Epistemology: Western

SEMESTER I
(AS PER CBCS AND NEP 2020)

PHILOSOPHY

SURYA KUMAR BHUYAN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

This course deals with Epistemology-Western, which is an important branch of Philosophy. It is concerned with the science of knowledge and discusses the issues like nature and scope of knowledge, origin of knowledge, sources of knowledge, theories of knowledge etc.

Epistemology or the theory of knowing is essentially connected with Metaphysics because we cannot start the enquiry of the theory of 'Real' or 'Being' unless and until we already justify our claim and prove by the process of knowing that knowledge of that enquiry is possible. If it is supposed that we cannot know the 'Real' or 'Being', it is meaningless to investigate the nature of Reality. So, the issue of the nature and validity of our knowledge and the enquiry of the nature of Reality or Being are the two aspects of the same enquiry.

This course consists of fifteen units. The first unit starts with "**Scepticism and Knowledge and Its Varieties**". It includes the concepts like Knowledge and its varieties, What is scepticism, The history of scepticism and its varieties

The second unit is ''**Arguments for Scepticism**". The concepts included in this unit are:

Scepticism is a philosophical method, Development of skepticism, Different sense and applications of skepticism, Academic skepticism and Pyrrhonism in ancient period, Skepticism after Rene Descartes, Hume's skepticism, Irrational skepticism, Naturalistic skepticism.

Philosophical skepticism and logical positivism, Philosophical and Scientific skepticism

A. J. Ayer's view. The concepts included in this unit are Zta, Theism and its various types, Polytheism, Henotheism, Monotheism, Deism, and Monism.

The third unit is ''**Ways of Knowing**". It deals with the issues such as Knowledge, JTB definition of knowledge, The theories of epistemic justification, Sources of knowledge, The theories of origin of knowledge: rationalism, empiricism and skepticism

The fourth unit is "**Perceptions**". It basically discusses the concepts like Nature of perception, Different theories of perception, Direct realism, indirect realism, Idealism, Phenomenalism, Perception in Indian philosophy The fifth unit, "Carvaka Epistemology" discusses the concepts like accidentalism and naturalism, the denial of inference, and the denial of the validity of the Vedas.

The Sixth unit is **Knowledge and Belief**". The concepts included in this unit are-

Nature of Knowledge, Nature of Belief, Relation between knowledge and belief-Traditional view.

Knowledge and Belief-Modern view and Difference between knowledge and Belief

The seventh unit is "**Knowledge as Justified True Belief**". The concepts included in this unit are The tripartite theory, Knowledge as justified true belief, The Truth Condition, The Belief Condition, The Justification Condition, Approaches to justification, Kinds of justification, Lightweight knowledge, The Gettier Problem, The No-False-Belief condition, The No-Defeaters condition, Doing without Justification? Reliabilist Theories of Knowledge and Causal Theories of Knowledge

The name of the eighth unit is '**Belief Condition**'. It deals with the issues like Knowing, Knowing in everyday life, Knowing that and knowing how, Believing, Some aspects of belief, Believing that, Traditional development of knowledge and belief, Differences between knowledge and belief, and Relation between knowledge and belief

The name of the ninth unit is '**Theories of Truth**'. It discusses the units like Truth in Philosophy, Correspondence theory of truth, Coherence theory of truth, Pragmatic theory of truth, and Some other important theories of truth

The tenth unit is "**Gettier's Problem**". It deals with the issues such as the standard analysis of Knowledge (JTB), The "Knowing That" and "Knowing How": Distinction, Belief, Belief as a necessary condition for knowledge, The analysis of Beliefs, Truth Necessary condition for knowledge, No Magical Connection between knowledge and truth, Alleged Counter examples to the Necessary of Condition (ii) i.e. truth, Justification: justification as a Necessary Condition for Knowledge, Why Justification Is Necessary for Knowledge, The Nature of Justification, Knowledge and Its Conditions, and Gettier Counter Examples

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The twelfth unit is ""**Problem of the Knowledge of Other Minds**". The concepts included in this unit are Argument from Analogy, Philosophical Behaviourism, Wittgenstein's Linguistic Argument Criteriological Argument, and a Few More Comments

The thirteenth unit is "**Knowledge and Certainty of Cogito**". This unit deals with the issues such as Knowledge and quest for certainty, The role of reason: Rationalism, Descartes method, The method of Mathematics, Intuition and Deduction, Descartes' Methodic doubt, Cogito Ergo sum, and Criticisms

The fourteenth unit is "**Certainty of A Priori Knowledge of Kant**". The concepts covered in this unit are- The problem of synthetic judgement a priori, Synthetic judgement a priori mathematics, Synthetic judgment a priori in physics, Synthetic judgment a priori in metaphysics, Main division of Kant's system, Space and time are a priori percepts, and Criticism

The fifteenth unit is "**Wittgenstein on Certainty**". The issues included in this unit are: the knowledge of General discussion on Certainty, certainties of a world-picture: The Epistemological Investigation of 'on Certainty', and Knowledge and Certainty

While going through this course you will come across some boxes which are put on the left side or right side of the text. These boxes will give us the meanings of some words and concepts within the text. Apart from this, there will be some broad and short questions included under Activity and Check Your Progress in every unit. Activities will increase our thinking capacity because questions put in Activity are not directly derived from the text. But answers to the short questions are put in the section Answers to Check Your Progress. Besides, there are some text-related questions which are put in Model Questions. These questions will help you in selecting and mastering probable topics for the examination so that you can prepare for the examination with confidence.