

# University of London MA Philosophy. 2001-2002

## Overall Course Schedule for Epistemology and Methodology

**Day:** *Tuesday*      **Time:** *11am*      **Place:** *Seminar room, UCL*

**Convenor:** *Scott Sturgeon*

### ***Aims of Course***

To acquaint students with philosophically puzzling aspects of knowledge and its acquisition. The course covers everyday knowledge as well as that gained by scientific activity.

### ***Objectives:***

Students who complete the course satisfactorily will

- be able to explain and assess key positions concerning the nature of knowledge, internalism and externalism, and quantified epistemology;
- state and analyse arguments concerning said topics, writing in their own voice.

P.T.O for Course Schedule

## **Course Schedule**

**Term 1:**      ***Scott Sturgeon***      ***s.sturgeon@bbk.ac.uk***

Week 1: Introduction. Various types of knowledge. Necessary and sufficient conditions. Theories, thought experiments and counter-examples. The JTB view in outline. Primary reading: §§1-3 of my

"Knowledge" in Philosophy: guide through the subject; edited by A.Grayling. Secondary reading: §2.1 of Jonathan Dancy's Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology.

Week 2: Fallibilism and Infallibilism. Scope distinctions: necessity-of-the-consequence versus necessity-of-the-consequent. The Gettier Problem. Primary reading: §4 of "Knowledge"; and §§2.2-2.4 of Dancy. Secondary reading: §§5.1-5.4 of Ralph Baergen's Contemporary Epistemology.

Week 3: Internalism vs. Externalism and Foundationalism vs. Coherentism. The four possibilities. Strengths and weaknesses of each. Primary reading: §§1.5-1.7 of "Knowledge". Secondary reading: Chapters 4 and 8 of Dancy, and E.Sosa's "The raft and the pyramid", in Blackwell's Epistemology: an anthology.

Week 4: Externalism 1: Reliabilism. Process vs. Content. Strengths and weaknesses. Primary reading: §1.8 of "Knowledge" and Goldman's "What is Justified Belief?" in the Blackwell anthology. Secondary reading: Chapter 4 of Baergen.

Week 5: Externalism 2: Tracking. The theory and its metaphysics. The theory and skepticism. Primary reading: Chapter 3 of Dancy. Secondary reading: part 2 of Nozick's Philosophical Explanations.

## **READING WEEK**

Week 6: Three types of perceptual experience. An epistemic and phenomenal constraint on theory. Disjunctivism, intentionalism and sense-data theories. Primary reading: §§1.1-1.2 of my Matters of Mind; and §§2.1-2.3.1 of Mike Martin's "Perception", in the Grayling.

Week 7: Strengths and weaknesses of disjunctivism, intentionalism and sense-data theories. Primary reading: §1.3, 1.6 and 1.7 of Matters of

Mind; §§2.3.2-2.3.4 of Martin's "Perception", in the Grayling. Secondary reading: chapters 10 and 11 of Dancy; chapter 7 of Baergen.

Week 8: Quantified epistemology: statics. Credence and probability. The Partition Principle. Dutch books. Primary reading: Dorothy Edgington's "The Logic of Uncertainty" (which I'll make available). Secondary reading: §4.5 of David Papineau's "Methodology", in the Grayling; and §1.3 of John Worrall's "Philosophy and the Natural Sciences", in volume 2 of Grayling.

Week 9: Quantified epistemology: dynamics. Conditionalization and Jeffrey. Learning from experience? Primary reading: §4.7 of Papineau's "Methodology" and §1.3 of Worrall's "Phil. and the NS"

Week 10: Quantified epistemology: conditionality. Truth conditions and triviality. Readings: a handout to be provided in advance if it looks like we'll have time for the topic.

**Term 2: Ken Gemes [k.gemes@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:k.gemes@bbk.ac.uk)**

All primary readings and those secondary reading marked with an '\*' are available in course packet. The course packet will be available from December 1<sup>st</sup>. To arrange pick-up of a packet contact Ken Gemes at [k.gemes@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:k.gemes@bbk.ac.uk). Students will be expected to have done the reading for week 1.

Week 1: Induction Aim: To examine the question of if, and how, on the basis of our limited experience we can come to knowledge of things as yet not experienced. Primary Reading: W. Salmon, *Foundations of Scientific Inference*, pp. 5-25 Secondary Reading: D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Book I, Part III, Sections VI and XII

Week 2: Goodman's Paradox Aim: To examine the ramifications of

Goodman's new Riddle of Induction Primary Reading: K. Gemes, "The World in Itself: Neither Uniform or Physical" Secondary Reading: N. Goodman, *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast*, Chapter 3 and 4

Week 3: Hempel's Paradox Aim: To examine the ramifications of Hempel's Raven paradox. Primary Reading: C. Hempel, "Studies in the Logic of Confirmation"

Week 4: Demarcation Dispute I: Positivism Aim: To examine the controversy over the question of how we are to separate pseudo-science/metaphysics from science Primary Reading: C. Hempel, "Empiricist Criteria of Cognitive Significance" Secondary Reading: K. Gemes, "Logical Content and Empirical Significance"\*

Week 5: Demarcation Dispute II: Popper Aim: To examine Popper's deductivist attempt to answer the Demarcation question. Primary Reading: K. Popper, *Logic of Scientific Discovery*, pp.40-42; *Conjectures and Refutations*, pp.33-65, *Objective Knowledge*, pp.17-21 Secondary Reading: W. Salmon, "Rational Prediction"\*

## **READING WEEK**

Week 6: Laws & Explanation Aim: To examine the question of what makes for a good scientific explanation, in particular whether such explanations need to invoke the notion of laws of nature. Primary Reading: C. Hempel, *Philosophy of Natural Science*, pp. 47-58 W. Salmon, *Scientific Explanation and The Causal Structure of the World*, p. 1-20

Week 7: Scientific Realism, Instrumentalist, Constructive Empiricism Aim: To examine the question of how scientific theories are to be interpreted. Are they the literal truth or merely useful instruments for making predictions? Primary Reading: W. Quine, "Posits and Reality" B.

Van Fraassen, *The Scientific Image*, pp. 1-25 Secondary Reading: R. Boyd, "The Current State of Scientific Realism"\*

Week 8: Objectivity and Subjectivity in Science Aim: To examine to what extent theory choice is determined by subjective and social, rather than objective, factors. Primary Reading: N. Hanson, "Observation" T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Postscript Secondary Reading: T. Kuhn, *The Essential Tension*, Chapter 13, "Objectivity, Value Judgment and Theory Choice"\*

Week 9: The Unity of Science Aim: To examine how various domains of knowledge interrelate. Primary Reading: H. Putnam & P. Oppenheim, "The Unity of Science as a working Hypothesis". J. Fodor, "Special Sciences".

Week 10: Summation & Review of Major Themes No Readings