



Course Syllabus

***Please note that this is a general syllabus. It omits specific dates and is subject to change.**

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.

Required Text

Epistemology by Richard Feldman

Copyright: 2003

ISBN: 9780133416459

Recommended Text (freely available online through ASU library, no need to purchase)

Epistemology: Contemporary Readings

by Michael Huemer (2002)

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

ISBN: 9780415259217

Faculty

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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.

Course Topics, Schedule & Grading

Course Schedule, due dates TBD

ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS	POINTS	DUE DATE (11:59pm AZ time)
UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO EPISTEMOLOGY (Feldman, Ch.1)		
Introductions Thread	5	
Syllabus Quiz	5	
Core Concepts Quiz	10	
Little Logic Quiz	10	
Epistemological Questions Reflection	10	

Epistemological Questions Quiz	30
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UNIT 2: THE ANALYSIS OF KNOWLEDGE (Feldman, Ch. 2-3)

Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10
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Discussion Board Posts (Initial Post & 2 Replies)	10
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Quiz	60
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Choose Term Paper Topic	5
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UNIT 3: EVIDENTIALIST THEORIES (Feldman Ch. 4)

Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10
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Discussion Board Posts	10
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Quiz	60
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Term Paper Outline and Bibliography Draft	10
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UNIT 4: NON-EVIDENTIALIST THEORIES (Feldman, Ch. 5)

Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10
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Discussion Board Posts	10
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Quiz	60
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Term Paper Summary	15
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UNIT 5: SKEPTICISM (Feldman, Ch. 6-7)

Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10
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Discussion Board Posts	10
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Quiz	60
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UNIT 7: RELATIVISM (Feldman Ch. 9)

Yellowdig Reflection & Participation	10
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Discussion Board Posts	10
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Quiz	60
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OPTIONAL UNIT: SCIENCE (Formerly Unit 6) (Feldman, Ch. 8)

Quiz	replace lowest quiz
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FINAL DAYS

Final Exam Part 1 (Open Book, Untimed)	125
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Final Exam Part 2 (Closed Book, Timed, Responsus)	125
Final Term Paper	250
	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

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.

Communicating With the Instructor

This course uses a discussion board called "Hallway Conversations" 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 your instructor. You can expect a response within 48 hours.

Online Course

This is an online course. There are no face-to-face meetings. You can log into your course via MyASU or <https://my.asu.edu>.

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.

All instructor correspondence will be sent to your ASU email account.

Course Time Commitment

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.

Late or Missed Assignments

Notify the instructor **BEFORE** an assignment is due if an urgent situation arises and the assignment will not be submitted on time. Published assignment due dates (Arizona Mountain Standard time) are firm. Please follow the appropriate University policies to request an [accommodation for religious practices](#) or to accommodate a missed assignment [due to University-sanctioned activities](#).

Submitting Assignments

All assignments, unless otherwise announced, **MUST** be submitted to the designated area of Blackboard. Do not submit an assignment via email.

Drop and Add Dates/Withdrawals

This course adheres to a compressed schedule and may be part of a sequenced program, therefore, there is a limited timeline to [drop or add the course](#). Consult with your advisor and notify your instructor to add or drop this course. 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

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>. Additionally, required behavior standards are listed in the [Student Code of Conduct and Student Disciplinary Procedures](#), [Computer, Internet, and Electronic Communications 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.

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.

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.

Title IX 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.

Accessibility Statement

In compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADAAA) of 2008, 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 DRC by going to <https://eoss.asu.edu/drc>, calling (480) 965-1234 or emailing DRC@asu.edu. To speak with a specific office, please use the following information:

ASU Online and Downtown Phoenix Campus

University Center Building, Suite 160
602-496-4321 (Voice)

Polytechnic Campus

480-727-1165 (Voice)

West Campus

University Center Building (UCB), Room 130
602-543-8145 (Voice)

Tempe Campus

480-965-1234 (Voice)

Computer Requirements

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

- Web browsers ([Chrome](#), [Internet Explorer](#), [Mozilla Firefox](#), or [Safari](#))
- [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) (free)
- [Adobe Flash Player](#) (free)
- Microphone (optional) and speaker

Technical Support

This course uses Blackboard to deliver content. It can be accessed through MyASU at <http://my.asu.edu> or the Blackboard home page at <https://myasucourses.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 call toll-free at 1-855-278-5080.

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