ARTS2360

Knowledge and Reality

Term Two // 2021

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
David Bronstein	d.bronstein@unsw.edu.au		MB 344	

School Contact Information

School of Humanities and Languages

Location: School Office, Morven Brown Building, Level 2, 258

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

Phone: +61 2 9385 1681

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Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Nothing is more human than to think that reality gives us knowledge. Nothing is more human than to wonder what, if anything, is real. When philosophy seeks to understand these fundamental and vital aspects of people and the world, we gain both an epistemology and a metaphysics. Some metaphysical topics that the course might explore include these: what it is to be a person; what it is to have a free will (if indeed anyone ever does); whether there is, or even could be, a supremely good and knowing and powerful god; whether there is any meaning to human life; whether there is any harm in death as such; and what makes two different individual things able to be examples of one kind of thing. Some epistemological issues that the course might explore include these: what it is for a thought or claim to be true; what it is for a thought or claim to be rationally well supported; what it is for a thought or claim to be knowledge; what it is to have knowledge via the senses; what it is to have knowledge purely via reason; and whether it might be impossible for us ever to have any knowledge or rational support at all.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Recognise and discuss some historically and philosophically important ideas and ways of thinking from metaphysics.
2. Recognise and discuss some historically and philosophically important ideas and ways of thinking from epistemology.
3. Engage critically and imaginatively with those ideas and those ways of thinking from metaphysics.
4. Engage critically and imaginatively with those ideas and those ways of thinking from epistemology.

Teaching Strategies

The course is taught via three hours of lectures, and one hour of tutorials, per week. The lectures introduce students to a series of topics in metaphysics, plus a series of topics in epistemology. The tutorials involve further discussion of those topics, complementing and expanding upon the central ideas from the lectures. In particular, tutorials will highlight and clarify the central concepts, theses, and questions arising in the lectures, and will encourage students to engage with potentially practical applications of those concepts, theses, and questions.

Assessment

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Moodle Discussion Forum Post	5%	08/06/2021 12:00 PM	1, 2, 3, 4
Moodle Discussion Forum Posts	35%	Not Applicable	1, 2, 3, 4
Final Essay	60%	09/08/2021 11:00 PM	1, 2, 3, 4

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Moodle Discussion Forum Post

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 200 words

Details:

Students respond to a specific question about the reading and/or reflect on a specific passage. Due near the start of term so that students receive feedback early on in light of which they can improve in future assignments.

Students receive a mark and written feedback.

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 2: Moodle Discussion Forum Posts

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 7 posts, 200 words each

Details:

Students respond to a specific question about the reading and/or reflect on a specific passage from the reading. Students post as many times as they want. Length: 200 words per post, 1,400 words in total.

Students receive a mark and written feedback.

Assessment 3: Final Essay

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 2000 words

Details:

A sustained philosophical engagement with one of the topics, ideas, arguments, or texts covered in the course. Length: 2,000 words.

Students receive a mark and written feedback.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 31 May - 4 June	Topic	Tuesday: Course introduction; metaphysics and epistemology with Plato Wednesday: Metaphysics and epistemology with Plato
Week 2: 7 June - 11 June	Topic	Tuesday: What am I? Personal identity Wednesday: What am I? Personal identity
Week 3: 15 June - 18 June	Topic	Tuesday: What am I? Personal identity Wednesday: Am I free? Free will and determinism
Week 4: 21 June - 25 June	Topic	Tuesday: Am I free? Free will and determinism Wednesday: Am I free? Free will and determinism
Week 5: 28 June - 2 July	Topic	Tuesday: Death and the meaning of life Wednesday: What is knowledge?
Week 7: 12 July - 16 July	Topic	Tuesday: Philosophy and *The Matrix* Wednesday: Philosophy and *The Matrix*
Week 8: 19 July - 23 July	Topic	Tuesday: Hume and the problem of induction Wednesday: Ancient skepticism
Week 9: 26 July - 30 July	Topic	Tuesday: Epistemic virtue and vice Wednesday: Bullshit and conspiracy theories
Week 10: 2 August - 6 August	Topic	Tuesday: Epistemic injustice Wednesday: End of term review

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Students are asked to purchase a copy of:

A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality by John Perry. Hackett, 1978. ISBN-13: 978-0-915144-53-2

All other readings will be made available on Moodle.

Recommended Resources

Not available

Course Evaluation and Development

This course will be formally evaluated through UNSW's myExperience process. Feedback from this survey is used by the school and individual teachers to inform course design and teaching practice. We are also open at any time during the term to comments and suggestions about the course.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.
http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bedegal people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW Kensington campus is located.