

180002-EN1 EPISTEMOLOGY AND MATHEMATICS-MOD1 **ALEXANDER BIRD**

Prerequisites	First part of 180002-EN1 EPISTEMOLOGY AND MATHEMATICS-MOD1, delivered by Prof. Tommaso Piazza
Educational goals	<p>Overview: <u>Topics in epistemology</u> The course considers several topics in contemporary epistemology: Evidence and Evidentialism, Social Epistemology, Justification, Empiricism, and Epistemic Probability. A running theme will be knowledge-first epistemology and its responses to these questions.</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding: Students will be expected to acquire essential knowledge about some of the major philosophical problems concerning belief and knowledge.</p> <p>Use of knowledge and understanding: The course will provide students with tools for the application of rigorous methods of reasoning in diverse circumstances, with particular attention to the normative assessment of belief.</p> <p>Ability to draw conclusions: The course will emphasize the relevance of accurate argumentation and the application of logical and formal tools to correct reasoning in epistemology.</p> <p>Communication skills: Strong emphasis will be placed on the capacity to discuss theoretical problems clearly and systematically, and to motivate through rigorous arguments one's point of view.</p> <p>Ability to learn: Independent elaboration of the material presented in class will be encouraged. Knowledge acquisition will be facilitated through class discussions.</p>
Course content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evidence and Evidentialism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidentialism and its critics • Evidence and knowledge (knowledge-first, E=K) 2. Social Epistemology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testimony, reductive and anti-reductive approaches • Group knowledge 3. Justification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does justification have a structure? (Coherentism, foundationalism, reliabilism, internalism v. externalism) • Knowledge-first approaches to justification 4. Empiricism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is empiricism? History of empiricism, empiricism v. rationalism • Criticism of empiricism. Can there be empirical knowledge without empiricism? 5. Knowledge-first <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is knowledge-first? • Naturalistic knowledge-first 6. Duhem's Thesis, underdetermination, and philosophy of science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are Duhem's Thesis and Quine's Thesis? • The knowledge response
Teaching methods	<p>6 x 3 hours sessions (3 sessions per week)</p> <p>Each session in two halves corresponding to the sub-topics above under 'Course content'.</p>

	Teaching will be delivered by a combination of lecture and seminar-style discussion.
Assessment and Evaluation	Assessment will be by oral examination on the basis of a prepared presentation and questions, to be examined by Zoom or similar video-conferencing.
Further information	Alexander Bird email: ajb368@cam.ac.uk webpage for course materials: http://www.alexanderbird.org/page3.html or QR code 