

Contemporary Debates in Epistemology

Instructor: Jennifer Wang
Sample Syllabus

Time and Location: TBA

Office hours: TBA

Course Description

This is an upper-level course in contemporary epistemology, the study of knowledge, justification, and other epistemic notions. We will be looking at arguments on opposing sides of various debates.

Textbook

Contemporary Debates in Epistemology
Eds. Matthias Steup and Ernest Sosa

Requirements

Students are required to attend and participate in class, submit a shorter paper and a longer paper.

- *Shorter paper:* Shorter papers will be due six weeks into classes. They should be 3-5 pages in length, double-spaced. I will give you question prompts to choose from, which will require you to focus on developing one short argument. There will be an in-class workshop of drafts the week of <<dates>>.
- *Longer paper:* Longer papers are due on the last day of class. They should be 12-15 pages in length, double-spaced. You will be asked to send me your topic proposals for approval by <<date>>, which should include (1) the problem which you intend to solve, (2) the solution you will investigate, (3) objections to this solution that you anticipate from your opponents, and (4) a bibliography of readings (2-4). You don't have to stick with any of these ideas for the final paper – you should go where the arguments lead you as you tackle the problem. Before the final paper is due, I will meet with each of you to discuss your paper's progress.

Attendance and Participation Policy

You are required to attend every class. Good attendance and participation in class will count in your favor if your final grade is within half a point of the next grade up.

Grading

25% Short paper
75% Long paper

Schedule

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Is knowledge closed under known entailment?

- Dretske vs Hawthorne

Week 3: Is knowledge contextual?

- Conee vs Cohen

Week 4: Can skepticism be refuted?

- Vogel vs Fumerton

Week 5: Is there *a priori* knowledge?

- Bonjour vs Devitt

Week 6: Short paper workshops

Week 7: Is infinitism the solution to the regress problem?

- Ginet vs Klein

Week 8: Can beliefs be justified through coherence alone?

- Elgin vs van Cleve

Week 9: Is there immediate justification?

- Pryor vs Williams

Week 10: Does perceptual experience have conceptual content?

- Brewer vs Byrne

Week 11: Is justification internal?

- Greco vs Feldman

Week 12: Is truth the primary epistemic goal?

- Kvanvig vs David
- Long paper proposals are due <<date>>

Week 13: Is justified belief responsible belief?

- Foley vs Wolterstaff

Week 14: Guest speakers

- <<invited speakers to debate some topic in class>>