

PHIL 3380: Feminist Philosophy of Science

Monday/Wednesday 8:05-9:25AM

GC 5620

Hannah Allen

Department of Philosophy

Feminism and philosophy of science have been involved since the late 20th century, when philosophers of science turned a critical eye on traditional concepts of the nature of scientific knowledge, scientific objectivity and the scientific method. Feminist philosophers of science point out that women have traditionally been excluded from scientific inquiry and institutions, which reinforces existing social hierarchies. They suggest diverse accounts of how to overcome such hierarchies, and engage such questions as: how does objective knowledge relate to actual human and scientific practice? Is objective knowledge possible? What is the relationship between knowledge and gender? How does science contribute to existing social hierarchies? Answering these questions invoke responses from philosophers in a variety of areas, including philosophy of science, philosophy of biology, epistemology, and naturalism, among others. This course will survey these contributions and discuss influential works in the areas noted above. Key topics include: objectivity, feminist standpoint theory, epistemic injustice and the role of values in scientific inquiry.

Contact Information:

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Office Hours: Monday 12-2PM (CTIHB 405) and by appointment.

Required texts:

1. Kourany, J. (2010) *Philosophy of Science After Feminism*. Oxford University Press.
2. Longino, H. (1990) *Science as Social Knowledge: Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry*. Princeton University Press.

All other course materials are linked from the 'Syllabus' page on Canvas.

Course Outcomes: At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- understand key ideas, arguments, and achievements of feminist philosophy of science
- connect scientific methods to philosophical commitments and broader social implications
- write clear and concise arguments incorporating the points above
- apply ideas in the course to their experiences and daily life
- improve general skills in reading comprehension, reasoning, and argument

Teaching and Learning Methods: Lecture and discussion, with some small-group work. Students

are expected to read assigned texts carefully before class, and come to class meetings prepared to discuss key issues and ideas. Course outcomes will be achieved by individual reflection, followed by discussion, and then articulation of ideas in writing. Assignments are structured so students build up to more difficult projects later in the semester.

Requirements and Grading.

1. Participation (20%): Participation in this class includes arriving on time, contributing to class discussion, and participating in various class exercises and activities. Thoughtful participation in class discussions is an important component of this course. Please come to each meeting prepared to discuss the assigned readings. If you have to miss a class meeting for reasons beyond your control (i.e. excused absence), then makeup options will be made available upon request.
2. Weekly reflections (30%) Weekly reflections are scheduled every week (due by the class period in which we discuss the reading you are covering (see 'Class Schedule' for details). These are designed to enhance your understanding of key points in an assigned reading or to help you prepare for a class activity and/or paper assignment. These will be assigned weekly but only 12 count toward your final grade.
3. Paper 1 (15%): 5-7 pages, typewritten and double-spaced in a 12-point font on a key issue from course readings and discussion from the first half of the semester. More details on writing a successful philosophy paper will be provided in class.
4. Lead a discussion (10%): One presentation (~10 minutes) on an assigned article or chapter. Presentations will take place at the beginning of class, followed by general discussion. Signups for presentations will be during the second and third week of classes. Your presentation should (1) summarize the main points of the assigned text, (2) pick out one or two key concepts or arguments to examine, and (3) conclude with questions or objections, leading into a short Q&A. Before you present, you'll meet with the professor to discuss the material, ideas for your presentation, and grading rubric.
5. Final Project (25%): 7-10 pages, typewritten and double-spaced in a 12-point font on a key issue from course readings and discussion. Topics will be at your choice, but you must run your proposal by me first. (5% total of this 25% will encompass your project proposal and presentation).

Grading scale: The grading scale for this course is as follows:

A = 93-100

A- = 92-90

B+ = 89-87

B = 86-83

B- = 82-80

C+ = 79-77

C = 76-73

C- = 72-70

D+ = 69-67

D = 66-63

D- = 62-60

F = 59-0

Each requirement contributes a number of points toward the overall grade, corresponding to the percentage stated (max total=100). No curve.

Class Policies

Classroom Civility Statement: We will be covering controversial topics in the class—racism, sexism, the sources of inequality, our own implicit biases. It is essential that we maintain a safe and constructive classroom environment, where students with a variety of different perspectives can feel comfortable sharing their ideas and reasons for those ideas. Please be respectful, both as a speaker and a listener. We will provide optional discussion boards for a chance to engage the course material. Give classmates the benefit of the doubt (especially if they are saying something with which you do not agree). Feel free to ask for clarifications, reasons, unstated assumptions, and evidence. Be constructive.

Dates/Deadlines: The paper deadlines are strict; late papers will receive point deductions of a half letter grade per day. If you are unable to complete any one of the assignments on time, a typed explanation with appropriate documentation must be given to us before or within one week after the deadlines. Discussions will be opened Monday of every week and closed the following Sunday. To receive full credit on the discussion posts, you must complete one original post and one response to a peer.

Cheating/Plagiarism: Students are responsible for knowing and understanding the University's Code of Conduct as it pertains to plagiarism: <http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html>. In short, when you draw upon any source (class notes, an article, a website, a textbook, etc.), you must cite that source whether you are quoting from it directly or only paraphrasing it. The basic idea here is that you can draw on someone else's idea(s), but you cannot spin someone else's idea(s) as your own. Any Paper with evidence of plagiarism will be assigned a zero, and the student's action will be reported to the Dean.

Disability Services: The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability and Access, 162 Olpin Union Building, 801.581.5020 (V/TDD). CDA will work with you and the professor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the CDA.

University Safety Statement: The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.

Addressing Sexual Misconduct: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other

protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

Wellness Statement: Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness at www.wellness.utah.edu or 801-581-7776.

Resource Centers: If you are a student veteran, the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center located in Room 161 in the Oplin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.

If you are a member of the LGBTQ community, we want you to know that our classroom is a safe zone*.

Additionally, the U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Oplin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: <http://lgbt.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if there is any additional support you need in this class.

If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language and writing development. These resources include: the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu/>); the Writing Program (<http://writing-program.utah.edu/>); the English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli/>). Please let us know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.

Course Schedule:

NB: This is subject to change. All of it.

Unit I: Feminism, Objectivity and Values in Science

Week 1 What is the feminist philosophy of science?

Monday, August 22: Course Introduction

Wednesday, August 24: Background, Values in Science

- Kourany, Chapter 1 (p. 3-14)
- Longino, Chapter 1 (p. 3-12)

Week 2 Feminism, Objectivity, and Values

Monday, August 29: Assessing Objectivity

- Daston, excerpt from “Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective” (Canvas)
- Longino, Chapter 3 (p. 38-48; 58-60)

Wednesday, August 31: Longino’s Norms for Objectivity

- Longino, Chapter 4 (p. 62-82)
- **Philosophy Presentation How-To**

Week 3 Feminism, Objectivity, and Values, ctd

Monday, September 5 (Labor Day): No class

Wednesday, September 7: Assessing Longino’s Norms for Objectivity

- Longino, Chapter 8 (p. 162-176)

Week 4 Feminism, Objectivity, and Values (Conclusion)

Monday, September 12: Responses to Longino

- Kourany, Chapter 3 (p. 49-68)

Wednesday, September 14: Concluding Thoughts on Longino

- Longino, Chapter 10 (p. 215-232)

Unit II: Standpoint Epistemology

Week 5 Introduction to Feminist Standpoint Epistemology

Monday, September 19

- Wylie, “Why Standpoint matters” (Canvas)
- **Philosophy Paper How-To**

Wednesday, September 21

- Collins, “Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought” (Canvas)

Week 6 Epistemology and Trust

Monday, September 26

- Lindemann Nelson, “Knowledge at the Bedside: A Feminist View of What's Happening with This Patient” (Canvas)

Wednesday, September 28

- Rolin, “Trust in Science” (Canvas)

Week 7 Epistemic Injustice and Testimony

Monday, October 3

- Wayne, “Walking a Tightrope: The Feminist Life of a Drosophila Biologist” (Canvas)
- Kourany ‘The empiricist ideal of science’ (pages 63-68)

Wednesday, October 5

- Grasswick, “Epistemic Injustice in Science” (Canvas)
- **Paper 1 Due by Friday, Oct. 7, 2022**

Week 8 - Fall Break

Monday, October 10 - Fall Break, no class

Wednesday, October 12 - Fall Break, no class

Unit III: Epistemic Harms and the Death of Nature

Week 9 Applications of Epistemic Injustice

Monday, October 17

- Polhaus, “Epistemic Agency Under Oppression” (Canvas)
- Kourany, “The Methodological Approach” (p. 50-54)

Wednesday, October 19

- Merchant, “Dominion Over Nature” (Canvas)

Week 10 Applications of Epistemic Injustice, ctd

Monday, October 24

- Merchant, “Mechanism as Power” (Canvas)

Wednesday, October 26

- Gaard, “Tools for a Cross-Cultural Feminist Ethics” (Canvas)

Week 11 Looking Toward the Future

Monday, October 31

- Kourany, Chapter 5 (p.105-128)

Wednesday, November 2

- Shiva, “Solutions to the food and ecological crisis facing us today”;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ER5ZZk5atIE>

Unit IV: Socially Responsible (Philosophy of) Science

Week 12 Socially Responsible Science

Monday, November 7

- Kourany ‘The ideal of socially-responsible science’ (pages 68-77) and ‘The political challenge’ (pages 100-104)

Wednesday, November 9

- Douglas, “Inductive Risk and Values in Science” (Canvas)
- **Final Paper Proposal Due by 11/11 by 11:59PM**

Week 13 Citizen Science and Access to Information

Monday, November 14

- Plutynski, “Safe or Sorry? Cancer Screening and Inductive Risk” (Canvas)

Wednesday, November 16

- Ottinger, “Making Sense of Citizen Science” (Canvas)

Week 14 Algorithmic Bias

Monday, November 21

- Adams, “Feminist AI Projects and Cyberfutures” (Canvas)

Wednesday, November 23

- Benjamin, “Assessing Risk, Automating Racism” (Canvas)
- Buolamwini, TED Talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UG_X_7g63rY

Week 15 Meta-Philosophy

Monday, November 28

- Harding, “Is there a Feminist Method?” (Canvas)

Wednesday, November 30

- Dotson, “How is this Paper Philosophy?” (Canvas)

Week 16 Wrap Up and Final Paper Presentations

Monday, December 5

- Final Paper Presentations

Wednesday, December 7

- Final Paper Presentations
- **Final Paper Due Friday, December 16th (by 11:59PM)**