

EPISTEMOLOGY

<p><u>Professor</u></p> <p><i>Justin Clarke-Doane</i></p> <p>712B Philosophy Hall Phone: 212 - 854 - 3246 Office Hours: By Appointment jc4345@columbia.edu</p>	<p><u>Teaching Assistants</u></p> <p><i>William McCarthy</i> wkm2105@columbia.edu TA Session: Tuesday 8:10-9pm Office Hours: TBA</p> <p><i>Anthony Joseph (AJ) Marsh</i> ajm2263@columbia.edu TA Session: Tuesday 9:10-10am Office Hours: Tuesday 10-12pm</p>
---	---

Summary

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge, justification, and related topics. What is the difference between knowledge and mere belief? What are beliefs anyway? Can we know anything? If so, can we know anything outside of our own minds? What makes scientific inference justified? In what ways can the justification of our beliefs be upset? Should the pervasive fact of disagreement lead us to be less confident in our convictions? What about the realization that our beliefs reflect our peculiar backgrounds and upbringings? What is the nature of such questions? Are there independent facts about what counts as knowledge, justification, and so forth out there to be discovered? If not, then what is at issue when we dispute such things?

Meeting Details

The class meets on **MW 6:10pm-7:25pm** in **702 Hamilton Hall**.

Requirements

Participation will constitute **20%** of your grade. This involves completing the assigned reading ahead of class, and participating in discussion during your TA sessions and in class.

Two exams, a midterm (**March 13**) and a final (during finals week), will constitute **40%** of your grade. These are meant to ensure that you have completed the readings, and have wrestled with the questions they raise.

Two 6-page papers (due **March 4** and **May 1**) will together constitute **40%** of your grade. The first paper will constitute **15%** of your grade, and the second will constitute **25%**. Topics will be distributed ahead of time.

Resources

All of the readings will be available in pdf on Courseworks.

In addition, there are a number of free online philosophy resources that we recommend you utilize. They include:

- [The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)
- [The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)
- [PhilPapers](#)
- Jim Pryor's Guide to [Writing](#) and [Reading](#) Philosophy, and his guide to [Philosophical Terms and Methods](#)
- James Lenman's [How to Write a Crap Philosophy Essay: A Brief Guide for Students](#)
- Greg Restall's [Lectures on Logic](#) (including elementary, mathematical and non-classical)

Schedule of Readings

January 23 - Plato on Knowledge

Excerpts from Plato, *Meno*, *Phaedo*, & *Theaetetus*.

January 28 -- Gettier Cases

Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?"

January 30 -- Ancient Skepticism

Excerpts from Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Skepticism*.

February 4 -- Cartesian Skepticism

Excerpts from Descartes, *Meditations*.

February 6 -- Inductive Skepticism

Excerpts from Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*.

February 11 -- NO CLASS

February 13 -- NO CLASS

February 18 -- Inductive Skepticism Continued

Goodman, "The New Riddle of Induction."

February 20 -- Dogmatism

Pryor, "The Skeptic and the Dogmatist."

February 25 -- Foundationalism

Sellars, "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind."

February 27 -- Coherentism

Bonjour, "The Elements of Coherentism."

March 4 -- Beliefs and Credences

Christensen, "Two Models of Belief."

March 6 -- Rebutting and Undermining Defeaters

Excerpts from Cruz and Pollock, *Contemporary Theories of Knowledge*.

***FIRST PAPER DUE**

March 11 -- Ordinary Disagreement

Lackey, "What's the Rational Response to Everyday Disagreements?"

March 13 -- MIDTERM

March 18 -- NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

March 20 -- NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)

March 25 -- Genealogical Skepticism

Street, "A Darwinian Dilemma for Realist Theories of Value."

March 27 -- Internalism and Externalism

Fumerton, "The Internalism/Externalism Controversy."

April 1 -- Pluralism about Epistemic Value

Excerpts from Alston, *Beyond Justification: Dimensions of Epistemic Evaluation*.

April 3 -- The Ethics of Belief

Clifford, "The Ethics of Belief."

April 8 -- The Ethics of Belief Continued

James, "The Will to Believe."

April 10 -- The Metaphysics of Knowledge

Excerpts from Cuneo, *The Normative Web*.

April 15 -- Against Thought Experiments

Alexander, Buckner, Gonnerman, and Weinberg, "Are Philosophers Expert Intuiters?"

April 17 -- Naturalized Epistemology

Quine, "Epistemology Naturalized."

April 22 -- Non-Naturalism

Putnam, "Why Epistemology Can't Be Naturalized."

April 24 -- Empiricism

Devitt, "There is No A Priori."

April 29 -- Rationalism

Bealer, "The Incoherence of Empiricism."

May 1 -- Choosing Normative Concepts

Eklund, "Alternative Normative Concepts."

May 1 -- Review

***SECOND PAPER DUE**

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with Columbia University's policies on academic integrity at:
<http://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/academicintegrity>

Please also familiarize yourself with Columbia University's honor code at:
<https://www.college.columbia.edu/ccschonorcode>

Failure to comply with Columbia's policies can result in serious disciplinary action.