

Theory of Knowledge

Philosophy 422/522

Spring 2019, Tu Th 2:45–4:05 ED-22

Professor: P.D. Magnus

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Office: HU-257

Campus phone: x2-4223

Office hours: Tu 1:30–2:30, W 11:00–noon

Course texts

Course readings will be available on the Blackboard page for the course. Many of them will come from two book, which are available in the campus Bookstore.

I strongly recommend printing out readings from Blackboard. In general, people do not comprehend as well when they read on-screen as when they read on paper. And having a hard copy will allow you to reference it when we are discussing it in class. Regardless of how much time you plan to spend looking at the readings, it will be time better spent if you have a hard copy.

CDE: Contemporary Debates in Epistemology, 2nd edition ed. Matthias Steup, John Turri, Ernest Sosa; Wiley Blackwell, 2014; ISBN: 0470672099

EI: Epistemic Injustice Miranda Fricker; Oxford UP, 2007; ISBN: 0199570523

Requirements

- three take-home Exams 25%, 25%, 15%

The exam that you do worst on will be weighted for the least.

- rough draft of paper 10 %
- final paper 25%

Undergraduates (registered for 422) will be required to write 5–8 pages on an assigned topic.

Graduate students (registered for 522) will be required to write 10–12 pages on a topic of their choosing.

A rough draft will be due at the beginning of week 12 (apr 16). The paper will be returned to you with comments and the final draft will be due at the last meeting (may 7). You should turn in the rough draft along with the final.

Participation: Participation in class discussion is expected. Exemplary participation in class discussion will add to your grade, up to two-thirds of a letter grade.

Policies

Electronic devices in the classroom: This policy will be discussed and settled upon at the first class meeting.

Late policy: Assignments must either be ready to hand in at the beginning of class on the day they are due or submitted before then. Anything after than point is considered late and will be penalized up to one letter grade per day.

Academic honesty: Students are encouraged to discuss issues from the course with each other and with others outside of class, but they are responsible for their own ideas. Papers should include citations to any works cited or consulted, as well as acknowledgments of helpful interactions.

Absences: Students who will need to miss class for religious observance, away games, or for other scheduled reasons should discuss these issues with the professor at the beginning of the term. If an emergency results in absence, the student should contact the professor as soon as possible. Make-up exams will be given only for documented, excused absences.

Schedule

The following schedule is probably too ambitious. The topics for a given day may change as the term progresses.

Week 1 jan 24

Introduction

Week 2 jan 29,31

General scepticism [read Markosian]

Limited scepticism [read Schwitzgebel]

Week 3 feb 5, 7

The lottery paradox [read Nelkin]

Week 4 feb 12, 14

The Gettier problem [read Gettier, read Zagzebski]

Knowledge and belief [read Myers-Schutz and Schwitzgebel]

Week 5 feb 19, 21

Analysis vs. explication [read Justus]

Epistemic closure [read CDE 2]

FIRST EXAM passed out feb 21, due feb 26

Week 6 feb 26, 28

Contextualism [read CDE ch 3]

Pragmatic encroachment [read CDE ch 4]

Week 7 mar 5, 7

A priori knowledge [read CDE ch 8]

Coherence and foundationalism [read CDE ch 10]

Week 8 mar 12, 14

Permissiveness [read CDE ch 12]

Spring break

Week 9 mar 26, 28

Epistemic injustice [read EI pp. 17–29, 43–108]

Week 10 apr 2, 4

Epistemic injustice, continued [read EI pp. 147–175]

SECOND EXAM passed out apr 4, due apr 9

Week 11 apr 9, 11

The epistemic community [read Kitcher]

Week 12 apr 16, 18

ROUGH DRAFT of paper due apr 16

The epistemic community, revisited [read Heesen]

Week 13 apr 23, 25

To be announced

Week 14 apr 30, may 2

To be announced

Week 15 may 7

Conclusion

FINAL PAPER due and THIRD EXAM passed out at the final class session

THIRD EXAM due by may 16 at 8:00 AM