

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND APPLIED ETHICS**

 **STUDENT GUIDE**

**YEAR: 2023**

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| --- | --- |
| **Module Title**  | KNOWLEDGE AND SKEPTICISM |
| **Module Code** | 1PHP212 |
| **Programme in which the module is offered** | 1BDEG7 (B.A.) |
| **Year of offering/****Level of study** | 2023 |
| **SAQA Credits** | 15 |
| **NQF level**  | 6 |
| **Name of Lecturer / Lecturers** | Dr S. Ndlovu |

Date: 19 June 2023

Dear Student

Welcome to the module Knowledge and Scepticism. This module is intended for second year students who have chosen a Major or Minor in Philosophy. In this course students willexplore further the themes initiated in the first year within the context of Epistemology and Scepticism.

You will explore the ideas of Scepticism and Epistemology and their critique in the selected fragments of texts by relevant authors such as, for example, Locke, Descartes, Rousseau, Fanon, Walter Rodney, Mills etc

**Lecturer’s expectations**

You are expected to come to lectures and be actively involved in the activities as guided by lecturer/s. you are encouraged to critically engage with the material, participate in class discussions and contribute to the philosophical dialogue. We also expect you to respect your lecturers and fellow students. Finally, we look forward to working with you this semester.

**Roles and responsibilities of the students**

1. Please, **attend** all classes. We will **not repeat** lectures and, if you miss out, you will have to catch up on your own.
2. Since this is a course **which relies on you being able to think for yourself**, we **do not provide specific notes** or a set book. Your **notes** from lectures will form the main source for revision. You will quickly learn to **listen and take notes** accordingly. Please, always have a pen (preferably more than one, especially during exams) and paper ready.
3. Please, make sure that you have a valid **University email address** as this will be the mode of communication with students.
4. All Lecturers and the Coordinator will have **consultation hours**. However, the Lecturers will not be repeating lectures that you have missed. If you wish to consult, you must come prepared with questions that we can look at.
5. **Respect** for both lecturers and your classmates is of utmost importance, so:
	1. **Avoid activities which are disruptive.**
	2. **Stop** all the private **conversations** as you enter the venue.
	3. Keep your **cell phone** in your bag, **switched off**, for the duration of the class – your **attention in class has to be undivided**.
	4. Feel free to **raise your hand** at any time if you have a question or a comment regarding the lecture or course.
6. Due to the nature of this course,it is important that you **actively participate** in class discussions

## c) CONTACT DETAILS AND CONSULTATION TIMES

Contact : 035 902 6552

E-mail : NdlovuSI@unizulu.ac.za

**Consultation times**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Day of the week** | **Times** | **Venues** |
| Tuesday | 14.00 – 15.30 | Office: 712 (Arts Building) |
|  | 11:00 – 12.30 | Office: 712 |

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# 1 LEARNING COMPONENT

## 1.1 Purpose of the Module

1PHP212 (Knowledge and Skepticism) has the purpose of broadening the students' understanding of philosophy introduced at first year level. It is intended for second year students who have chosen the Major or Minor in Philosophy. Students will explore the themes initiated in the first year within the context of Scepticism and Epistemology.

**1.2** **Module Outcomes**

Present and discuss the selected epistemological theories in an academic manner; Compare and contrast these approaches to knowledge acquisition;appraise the relationship between knowledge and power in Rousseau.

## 1.3 Resources

You will be provided with an electronic course pack. Additional readings may still be required which will be posted on Moodle.

## 1.3 Chapter or Learning Unit breakdown

 **Part A**

**1.3.1 Learning Unit 1:** *Introduction to John Locke*

**Specific Outcomes:**

An understanding of Locke’s empiricist theory to knowledge acquisition.

 **Assessment Criteria:**

Students should demonstrate an understanding of Locke’s empiricism and its implications and limits for the acquisition of knowledge.

**Content:**

* Neither principles nor ideas are innate
* No innate speculative principles
* No innate practical principles
* Other considerations

**Assessment activities:**

A formal written assessment pertaining to Locke’s empiricism and how his categories impact on our understanding of knowledge.

**1.3.2 Learning Unit 2:** *Descartes*

**Specific Outcomes:**

An understanding of Descartes theory of rationalism.

 **Assessment Criteria:**

Students should demonstrate an understanding of Descartes’ epistemology of rationalism not in isolation but in relation to Locke.

**Content:**

* On the essence of material things
* The existence of God
* Truth, eternity and perfection
* Mind and body

**Assessment activities:**

A formal written assessment pertaining to Descartes philosophy and how his concepts impact on our understanding of the world. Students be asked to compare and contrast between Empiricism (Locke) and Rationalism (Descartes).

**PART B**

**1.3.3 Learning Unit 3:** de Sousa Santos*’ Epistemologies of the South, Justice Against Epistemicide.*

**Specific Outcomes:**

Students will be introduced to *de Sousa Santos’* concept of ‘Ecologies of the South’, which espouses a plurality of knowledges as opposed to the monoculture of scientific knowledge in his *Epistemologies of the South, justice against Epistemicide.*

 **Assessment Criteria:**

Students should show an awareness of the knowledge field as something that ought to be plural as opposed to the universalism of Western scientific knowledge.

**Content:**

* Ecologies of knowledges, epistemological plurality, universalism
* Intercultural translation

 **Assessment activities:**

A written assignment pertaining to the concept of Ecologies of the South, particularly in relation to the dominant Western scientific knowledge.

*NB: assessment activities will follow after every section/theme. There will be four assessment activities, each counting 25% overall.*

**1.3.4 Learning Unit 4:** *J-J**Rousseau and the Discourse on Inequality*

**Specific Outcomes**:

An understanding of Rousseau’s idea of the nature and causes of Inequality

 **Assessment Criteria:**

Students should demonstrate an understanding of Rousseau’s formulation of the concept of inequality in modern man, tracing and locating it in the state of nature. Students may be tested in their ability to make sense of today’s neo-liberal societies by making use of Rousseau analyses.

**Content:**

* On the Origin and foundation of inequality
* The state of nature
* Modern man and inequality

**Assessment activities:**

A formal written assessment pertaining to Rousseau’s concept of inequality.

##  2. Assessment Requirements

## 2.1 Rules and requirements during assessment activities

* Students will not be allowed to leave the venue while an assessment is being conducted.
* Plagiarism is a serious offence, and disciplinary action will be taken should a student be found guilty.

## 2.2 Assignment and project details

(a) All assignment must be typed out as follow:

* Arial to be used.
* Use 12 Point font,
* 1.5 line spacing,
* Insert Page numbers.
* Use the university approved assignment front page as provided in **Annexure A**, this should reflect your personal information.
* Make provision for a table of contents.
* Reference all sources that you use

**2.3 Rules for submitting assignments and projects**

**(a) Typing**

All students are encouraged to submit typed assignments.

**(b) Technicalities**

This involves the following:

* Giving appropriate topic to your assignment.
* Page numbering
* Correct numbering of headings
* Justification or alignment- recommended is full
* Spacing – recommended is 1.5.
* Font size recommended is 12
* Arrangement of paragraphs
* Referencing
* Acknowledgment of authors in the assignment e.g. Brille (2003) asserts that ……… or Brille (2003: 17) maintains: “……………”

**(c) Assignment Arrangement and Outlook**

* The outlook of your cover page with all the necessary information like your personal information, topic of the assignment, correct name of the module, lecturer offering the module, date of submission etc.
* Assessment Table Page
* Table of Contents
* Text Arrangement

**(d) Originality**

Students will be assessed in terms of the following:

* Formulation of the assignment topic.
* Introducing the topic to be tackled
* Formulation of headings and subheadings

**PLAGIARISM IS HIGHLY DISCOURAGED**. In writing assignments, students are discouraged in using the first person e.g. “Ï” or “we”. It is recommended that one can say: ‘This paper will…”; or “This assignment will…”

**(e) Coherence**

A good assignment is characterized by the logical flow of thoughts from one sentence to another and from one paragraph to another etc. In some cases you have to show how the paragraph is related to the main topic.

**(f) Reference List/ Bibliography**

At the end of an assignment you should give a list of all the sources you have referred to. Your reference list/bibliography must provide full and accurate details, as it is the means by which the reader can follow up your sources.

Please acquaint yourselves with the correct method of referencing. There are two crucial rules that relates to referencing when it comes to the Department of Philosophy and Ethics. The rules as adapted from

<http://www.canberra.edu.au/studyskills/writing/sources>(2013) are as follows:

# 3 READINGS

An Introduction into *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* by John Locke

*Meditations on First Philosophy with Selections from the Objections and Replies by* Rene Descartes.

*A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* by Jean Jacques Rousseau

*Ecologies of the South – Justice Against Epistemicide* by Boaventurade de Sousa Santos

## 3.1 Additional readings

*Creolising Rousseau,* edited byJ.A. Gordon and N. Roberts

Further readings will be posted on Moodle

# ANNEXURE A



**FINAL%**

**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND APPLIED ETHICS**

**ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MODULE TITLE |  |
| MODULE CODE |  |
| ASSIGNMENT TOPIC |  |
| LECTURER NAME |  |
| DUE DATE |  |
| **NON - PLAGIARISM DECLARATION** I know that plagiarism means taking and using the ideas, writings, works or inventions of another as if they were one’s own. I know that plagiarism not only includes verbatim copying, but also the extensive use of another person’s ideas without proper acknowledgement (which includes the proper use of quotation marks). I know that plagiarism covers this sort of use of material found in textual sources and from the Internet. I acknowledge and understand that plagiarism is wrong. I understand that my research must be accurately referenced. I have followed the rules and conventions concerning referencing, citation and the use of quotations as set out in the Departmental Guide. This assignment is my own work, or my group’s own unique group assignment. I acknowledge that copying someone else’s assignment, or part of it, is wrong, and that submitting identical work to others constitutes a form of plagiarism. I have not allowed, nor will I in the future allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as their own work. By signing this cover sheet, I agree that I have read and understood the above. I acknowledge that should it be found to be higher than the acceptable similarity percentage, I may receive 0 (ZERO) for my assignment. |
| STUDENT NAME | STUDENT NO | SIGNATURE |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| LECTURER REMARKS |  |