

Theory of Knowledge

This course will address central questions in epistemology via careful reading of classic 20th-century texts and 21st-century responses. We will explore topics such as skepticism, the nature of justification, foundationalism versus coherentism, internalism versus externalism, reliabilism, closure, contextualism, and the cognitive science of epistemic intuitions and self-knowledge.

Required Texts

All readings available in Course Reader or class website

Course Schedule and Reading List

Weeks 1-3 **Skepticism**

Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, Ch.1, "Appearance and Reality"

Barry Stroud, "The Problem of the External World"

G.E. Moore, "Proof of an External World"

Jim Pryor, "The Skeptic and the Dogmatist"

Jim Pryor, "What's Wrong with Moore's Argument?"

Hilary Putnam, "Brains in a Vat"

Sarah Sawyer, "My Language Disquotes"

Week 4 **Foundationalism versus Coherentism**

Roderick Chisholm, "The Myth of the Given"

Donald Davidson, "A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge"

Weeks 5-6 **Conceptual Analysis of Knowledge**

Edmund Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?"

Alvin Goldman, "A Causal Theory of Knowing"

Linda Zagzebski, "The Inescapability of Gettier Problems"

Week 7 **Externalism versus Internalism**

Robert Nozick, "Knowledge"

Fred Dretske, "Précis of Knowledge and the Flow of Information"

Roderick Chisholm, "The Indispensability of Internal Justification"

Weeks 8-9 **Contextualism**

Keith DeRose, "Contextualism and Knowledge Attributions"

Jane Heal, "Common Knowledge"

Tamar Gendler and John Hawthorne, "The Real Guide to Fake Barns: A Catalogue of Gifts for your Epistemic Enemies"

Patrick Rysiew, "Epistemic Contextualism" (sections 4-6)

Week 10 **Closure**

Gail Stine, "Skepticism, Relevant Alternatives, and Deductive Closure"

Fred Dretske, "Is Knowledge Closed Under Entitlement? The Case against Closure"

Sherrilyn Roush, "Sensitivity and Closure"

Week 11 **Naturalized Epistemology**

W.V.O. Quine, "Epistemology Naturalized"

Jaegwon Kim, "What Is Naturalized Epistemology?"

Hilary Kornblith, "Investigating Knowledge Itself"

Week 12 Cognitive Science of Intuitions and Self-Knowledge

Richard Nisbett and Timothy Wilson, "Telling More than We Can Know"

Asher Koriat, "How Do We Know that We Know?"

Alison Gopnik, *The Philosophical Baby*, selections

Weeks 13-14 Philosophical Responses to Cognitive Science

Eric Schwitzgebel, "The Unreliability of Naïve Introspection"

Hilary Kornblith, "What Reflective Endorsement Cannot Do"

Jonathan Weinberg et al., "Normativity and Epistemic Intuitions"

Jennifer Nagel, "Epistemic Intuitions"

Jennifer Nagel, "Intuitions and Experiments: A Defense of the Case Method in Epistemology"

Stephen Stich, "Different Groups Have Different Epistemic Intuitions? Reply to Jennifer Nagel"

Jennifer Nagel, "Reply to Stich"