

PHIL 215A Epistemology*3 Credits, 3 hours*

This course is designed to provide students with an adequate grounding in the central issues of epistemology, including such topics as the definition of knowledge, skepticism and the limits of knowledge, the role of perception, memory and reason as sources of knowledge, relativism, truth and the objectivity of knowledge.

Instructor

Mark Young, Ph D.

S213C

780.791.4825

Mark.Young@keyano.ca**Office Hours**

Mondays 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Wednesdays 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Fridays 2:00pm – 3:00pm

(or by appointment)

Hours of Instruction

Mondays 11:30am – 12:50pm

Wednesdays 11:30am-12:50pm

Required Resources

A course package has been designed specifically for this course and is available in the campus bookstore.

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify and understand some key contemporary theories and issues concerning knowledge.
- Identify some key theories and issues around truth
- Demonstrate the ability to write an argumentative term paper which includes scholarly academic research and properly adopts APA or MLA referencing.

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated based on the completion of four assignments. These assignments include: a term exam, term paper, a final exam and on-line discussion topics. Below is a brief description of each assignment, as well as relevant due dates.

On-line Discussions	TBA	15%
Term Exam	17 October	25%
Term Paper	5 December	25%
Final Exam	TBA	35%
Total		100%

A grade of C- is required for progression or transfer.

On-line Discussions

At five points throughout the term I will post discussion topics for students to comment on. The total value of the assignment is 15%, and therefore 3% for every post. Your response does not have to be lengthy – between 150-300 words - but must exhibit understanding, clarity, accuracy, good reflections and focus only on relevant material. Each topic will be available for only week and late submissions will not be accepted.

First Exam

The first exam will include multiple choice questions, short-answer questions and an essay question. The essay question will be provided before the exam, and it will follow the same format as the term paper. Students will be given a specific outline of the exam, including mark distribution, before the exam occurs. The value of this exam is 25% of the total grade.

Term Paper

The term paper should be between 8-10 pages (or 2400-3000 words), contain two references from the course textbook and one external source. The external source must be a peer reviewed academic source. A topics list will be provided for the term paper. Students must pick their term paper topic from this topic list or otherwise suffer a significant penalty. A basic format for the term paper, that also indicates the method evaluation, will be provided early in the term. The value of the term paper is 25% of the total grade.

Final Exam

The final exam will cover material considered after the first exam. This exam will include short answer questions and two essay questions. More details will be offered concerning this exam as it approaches. The value of the final exam is 35% of the total grade.

Grading System

Descriptor	Alpha Grade	4.0 Scale	Percent	Rubric for Letter Grades
Excellent	A+	4.0	> 92.9	Work shows in-depth and critical analysis, well developed ideas, creativity, excellent writing, clarity and proper format.
	A	4.0	85 – 92.9	
	A-	3.7	80 – 84.9	
Good	B+	3.3	77 – 79.9	Work is generally of high quality, well developed, well written, has clarity, and uses proper format.
	B	3.0	74 – 76.9	
	B-	2.7	70 – 73.9	
Satisfactory	C+	2.3	67 – 69.9	Work has some developed ideas but needs more attention to clarity, style and formatting.
	C	2.0	64 – 66.9	
Progression	C-	1.7	60 – 63.9	
Poor	D+	1.3	55 – 59.9	

Minimum Pass	D	1.0	50 – 54.9	Work is completed in a general way with minimal support, or is poorly written or did not use proper format.
Failure	F	0.0	< 50	Responses fail to demonstrate appropriate understanding or are fundamentally incomplete.

Proposed Schedule of Topics and Readings

1. Traditional Theories of Knowledge and Contemporary Skepticism

1.1 Foundationalism and Coherentism

Readings: L. Bonjour, "The Dialectic of Foundationalism and Coherentism," pp.117-142.

1.2 Contemporary Skepticism

Readings: J. Pollock, "The Gettier Problem," pp.309-319.

E. Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" pp.121-123.

2. Trends in Contemporary Epistemology

2.1 Epistemology Naturalized

Readings: W. V. O. Quine, "Epistemology Naturalized," pp.502-511.

2.2 Internalism and Externalism

Readings: R. Fumerton, "The Internalism/Externalism Controversy," pp.443-459.

2.3 Contextualist Theories

Readings: D. B. Annis, "A Contextualist Theory of Epistemic Justification," pp.397-404.

2.4 Virtue Epistemology

Readings: J. Greco, "Virtue Epistemology," pp.520-522.

J. Greco, "Virtues and Vices of Virtue Epistemology," pp.413-432.

2.5 Feminist Epistemology

Readings: L. Code, "A Feminist Epistemology?" pp.167-174.

2.6 Indigenous Epistemology

Readings: G. Cajete, Gregory, "Philosophy of Native Science," pp.45-56.

3. The Debate Over Truth

3.1 Correspondence Theory of Truth

Readings: B. Russell, "The Correspondence Theory of Truth," pp.230-235.

3.2 Pragmatic Theory of Truth

Readings: W. James, "The Pragmatic Theory of Truth," pp.235-244.

3.3 Postmodernism and Truth

Readings: R. Rorty, "Dismantling Truth: Solidarity versus Objectivity," 154-160.

D. Dennet, "Postmodernism and Truth," pp.161-167.

Performance Requirements

A late penalty of 3 marks per day, on a scale of 100, will apply to all late assignments, but will be waived for legitimate reasons if supporting documentation is provided. If an assignment is late, and not handed-in during class time, arrangements must be made with the instructor to hand-in the assignment. Late penalties do not apply to on-line discussions, as they cannot be submitted late. No term papers are accepted after the last day of classes. Should an assignment go missing, and the student is unable to produce another copy, the assignment will be considered not submitted. Likewise, if a grade is not recorded for an assignment the onus is on the student to demonstrate that the assignment was completed and graded. No changes can be made to the class schedule.

Student Responsibilities

It is your responsibility as a student to contact the Office of the Registrar to complete the forms for Withdrawal or Change of Registration, and any other forms. Please refer to the list of important dates as noted in the Academic Schedule in the Keyano College credit calendar.

More specific details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

Student Attendance

Class attendance is useful for two reasons. First, class attendance maximizes a students' learning experience. Second, attending class is a good way to keep informed of matters relating to the administration of the course (e.g., the timing of assignments and exams). Ultimately, you are responsible for your own learning and performance in this course.

It is the responsibility of each student to be prepared for all classes. Students who miss classes are responsible for the material covered in those classes and for ensuring that they are prepared for the next class, including the completion of any assignments and / or notes that may be due.

Academic Misconduct

Students are considered to be responsible adults and should adhere to principles of intellectual integrity. Intellectual dishonesty may take many forms, such as:

- Plagiarism or the submission of another person's work as one's own
- The use of unauthorized aids in assignments or examinations (cheating)
- Collusion or the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing work
- The deliberate misrepresentation of qualifications
- The willful distortion of results or data
- Substitution in an examination by another person
- Handing in the same unchanged work as submitted for another assignment
- Breach of confidentiality.

The consequences for academic misconduct range from a verbal reprimand to expulsion from the College. More specific descriptions and details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

In order to ensure your understanding of the concept of plagiarism, you must successfully complete the online tutorial found on ilearn.keyano.ca. Then print the certificate, sign it, and show it to each of your instructors. Your course work will not be graded until you show this signed certificate.

Specialized Supports

The Student Academic Support Services (SASS) department: Accessibility Services, Skill Centre and Wellness Services, work together to support student success at Keyano College.

Accessibility Services (CC167) supports student success through group and individualized instruction of learning, study and test taking strategies, and adaptive technologies. Students with documented disabilities, or who suspect a disability, can meet with the Learning Strategists to discuss accommodation of the learning barriers that they may be experiencing. Students who have accessed accommodations in the past are encouraged to visit our office at their earliest opportunity to discuss the availability of accommodations in their current courses. Individual appointments can be made by calling 780-791-8934

Skill Centre (CC119) provides a learning space where students can gather to share ideas, collaborate on projects and get new perspectives on learning from our tutorial staff. Students visiting the centre have access to one-to-one or group tutoring, facilitated study groups, and assistance in academic writing. The Skill Centre's Peer Tutor program provides paid employment opportunities for students who have demonstrated academic success and want to share what they have learned. Tutoring is available free to any students registered at Keyano College on a drop in basis, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Additional evening hours are subject to tutor availability and are posted in the Skill Centre.

Wellness Services (CC260) offers a caring, inclusive, and respectful environment where students can access free group and individual support to meet academic and life challenges. Mental Health Coordinators offer a safe and confidential environment to seek help with personal concerns. The Mindfulness Room in CC260 is available as a quiet space for students to relax during regular office hours. Wellness Service welcomes students to participate in any of the group sessions offered throughout the academic year addressing such topics as Mindfulness and Text Anxiety. Individual appointments can be made by calling 780-791-8934.

Please watch your Keyano email for workshop announcements from our Student Academic Support Services team.