PHIX2056

Knowledge, Language and Power

Session 2, Online-flexible 2023

Department of Philosophy

Contents

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor; Lecturer (Wks 1-6)
Jennifer Duke-Yonge
jennifer.duke-yonge@mq.edu.au
Consultation by arrangement

Lecturer (Wks 7-12)
Mark Alfano
mark.alfano@mq.edu.au
Consultation by arrangement

Tutor; forum leader
Iñaki Pertierra
inaki.larrauripertierra@mq.edu.au

Credit points
10

Prerequisites
40cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
What is knowledge? Why is it valuable? And to what extent is our knowledge of the world affected by social position, power and language? In this unit, we will explore traditional and contemporary approaches to epistemological questions about what we can know, what we should believe, and whom and what we should trust. Can we trust our individual senses or reflection to provide knowledge of the world, or is knowledge inherently social? When our own intuitions clash with what others say, should we trust ourselves or our community? When should we trust and defer to experts, and how can we tell who's really an expert to begin with? We will consider philosophical and practical questions about what it is to be a good or bad epistemic agent, focusing on concepts of epistemic (ir)responsibility and epistemic virtues and vices. We will also examine society-level phenomena that may undermine some people's ability to engage fully as epistemic agents, including systemic material, social, and political patterns that can manifest as epistemic injustice. Through an examination of issues including political language, propaganda and conspiracy theories, we will consider how our epistemic practices and institutions can lead to injustice or corruption, and what we can do about it.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: apply understanding developed through course material and readings to explain key theoretical and applied problems in Epistemology and responses to them.

ULO2: apply skills in critical analysis and reflection to respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.

ULO3: clearly communicate your own perspective on the views and arguments presented in the unit.

ULO4: contribute to the learning of the group by engaging constructively in philosophical discussion and activities.

General Assessment Information

Detailed assessment information and rubrics

Detailed information about each of the assessments, including rubrics, will be available in iLearn. Please make sure you read the assessment information carefully, and contact the convenor if you have any questions.

Submission and return of assessments

Assessments in this unit are to be submitted through the appropriate 'Turnitin' links in the unit website. They will be marked through 'Grademark', which will allow you to access your marked assignments directly through the website. For information about Turnitin and Grademark, see:

https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/tools-and-resources/ilearn/ilearn-quick-guides-for-students/assignments-and-grades

Special Consideration

Requests for extensions should be submitted via a Special Consideration request, which is available in the http://ask.mq.edu.au portal. Your request should be submitted no later than five days after the due date and should be accompanied by appropriate documentation. Please see here: https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/special-consideration

Read this information carefully, as your request may be turned down if you have not followed procedure, or if you have not submitted a request in a timely manner.

Late Assessment Submission Penalty

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, **a 5% penalty (of the**

total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). **Late submission of time sensitive tasks** (such as tests/ exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) **will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.**

Academic Integrity

In Philosophy, academic honesty is taken very seriously, and a range of methods, including but not restricted to the use of Turnitin, are used to detect plagiarism. Misrepresenting someone else's work as your own may be grounds for referral to the Faculty Disciplinary Committee. If you have questions about how to properly cite work or how to credit sources, please ask the convenor for help and see also the Academic Integrity Policy https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strate gy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/academic-integrity

Please note that the policy also prohibits resubmitting work you have already submitted in another unit. This counts as self-plagiarism.

Note: All written assignments in this unit (Reflective Task, Essay Preparation Task and Essay) are individual assignments. Collusion (unauthorised collaboration on individual assignments) is a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy. This includes sharing or making use of shared assignments, in person or online. If in doubt, contact a member of teaching staff.

A helpful resource if you would like to know more about referencing and avoiding plagiarism is Macquarie's Academic Integrity Module, available here: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/st udy/skills-development. You will need to complete this Module before accessing the unit content, if you have not already done so. More information is available in iLearn.

Policy on the use of ChatGTP and other Generative AI tools

Information about this unit's policy on the use of AI will be made available in the Assessment block in iLearn. Please check that information and contact the convenor if you have any questions.

Academic Writing and Study Support

Macquarie University offers a number of services to help with academic writing, referencing and study skills. For details, see: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/skills/assignments

For information about policies related to Assessment, see *Policies and Procedures* section below.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Online quizzes	15%	No	11:55pm Wednesdays, from week 3
Participation	15%	No	Weeks 2-11
Reflective tasks	25%	No	Pt1 (5%) 11:55pm Sun 6/8; Pt2 (20%) 11:55pm Sun 10/9
Essay preparation task	5%	No	11:55pm, Sunday 15/10/23
Essay	40%	No	11:55pm, Sunday 5/11/23

Online quizzes

Assessment Type [1]: Quiz/Test
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 10 hours
Due: **11:55pm Wednesdays, from week 3**
Weighting: **15%**

Online quizzes

On successful completion you will be able to:

- apply understanding developed through course material and readings to explain key theoretical and applied problems in Epistemology and responses to them.

Participation

Assessment Type [1]: Participatory task
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 15 hours
Due: **Weeks 2-11**
Weighting: **15%**

Students should be well prepared for online forum activities. Students should make a constructive contribution to online discussion and complete associated activities.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- clearly communicate your own perspective on the views and arguments presented in the unit.
- contribute to the learning of the group by engaging constructively in philosophical discussion and activities.

Reflective tasks

Assessment Type [1]: Reflective Writing
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 15 hours
Due: **Pt1 (5%) 11:55pm Sun 6/8; Pt2 (20%) 11:55pm Sun 10/9**
Weighting: **25%**

Reflective tasks

On successful completion you will be able to:
- apply understanding developed through course material and readings to explain key theoretical and applied problems in Epistemology and responses to them.
- apply skills in critical analysis and reflection to respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.
- clearly communicate your own perspective on the views and arguments presented in the unit.

Essay preparation task

Assessment Type [1]: Plan
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 5 hours
Due: **11:55pm, Sunday 15/10/23**
Weighting: **5%**

A short essay preparation task

On successful completion you will be able to:
- apply understanding developed through course material and readings to explain key theoretical and applied problems in Epistemology and responses to them.
- apply skills in critical analysis and reflection to respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.
- clearly communicate your own perspective on the views and arguments presented in the

unit.

Essay

Assessment Type [1]: Essay
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 30 hours
Due: **11:55pm, Sunday 5/11/23**
Weighting: **40%**

An argumentative essay about themes from the unit

On successful completion you will be able to:
- apply understanding developed through course material and readings to explain key theoretical and applied problems in Epistemology and responses to them.
- apply skills in critical analysis and reflection to respond to the problems and theories introduced in the unit.
- clearly communicate your own perspective on the views and arguments presented in the unit.

---

[1] If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the Writing Centre for academic skills support.

[2] Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Lectures

Lectures will be delivered live on campus from 10-12 on Thursdays, in 23 Wally's Walk T2 (please check the timetable, http://timetables.mq.edu.au before the first lecture in case of late room changes). Internal students are expected to attend lectures. Lecture recordings will be available for online students through the Echo block in iLearn.

Forum discussion

OUA students and other "Online flexible" students will engage in tutorial discussions through the discussion forums in iLearn (Weeks 2-11). You will need to watch the lectures before engaging in the weekly assessed discussions. See the assessment block in iLearn and your forum leader's

introductory messages for information on how participation is assessed.

Reading

All the essential readings and some supplementary readings for the course will be available electronically through the library, with links from the 'Leganto' block iLearn. You should do the essential weekly reading before your tutorial/discussion.

Website

The unit website is available through iLearn (http://ilearn.mq.edu.au). It contains essential resources for the unit, and you are expected to log in on a regular basis.

Student Email

Communications about the unit may be sent to your MQ student email address. **Please make sure you check it regularly.** For more information about accessing your MQ email, and how to redirect it to a personal email account if you wish to do so, can be found here: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk/student-email

Unit Schedule

PART 1: Traditional Epistemology: What can I know? (Dr Jenny Duke-Yonge)		
In the first half of the unit, we will explore some traditional approaches to knowledge and belief. What is knowledge? Can we, as individuals, really have knowledge about how the world it? If so, how do we get it? If not, where does that leave us?		
Week 1 (week beginning 24/7)	**Introduction to Epistemology** This week, we will have a general introduction to the unit, and to some of the key questions of Epistemology, the theory of knowledge.	*No tutorials this week*
Week 2 (w/b 31/7)	**The problem of scepticism** This week we will consider the challenge posed by Scepticism: Could we be wrong about everything? Are any of our beliefs about the world justified?	*Reflective task (part 1) introductory quiz due Sunday 6/8* *Tutorials/ assessed discussion and quizzes start week*
Week 3 (w/b 7/8)	**Does knowledge have foundation?** One way to answer the sceptic would be to find something that grounds and justifies our knowledge. This week we'll consider some traditional attempts to find a foundation for knowledge in Reason or Experience, and some alternative views.	
Week 4 (w/b 14/8)	**Justification: Internalism and Externalism** We'll begin this week to a challenge to the traditional analysis of knowledge, and the conception of justification that underlies it. How should we understand 'justification'?	

Week 5 (w/b 21/8)	**Epistemic Fallibility, Luck and Responsibility** The preceding weeks may have given us reason to think that our knowledge is not as secure as we might have supposed. Is it just a matter of luck whether we know anything at all? This week we'll consider how we should respond to our own epistemic fallibility.	
Week 6 (w/b 28/8)	**Knowledge and perspective** In the final week of Part 1 we will return to questions about the possibility of objective knowledge, and consider Standpoint Epistemology, which emphasises the epistemic significance of our situated perspectives, and the relevance of an individual's experience and social identity to their epistemic agency.	

PART 2: Social Epistemology (A/Prof Mark Alfano)

In the second half of the unit, we will explore Social Epistemology, which is based on the idea that to understand knowledge we need to go beyond the individual and consider the social role of the concept of knowledge and our epistemic practices, and how our knowledge is a function of our relations with others. We will also explore how social and political inequalities and power relations are connected with distinctively epistemic forms of injustice, and consider what we might do about it.

Week 7 (w/b 4/9)	**Social Epistemology** This week introduces social epistemology and Goldman's question about how to trust which experts.	*Reflective Task (Part 2) due Sunday 10/9*
	Mid-semester break, 11/9 – 24/9	
Week 8 (w/b 25/9)	**Social networks** This week continues the exploration of social epistemology and asks under what conditions it makes sense to trust scientists.	
Week 9 (w/b 2/10)	**Misinformation and Conspiracy Theories** This week continues the exploration of social epistemology through the ways in which misinformation spreads in social networks. We will also examine the epistemology of conspiracy theories.	
Week 10 (w/b 9/10)	**Social Epistemology and Virtue Epistemology** This week explores the relationship between social epistemology and virtue epistemology	*Essay preparation task due Sunday 15/10*
Week 11 (w/b 16/10)	**Epistemic Injustice** This week we will introduce the concept of Epistemic Injustice: a distinctive form of injustice that may undermine a person's ability to engage in society as an epistemic agent.	
Week 12 (w/b 23/10)	**Language and Power** This week, we'll consider how both the use of language and the suppression of language may lead to injustice.	*No tutorials/ assessed discussion this week*

Week 13 (w/b 30/10)	*Essay writing week: No classes*	*Essay due Sunday 5/11*

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Progression Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Fitness to Practice Procedure
- Assessment Procedure
- Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public
- Special Consideration Policy

Students seeking more policy resources can visit Student Policies (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the search tool.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct

Results

Results published on platform other than eStudent, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe academic integrity – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free online writing and maths support, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

The Writing Centre

The Writing Centre provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- Workshops
- Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader
- Access StudyWISE
- Upload an assignment to Studiosity
- Complete the Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support
- Accessibility and disability support with study
- Mental health support
- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via AskMQ, or contact Service Connect.

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
11/07/2023	Extension of due date for quizzes