

University of Central Oklahoma
College of Liberal Arts
Department of Humanities & Philosophy
Summer 2021

PHIL 3990: Vice Epistemology

CRN:

Time: Arranged

Instructor: Dr. Jerry Green

Email: jgreen67@uco.edu

Phone: 405.974.5612

Office: Liberal Arts 204C

Office Hours: T,Th 9:30AM-11:00AM; W 3:00-5:00PM (and by appointment)

Course Description:

This course focuses on vice epistemology. After a brief survey of virtue epistemology, we will examine what characterizes a bad epistemic disposition, and look at specific examples of epistemic vices. We will then discuss the epistemic vices that correspond to the virtues of curiosity and inquisitiveness.

Course Objectives: Students will seek to answer, using critical reasoning, a series of questions about the issues as raised by the course readings. In addition, students will engage in sustained discussion of these issues in order to better understand the material and to better articulate their own perspectives on the topics. The following are the outcomes a successful student will attain by the end of this course: (1) identify and define key philosophical terms studied in the course, (2) identify major points and arguments of various philosophic essays, (3) critically analyze and evaluate philosophic arguments, and (4) provide rationally persuasive arguments in defense of their own beliefs about a variety of controversial issues in philosophy.

Student Learning Objectives:

- 1) Students will continue the process of developing ethical and critical thinking skills necessary for interpreting the self in relation to culture and society.
- 2) Students will read, analyze, and synthesize major texts from the history of philosophy and communicate about them in writing.
- 3) Students will analyze, appraise, and formally symbolize arguments.

Transformational Learning Outcomes: The University of Central Oklahoma is a learning-centered organization committed to Transformative education through active engagement in the teaching-learning interchange, scholarly and creative pursuits, leadership, global competency, healthy lifestyles, and service to others. Transformative learning goals (the “Central Six”) have been identified as: *Discipline Knowledge*, *Leadership*, *Research*, *Scholarly and Creative Activities*, *Service Learning and Civic Engagement*, *Global and Cultural Competencies*, and *Health and Wellness*.

This course addresses four of the University’s transformative learning goals:

Discipline Knowledge, by investigating some core questions and subfields of philosophy

Leadership, by performing a sustained investigation of the ethical and epistemological features of interpersonal relations

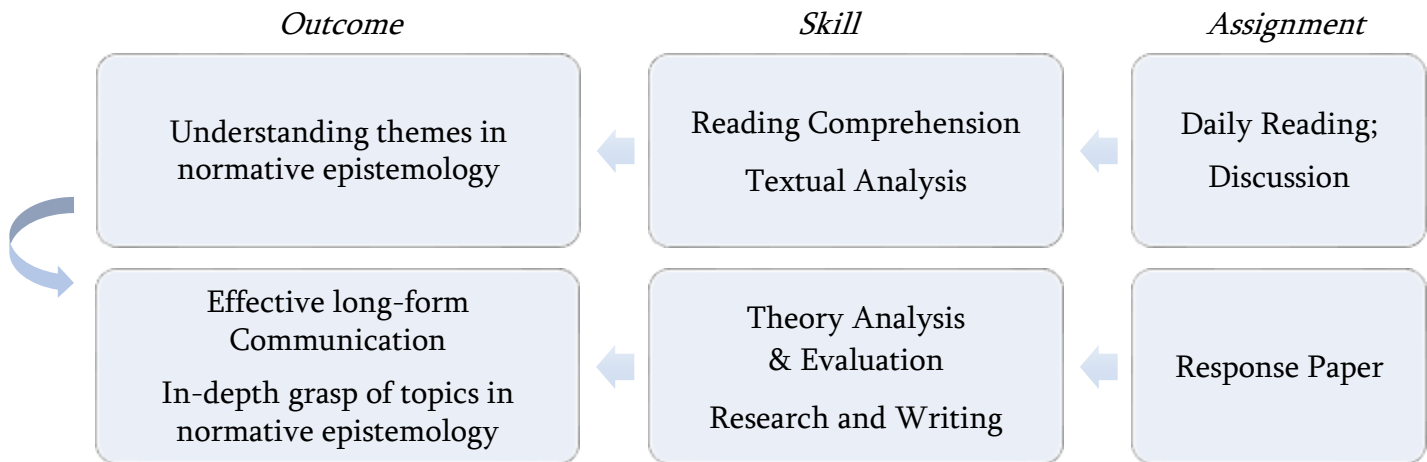
Course Materials

We will focus mostly on peer-reviewed journal articles, accessible through the library website. I will also post the occasional book chapter as a pdf on D2L.

Other Resources

[Guide for Reading Philosophy](#) (Jim Pryor, NYU) [Guide for Writing Philosophy](#) (Jim Pryor, NYU)
[Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) (various) [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) (various)

Assignments & Learning Outcomes



Reading

This course will be reading-intensive. We will cover a significant amount of very difficult material in a relatively short time.

Meetings

This class will be run as a tutorial, which means that individual student preparation and discussion is very important. It is the student's responsibility to lead the bulk of conversation in each meeting.

Writing

The primary task of this course is to write a 3-5 pp paper, of the format and quality sufficient for presenting at a student research conference. This paper will be in the conference commentary/response format, where the task is to point out specific flaws, shortcomings, or omissions in a longer work on the topic of vice epistemology.

Grades

There are two components to the grade for this course:

Participation: 10%

Paper: 90%

Thesis: 10%

Outline: 10%

First Draft: 20%

Final Draft: 60%

Participation means both regularly attending scheduled discussion sessions *and* being prepared to take the lead on a lengthy, in-depth conversation about the day's material. This course will run more as a tutorial than a lecture, so it is the student's responsibility to make discussion sessions worthwhile.

Academic Honesty

Given that much of this course is devoted to intellectual and moral virtues, it should be no surprise that it also has high standards for academic conduct. You are expected to consult and understand the University's Academic Dishonesty Policy (<http://sites.uco.edu/academic-affairs/files/aa-forms/StudentInfoSheet.pdf>); participation in this class constitutes an agreement to follow this policy.

My own policy is this: it is always better to ask for help than to cheat. Always. Cheating takes more work, with worse results, than simply attempting the assignment, even if you phone it in. If you are confused at any point about whether something constitutes academic dishonesty, ask. I am here to help. However, if you are caught engaging in academic misconduct, I will pursue whatever maximum penalties the University may apply, from a 0 to an assignment to an F for the course to expulsion from the University. Don't try it.

Note that UCO subscribes to the Turnitin.com plagiarism prevention service. Students, by taking this course, agree that all required assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com restricted access reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such assignments. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com website. Turnitin.com is just one of the various plagiarism prevention tools and methods that may be utilized by your instructor during the semester. The UCO Student Handbook describes the process for contesting allegations of plagiarism.

Tech Policy

Computers, tablets, e-readers, etc., will not be allowed during class time. I know it sounds paternalistic (it is) and lame (it isn't), but computers in class do [much more harm than good](#).

Three main reasons for this policy:

- 1) You might think you can multi-task well. [You are incorrect](#). Even if you were miraculously among the 2% of good multi-taskers, you would still distract those around you.
- 2) Electronic texts are much [less effective](#) than paper for the kind of reading we'll be doing.
- 3) [It is well-documented that taking](#) notes by hand is much more effective than typing. If you want a digital version of your notes, scan them or, better, type them out after class.

So, unless you have an accommodation from DSS (see below), no electronic devices in class.

Reasonable Accommodations Policy

Any student who needs extra time or resources to do their best work due to a physical, cognitive or emotional condition may qualify for academic accommodations. You should consult Disability Support Services for further information: <http://sites.uco.edu/student-affairs/dss/>

The University of Central Oklahoma complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations must make their requests by contacting Disability Support Services, at (405) 974-2516 (V/TTY). The DSS Office is located in the Nigh University Center, Room 305. Students should also notify the instructor of special accommodation needs as soon as possible.

A bit of advice: *do not let shyness or embarrassment or pride stop you from getting the services you deserve*. I've seen too many students allow their grades to suffer because they didn't speak up to claim the accommodations they were entitled to. I will do everything I can to make sure that your accommodations stay between you, me, and DSS.

Title IX

The University of Central Oklahoma complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations must make their requests by contacting Disability Support Services, at (405) 974-2516. The DSS Office is located in the Nigh University Center, Room 305. Students should also notify the instructor of special accommodation needs as soon as possible. Per Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), pregnant and parenting students may request adjustments by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, at (405) 974-3377 or TitleIX@uco.edu. The Title IX Office is located in the Lillard Administration Building, Room 114D. For more information about your options, including reporting and confidential resources, please visit:

<http://www.uco.edu/central/title-ix/index.asp>.

Physical and Mental Health

College can be a very stressful time, emotionally, socially, and academically. You don’t have to face these stresses alone. There are numerous resources on campus to help, including:

<http://sites.uco.edu/student-affairs/scc/>

<http://sites.uco.edu/wellness/shc/>

Student Information Sheet

More important info here: <http://sites.uco.edu/academic-affairs/files/aa-forms/StudentInfoSheet.pdf>

Schedule (Subject to Revision)

Week 1: Virtue Epistemology

- Baehr (2018). “The Four Dimensions of Intellectual Virtue”
- Battaly (2012). “Virtue Epistemology”
- Kvanvig (1992). *The Intellectual Virtues and the Life of the Mind*, Chs. 1 & 3
- Montmarquet (1992). “Epistemic Virtue and Doxastic Responsibility”
- Zagzebski (2018). “Intellectual Virtues: Admirable Traits of Character”

Week 2: Vice Epistemology

- Baehr (forthcoming). “The Structure of Intellectual Vices”
- (2010). “Epistemic Malevolence”
- Battaly (2014). “Varieties of Epistemic Vice”
- Cassam (2018). “Epistemic Insouciance”
- (2016). “Vice Epistemology”
- Kidd (2018). “Deep Epistemic Vices”
- (2016). “Charging Others with Epistemic Vice”
- (2015). “Capital Epistemic Vices”

Week 3: Curiosity & Inquisitiveness

- Watson, Lani (forthcoming). “Vices of Questioning in Public Discourse”
- (2018b). “Curiosity and Inquisitiveness”
- (2018c). “What is a question?”
- (2015). “What is Inquisitiveness.”

Week 4: Epistemic Vice

- Christnot-Peters (2019). “Trolls are Now ‘Sealioning’ Scientists on Social Media - But What Does it Mean?”
- Green (unpublished). “Sealioning as an Epistemic Vice”
- Johnson (2017). “The Multiple Harms of Sea Lions”
- Shepherd (2019) “‘Sealioning’ is a Common Trolling Tactic on Social Media - What is it?”
- Tegiminis (2014). “Why Sealioning is Bad”

Final Paper Due: Wed, June 30th