy of mind. I've presented my work at meetings of the American Philosophical Association and elsewhere. My personal web page, including my C.V., can be found at **jeffreyjohnwatson.com**. I love teaching philosophy, and hope that through this class you come to appreciate it too.

Teaching Assistant

I will be on family leave during the last few weeks of this course. Aubrial Harrington will serve as the Teaching Assistant for this course while I am on leave. You may sign up for Ms. Harrington's online office hours if you need assistance while I am out at **links.asu.edu/watsonTA**.

If you have a grade-related question, please include both Ms. Harrington (amharr42@asu.edu) and Dr. Watson (drwatson@asu.edu) on the same email, so that you can get the fastest response without duplicating efforts.

3. Course Description

Catalog Description

Nature, sources, and limits of human knowledge. Topics may include truth, a priori knowledge, empirical knowledge, perception, induction, and skepticism.

Course Overview

In this course we consider the nature of knowledge. What do we know, and how do we know it? What counts as evidence for the truth of a belief? Do we know anything at all? Are human beings rational? How can reasonable people disagree?

Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, students should:

- Be able to state the Traditional Analysis of Knowledge and articulate the importance of each of the necessary conditions of knowledge in the definition.
- Be able to explain the Gettier Problem and its significance for the Traditional Analysis of Knowledge, and explain and critically evaluate the responses to the Gettier problem given by evidentialism, foundationalism, coherentism, no false grounds, no defeaters, non-evidentialism, proper function theory, truth-tracking theory, the causal theory, and reliabilism.
- Be able to explain the problem of skepticism, and to articulate and critically evaluate responses to the problem of skepticism.
- Recognize what a "contextualist" or "relativist" account of knowledge is, and explain and critically evaluate contextualist approaches as responses to skepticism and as responses to the epistemology of disagreement.

4. Textbook Information

Required Textbooks

There are two books for this course. The primary book is *Epistemology* by Richard Feldman. **You must buy Feldman's book in advance.** No electronic edition is available, although Chapter 1 is on reserve. Our class entirely revolves around Feldman's short, readable book.

The secondary book is *Epistemology: Contemporary Readings* by Michael Huemer. While this book is listed as "recommended", not "required", **you are required to read articles in Huemer's book each week.** Graciously, the ASU Library has secured unlimited electronic access to this textbook for students, so you only need to buy a paper copy if you would prefer to. You can access the Library's copy by going to <http://links.asu.edu/huemer>

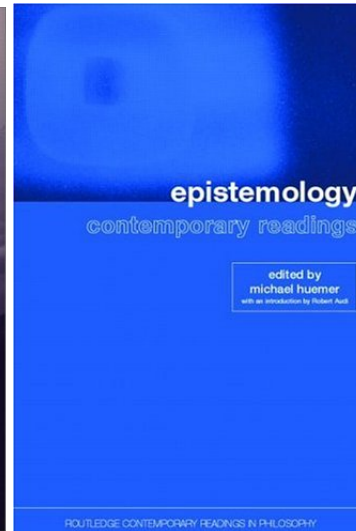
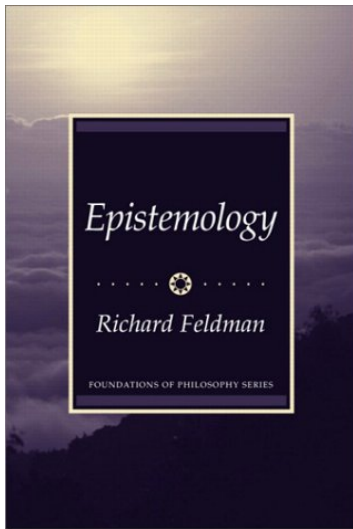
Detailed information about the two books is listed below. Both books are required. All other required readings will be provided.

Epistemology
by Richard Feldman

Epistemology: Contemporary Readings
by Michael Huemer (2002)

Copyright: 2003
ISBN: 9780133416459

<http://links.asu.edu/huemer>
ISBN: 9780415259217



Suggested Resource for Term Paper Research

Audi, Robert (2003). *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*, Second Edition. ISBN 0203987071. **A free electronic copy of this book is accessible via the ASU Library website** .

5. Course Topics, Schedule & Grading

Course Schedule, Fall 2020

ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS	DUE DATE (11:59pm AZ time)
UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO EPISTEMOLOGY (Feldman, Ch.1)		
Introductions Thread	5	10/14
Syllabus Quiz	5	10/14
Core Concepts Quiz	10	10/15
Little Logic Quiz	10	10/16
Epistemological Questions Reflection	10	10/16
Epistemological Questions Quiz	30	10/18
UNIT 2: THE ANALYSIS OF KNOWLEDGE (Feldman, Ch. 2-3)		

Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10	10/23
Discussion Board Posts (Initial Post & 2 Replies)	10	10/23 (post) - 10/25 (replies)
Quiz	60	10/25
Choose Term Paper Topic	5	10/25
UNIT 3: EVIDENTIALIST THEORIES (Feldman Ch. 4)		
Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10	11/6
Discussion Board Posts	10	11/6 (post) - 11/8 (replies)
Quiz	60	11/8
Term Paper Outline and Bibliography Draft	10	11/8
UNIT 4: NON-EVIDENTIALIST THEORIES (Feldman, Ch. 5)		
Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10	11/13
Discussion Board Posts	10	11/13 - 11/15
Quiz	60	11/15
Term Paper Summary	15	11/15
UNIT 5: SKEPTICISM (Feldman, Ch. 6-7)		
Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10	11/20
Discussion Board Posts	10	11/20 - 11/22
Quiz	60	11/22
UNIT 7: RELATIVISM (Feldman Ch. 9)		
Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10	11/27
Discussion Board Posts	10	11/27 - 11/29
Quiz	60	11/29
OPTIONAL UNIT: SCIENCE (Formerly Unit 6) (Feldman, Ch. 8)		
Quiz	replace lowest quiz	12/4
FINAL DAYS		
Final Exam Part 1 (Open Book, Untimed)	125	12/4
Final Exam Part 2 (Closed Book, Timed, Respondus)	125	12/4
Final Term Paper	250	12/4
TOTAL POINTS		1000

Assignment Descriptions

Introductory Quizzes: these multiple-choice quizzes which permit retakes are to help students who are new to philosophy master some of the basics. Students who have taken other courses in philosophy may find these helpful review.

Unit Discussion Boards: these are opportunities for you to express and defend your views on these topics in Epistemology and learn through discussion with other students in the class.

Unit Yellowdig Reflections: these are short, phenomenologically-oriented writing assignments, meant to get you reflecting on aspects of your own experiences as a knower.

Unit Quizzes: these quizzes measure your understanding of the readings and lectures in each unit, and have two parts, 50% multiple choice and 50% essay. Multiple-choice questions measure your recognition of major concepts, terms, and ideas, while essay questions require you to explain arguments in the text and give your own critical evaluation of them.

Final Exam: the final exam is an essay exam requiring you to use the concepts and analytical tools you studied in the course and apply them to novel scenarios or situations, such as interpreting the claims made by two sides in a debate and offering a judgment on them.

Final Paper: the term paper is an argument paper, minimum 1,500 words, where you defend a thesis on a topic in contemporary Epistemology. The paper will require some original research, but it is not primarily a report on what someone else has argued, but a defense of your own views.

Grade Distribution

- Weekly Quizzes: 30%
- Discussion Boards: 5%
- Yellowdig Reflections: 5%
- Term Paper Preparation: 3%*
- Introductory Materials: 7%
- Final Exams: 25%
- Final Term Paper: 25%*

Note: The Final Exams and Term Paper are weighted heavily. This is consistent with most upper-division college courses, but it is also an acknowledgment that with our highly compressed schedule students may have a bad week or two. Weighting these final assignments heavily gives everyone the opportunity to recover from a rough week. Having said that, weekly quiz scores tend to be a fairly reliable predictor of final exam scores. Students who do well on weekly quizzes tend to do well on the final exams, and students who do not do well on weekly quizzes tend not to do well on the final exams. Similarly, students who complete and make use of my feedback on the term paper preparation assignments tend to do well on the term paper, and students who skip these assignments tend to do poorly on the term paper.

*Students seeking a "Y" in the course are exempt from the term paper and term paper preparation assignments.

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage	Points Range	Meaning
A+	99 - 100%	985-1000	
A	94 - 98%	935 - 984	Outstanding
A -	90 - 93%	895 - 934	
B+	87 - 89%	865 - 894	

B	84 - 86%	835 - 864	Very Good
B-	80 - 83%	795 - 834	
C+	77 - 79%	765 - 794	
C	67 - 76%	665 - 754	Acceptable
D	64 - 66%	635 - 664	Below Standard
E	50 - 64%	495 - 634	Failing but Participated
EU	1 - 49%	1 - 494	Failing, Minimal Participation*
EN	0%	0	No Attempt

Grades on Discussion Boards & Reflections

Discussion Boards and reflections are primarily graded on whether they satisfy requirements. They use a different grading scale.

Percentage	Meaning
100%	Satisfactory
80%	Not Quite Satisfactory
65%	Unsatisfactory
50%	Failing
0%	No Attempt

In rare cases I have given over 100% for discussion contributors who go far over and above expectations.

Other Grades

*EU: An EU grade indicates that you failed due to ceasing to participate in the class and it has financial aid consequences. Normally I give this grade if you earn less than half of the points available in the class; however, even if you have less than 50%, I will still give you an E instead of an EU if you had 50% or better average on the Quizzes, or the Final Exams, or the Final Paper.

XE: The Grade of XE is given in cases of Academic Dishonesty. The determination about whether to give a grade of XE is made by the Dean's office, not by your instructor. Your instructor is required to report cases of Academic Dishonesty to the Dean's office.

I: This class offers the grade of I or "incomplete" in situations where (i) the withdrawal deadline for the course has passed, and (ii) the student currently has a passing grade, and (iii) there is a serious,

verifiable major life event with documentation which makes it a practical impossibility for the student to complete the coursework by the last day of the course. I will not require documentation if the life event is related to COVID-19, whether directly or indirectly. I would suggest you contact an academic advisor or academic coach for more information if you think this situation might apply to you. See **Grade of Incomplete**.

W: Withdrawn. There is a limited timeline to add/drop or **withdraw from the course**. Consult with your **Academic Advisor** to add or drop this course or to withdraw. If you add the course, contact the instructor immediately to get caught up. You do not need to contact me to drop or withdraw from the course. Also please review the following ASU policies: **Withdrawal from Classes**, and **Medical/Compassionate Withdrawal**

Y: Satisfactory. The grade of "Y" is an alternative to a "C" grade, which counts for most purposes as a "C", but does not calculate as part of your GPA. You may request a grade of "Y" in writing up until the last day of class by sending an email to drwatson@asu.edu. Students who are seeking a grade of "Y" or "Satisfactory" in the class are exempt from the term paper and all term-paper related assignments.

Grading Procedure

Grades reflect your performance on assignments and adherence to deadlines. Many assignments make use of 'rubrics' which provide a guide to your score in the absence of detailed feedback. Graded assignments will typically be available within 7 days of the due date via Grades in Canvas, provided they were submitted on time. Please do not e-mail me about your grade until the 7 day window has passed. Do e-mail me if you'd like more detailed feedback on your grade on an assignment. (Note that assignments submitted late during the grace period will be graded when time is available.) Note that any assignment which is submitted will earn at least 1 point. If you receive '0' points for an assignment, that means I have no record of receiving it. Double-check to make sure you submitted it, and if you did, then contact me right away.

6. Online Course Policies

Communicating With the Instructor

This course uses a discussion board called "Community Forum" for general questions about the course. Prior to posting a question, please check the syllabus, announcements, and existing posts. If you do not find an answer, post your question. You are encouraged to respond to the questions of your classmates.

Email questions of a personal nature to me directly. You can expect a response within 48 hours.

I am available to talk in more depth via video chat (Google Hangouts) or phone call, simply sign up for an appointment (links.asu.edu/watson). I am available to meet on campus with students who live near Tempe.

Online Course

This is an online course. There are no face-to-face meetings.

Email and Internet

ASU email is an **official means of communication** among students, faculty, and staff. Students are expected to read and act upon email in a timely fashion. Students bear the responsibility of missed messages and should check their ASU-assigned email regularly.

You should use your ASU e-mail, not your personal e-mail, for any communication or assignments related to this course. All instructor correspondence will be sent to your ASU email account.

Course Time Commitment

According to the Arizona Board of Regents, this three-credit course requires approximately 135 hours of work. Please expect to spend around 18 hours each week preparing for and actively participating in this course. If you find you need to spend more than 18 hours a week on this course, please contact me.

7. Late Work Policy

Late or Missed Assignments

My Grading Policy on Late assignments is as follows:

1. **Grace Period.** There is a 48-hour grace period past the official due date on all quizzes, exams, and assignments. You may submit late assignments during the grace period without penalty. You do not need to e-mail me about the circumstances. Recognize that if you rely on the grace period, there is no "grace period" beyond the grace period for technical or personal issues. Note that assignments submitted during the grace period may be graded after assignments submitted on time. I do not accept late work after the grace period, since it is over 48 hours late, except as described below. ***Note that in Summer B sessions, the grace period is only 24 hours for Final Exams and the Final Paper due to shorter grading deadlines.***

2. **ASU Policies.** Notwithstanding #1, I accept late work without penalty, pursuant to ASU Policy, when I am informed in advance of cases of:

- **accommodations for religious practices.** (Dr. Watson considers 'weddings' and 'funerals' to qualify as 'religious practices' for the purpose of this policy even if secular in tone.)
- accommodations **due to University-sanctioned activities** documented by a letter on ASU letterhead
- the "Flexible Deadlines" accommodation for a **disability** , which can only be granted by the **DRC**
- accommodations for **Active-Duty Military Service** - please reach out by e-mail at the start of class as I will adjust due dates during deployment.

3. **ASU-Caused Technical Issues.** Most technical issues can be handled within the grace period. However, notwithstanding #1-2, if there is an ongoing technical issue which keeps you from completing an assignment on time, then you should contact Technical Support **855-278-5080**. If technical support can't help, but they confirm the issue is on ASU's end (or my end), not on your end, then you need to obtain a case number from them. Forward me the case number and a description of the event, and I can allow you to submit work past the deadline, but please do not email me about technical issues until after you have contacted Technical Support. Note that you should save your work regularly while writing essays for online quizzes. If the issue is on your end, Technical Support may be able to help you, but this is not an excused reason for late work beyond the grace period.

4. **Emergency Policy.** Notwithstanding #1-3, if you have an documented serious medical, personal, or family emergency which arises prevents you from completing the work on time, and which you couldn't reasonably foresee in advance, I will allow you to complete the work late within a period I deem reasonable. (Pregnancy, childbirth, fostering, and adoption are covered under this policy, as well as medical emergencies for any child or adult dependents under your care.) You can provide me with the documentation by FAX or as an attachment to an e-mail. You should contact me as soon as you can, even if the documentation takes a week or more to get to me. If you would like to keep the details confidential, such as in cases with very personal physical or mental health information, or cases where

you have experienced sexual assault or domestic or relationship violence, please contact **ASU's Student Advocacy and Assistance** office, which can write a letter to me on your behalf while keeping your circumstances confidential, which I will accept as an appropriate excuse for late work or an incomplete ("I") grade.

Lastly, note that events which are part of the normal course of life for your fellow online students are not going to qualify as emergencies, even if I completely understand them and can empathize. For instance, demands from a job, from other coursework, from family or vacations, and involvement with extracurricular activities are all part of the lives your peers are juggling too and do not count for extensions.

Note on Time Limits on Quizzes

Check the quiz settings carefully before beginning the quiz. Most quizzes should automatically submit when the time limit is reached; other quizzes, however, might permit you to continue working even after the time limit is reached. If a quiz permits you to continue working after the time limit, note that there will be a penalty for going over-time depending on how long overtime you went: 5-10 minutes overtime is unlikely to incur much if any penalty, whereas 1 hour overtime is unlikely to receive any credit.

Submitting Assignments

All assignments, unless otherwise announced, must be submitted through Canvas. Please do not submit an assignment via e-mail.

8. Academic Policies

Drop and Add Dates/Withdrawals

This course adheres to a compressed schedule, therefore, there is a limited timeline to **drop or add the course**. Consult with your **Academic Advisor** to add or drop this course or to withdraw. If you add the the course, contact the instructor immediately to get caught up. You do not need to contact the instructor to drop the course, although you're encouraged to contact the instructor if you intend to withdraw. If you are considering a withdrawal, review the following ASU policies: **Withdrawal from Classes**, **Medical/Compassionate Withdrawal**, and a **Grade of Incomplete**.

Grade Appeals

Grade disputes must first be addressed by discussing the situation with the instructor. If the dispute is not resolved with the instructor, the student may appeal to the department chair per the **University Policy for Student Appeal Procedures on Grades**.

Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

ASU expects and requires its students to act with honesty, integrity, and respect. Required behavior standards are listed in the **Student Code of Conduct and Student Disciplinary Procedures**, **Computer, Internet, and Electronic Communications policy**, **ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy**, and outlined by the **Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities**. Anyone in violation of these policies is subject to sanctions.

Students are entitled to receive instruction free from interference by other members of the class. An instructor may withdraw a student from the course when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process per **Instructor Withdrawal of a Student for Disruptive Classroom Behavior**.

Appropriate online behavior (also known as netiquette) is defined by the instructor and includes keeping course discussion posts focused on the assigned topics. Students must maintain a cordial

atmosphere and use tact in expressing differences of opinion. Inappropriate discussion board posts may be deleted by the instructor.

The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities accepts **incident reports** from students, faculty, staff, or other persons who believe that a student or a student organization may have violated the Student Code of Conduct.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Statement

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>

Instructor's Policy On Academic Integrity

I, the instructor of this course, take matters of academic integrity very seriously. In particular, intentionally representing work as your own which is not your own - including failing to cite an internet resource that you rely upon, paraphrase, or copy and paste whole sentences or phrases from in your work - means I will recommend that you **fail the entire course**. The reason for this policy is simple: most of our assignments involve writing, and if you plagiarize or use unattributed sources on one assignment, then I have no way to be certain your other work is not also plagiarized.

I report all academic integrity violations to the Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, who may impose a grade of XE, suspension, or expulsion from the University. You have a right to appeal any penalty for academic integrity violations to the Dean.

In order to insure that you are the author of your written work, you may be required to discuss any written assignments through a phone call or other conversation with the instructor at a mutually convenient time. If I make a reasonable request to discuss an assignment with you, and you fail to do so in a reasonable time period, then you will fail the assignment, and if there is evidence that a violation of academic integrity occurred, then you will fail the course.

Citations

As part of academic integrity, you must cite everything which you obtain from any source except your own ideas, on every assignment. Citations are required on essay questions on weekly quizzes, discussion board posts, writing assignments, and the final paper. Citing sources isn't just a matter of integrity, it's a matter of being a good member of the academy - it shows that you know where an idea came from. Note that I provide a shortened citation style (under 'Academic Integrity') to make this quick and painless for you.

Respondus Monitor

The final exam for this course uses Respondus Monitor. Respondus monitor takes a video and audio recording of the exam environment in order to ensure the integrity of the exam. To take the final exam, you will need access to a computer with a microphone and web camera which is able to install the Respondus software (Chromebooks will not work). You will also need a photo ID (for example, a driver's license or passport) in order to verify your identity. Please notify the instructor in advance if there are differences in your usual appearance or name to be aware of.

Prohibition of Commercial Note Taking Services

In accordance with **ACD 304-06 Commercial Note Taking Services**, written permission must be secured from the official instructor of the class in order to sell the instructor's oral communication in the

form of notes. Notes must have the notetaker's name as well as the instructor's name, the course number, and the date.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to complete the course evaluation. The feedback provides valuable information to the instructor and the college and is used to improve student learning. Students are notified when the online evaluation form is available.

ASU Title IX Policy Statement

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>, is available if you wish discuss any concerns confidentially and privately.

Inclusion Statement

Arizona State University is a comprehensive public research university which measures itself not by whom it excludes, but by whom it includes and how they succeed. Our class welcomes and includes students of differing ages, races, ethnicities, geographic locations, economic and family backgrounds, sexual or gender identities, religious beliefs, political views, disabilities, and life experiences. I, Dr. Watson, am committed to providing instruction without discrimination, and encourage you to contact me if there is something I can do to make you feel more welcome. I respect my students, and I encourage each of them to bring to their voice to the table to offer their unique perspective without intimidation. I expect students to extend civility towards one another as we engage in dialogue about controversial topics in philosophy.

Syllabus Disclaimer

The syllabus is a statement of intent and serves as an implicit agreement between the instructor and the student. Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. Please remember to check your ASU email and the course site often.

Accessibility Statement

In compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, professional disability specialists and support staff at the Disability Resource Center (DRC) facilitate a comprehensive range of academic support services and accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

Qualified students with disabilities may be eligible to receive academic support services and accommodations . Eligibility is based on qualifying disability documentation and assessment of individual need. Students who believe they have a current and essential need for disability accommodations are **responsible for requesting accommodations and providing qualifying documentation** to the DRC. Every effort is made to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

Qualified students who wish to request an accommodation for a disability should contact the **Disability Resources Center**:

- <https://eoss.asu.edu/drc>
- Phone: 480-965-1234
- FAX: 480-965-0441
- Email: DRC@asu.edu

Computer Requirements

This course requires a computer with Internet access and the following:

- A couple of web browsers (**Chrome** , or **Mozilla Firefox** ; Safari is *not* recommended)
- **Adobe Acrobat Reader** (free)
- **Adobe Flash Player** (free)
- Microphone (optional) and speaker

In addition, the final exam for this course requires the use of Respondus Monitor. (Respondus Monitor is not RPNOW). There is no charge to you for using Respondus Monitor, but it requires you to download and use Respondus Lockdown Browser. You will need access to a standard Mac or PC computer with a microphone and web camera and the ability to download Respondus Lockdown Browser in order to take the final exam. Chromebooks are not compatible with Respondus. Students using Chromebooks will need access to a secondary, standard PC or Mac computer to take the final exam.

Technical Support

This course uses Canvas to deliver content. It can be accessed through MyASU at <http://my.asu.edu> , through asu.instructure.com, or through the Canvas home page at canvas.asu.edu . Note that even if there is a disruption to my.asu.edu you should still have access to the course through canvas.asu.edu.

To monitor the status of campus networks and services, visit the System Health Portal at <http://syshealth.asu.edu/> .

To contact the help desk for technical support, I recommend using 24-hour Live Chat via the Question Mark icon on the Left Hand Sidebar on Canvas. Alternatively, you may Call 855-278-5080; Let them know you are using Canvas rather than Blackboard, so that they can transfer you to a Canvas specialist.

Student Success

This is an online course. To be successful:

- check the course daily
- read announcements

- read and respond to course email messages as needed
- complete assignments by the due dates specified
- communicate regularly with your instructor and peers
- create a study and/or assignment schedule to stay on track