

**PHIL 4360 Theory of Knowledge II**  
**Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:30 pm – 3:50 pm, MacKinnon 311**  
**Winter 2011**

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**Brief Description**

In this course we will look at the relationship between justification and epistemic duty. The traditional view is that justification involves having reasons and having reasons that one has access to. On this internalist view, to be justified is to be epistemically blameless. As such, a justified belief is one that can stand up to critical scrutiny (self-imposed or otherwise). In the first half of this course we will examine this deontological conception of justification and contrast it with externalist accounts, which reject the cognitive access requirement on justification. Once we have a handle on this issue, we will spend the second half of the course exploring how it bears on the epistemology of disagreement.

**Readings**

Aside from one class handout, all of the readings for the course will be available online through the library's Ares Course Reserve System: <https://ares.lib.uoguelph.ca/ares/>.

**Recording of Materials**

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

**Resources**

The Undergraduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate programs. It can be found at: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>

**E-mail Communication**

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

**Drop Date**

The last date to drop one-semester Winter 2011 courses, without academic penalty, is Friday, March 11, 2011. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar. ([http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad\\_calendar/08-drop.shtml](http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/08-drop.shtml))

### **When You Can't Meet A Course Requirement\***

When you find yourself unable to meet any course requirements due to illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the instructor [or designated person] in writing with name, id#, and e-mail contact. Where possible, this should be done in advance of the missed work or event, but otherwise just as soon as possible after the due date and certainly no longer than one week later. Note: if appropriate documentation is necessary, the course instructor or delegate will request it of you. Such documentation will rarely be required for course components representing less than 10% of the course grade. Such documentation will be required, however, for Academic Consideration for missed end-of-term work and/or missed final examinations. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration. ([http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad\\_calendar/c08/c08\\_ac.shtml](http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/c08/c08_ac.shtml)). Also see the BA Counselling Office website ([www.uoguelph.ca/baco](http://www.uoguelph.ca/baco))

\* See below for specific details on late or missed assignments

### **Copies of Out-of-Class Assignments**

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

### **Academic Misconduct**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The University of Guelph takes a serious view of academic misconduct, and it is your responsibility as a student to be aware of and to abide by the University's policy. Included in the definition of academic misconduct are such activities as cheating on examinations, plagiarism, misrepresentation, and submitting the same material in two different courses without written permission from the relevant instructors. To better understand your responsibilities, read the Undergraduate Calendar ([http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad\\_calendar/01.shtml](http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/01.shtml)) for a statement of Students' Academic Responsibilities; also read the full Academic Misconduct Policy ([http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad\\_calendar/08-amisconduct.shtml](http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/08-amisconduct.shtml)). You are also advised to make use of the resources available through the Learning Commons (<http://www.learningcommons.uoguelph.ca/>) and to discuss any questions you may have with your course instructor, TA, or academic counsellor.

**Instructors have the right to use software to aid in the detection of plagiarism or copying and to examine students orally on submitted work, and they also have the right to enter sentences or phrases into a search engine, e.g. Google.**

For students found guilty of academic misconduct, serious penalties, up to and including suspension or expulsion, can be imposed. Hurried or careless submission of work does not exonerate students of responsibility for ensuring the academic integrity of their work. Similarly, students who find themselves unable to meet course requirements by the deadlines or criteria expected because of medical, psychological or compassionate circumstances should review the university's regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration in the calendar ([http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad\\_calendar/08-ac.shtml](http://www.uoguelph.ca/undergrad_calendar/08-ac.shtml)) and discuss their situation with the instructor and/or the program counsellor or other academic counsellor as appropriate.

## Evaluation

1. **10 critical summaries (10%).** Starting the second week of classes, every Thursday you will be required to hand in a one-page critical summary on that day's reading. The summary will not be graded, but you will receive 1% for doing the work (**NB:** for the week prior to reading week, the summaries will be due on the Tuesday class).

**Note:** there will be 11 opportunities to hand in a summary, so you can come to class empty handed once and still receive full marks.

**Note:** I will not accept critical summaries that are handed in late. If, for some reason, you need to miss class, you can hand in your weekly summary *before* the missed class (but not after).

2. **Seminar Presentation (20%).** You will be required to give a half-hour presentation on a reading of your choice. Your presentation may form the basis for one of your papers. You should give the class a handout of your presentation to help them follow along, and your handout will count as your 1% for that week's critical summary.

Because of the number of students in the class (approx. 20), each week we will have 2 students presenting on the same article. One student will do an exegetical (explanatory) summary of a paper, and another student will give a critical analysis of the same paper and lead us into a discussion.

3. **One short (5-page) paper (30%)** on a topic of your choice.

**Note:** I strongly encourage you to discuss your topic with me before you start writing.

**Note:** I will not accept e-essays (i.e. essays handed in by email).

**Note:** due to fairness considerations, late essays will be penalized 2% per day unless accompanied by a medical certificate.

4. **One long (10-page) paper (40%)** on a topic of your choice.

**Notes:** same as above.

## Schedule of Readings

**Note:** dates with an asterisk (\*) indicate presentation dates & dates on which critical summaries are due.

- January 11<sup>th</sup> Introduction; class mechanics
- January 13<sup>th</sup> Justification & Knowledge  
Edmund Gettier, “Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?”
- January 18<sup>th</sup> Justification & Foundations  
Richard Feldman, *Epistemology*, Chapter 4, Sections 4.2 – 4.5 (class handout)  
H.H. Price, “The Given”
- \* January 20<sup>th</sup> Justification & Foundations  
Wilfrid Sellars, “Does empirical knowledge have a foundation?”
- January 25<sup>th</sup> Internalism & Externalism  
William P. Alston, “Internalism and Externalism in Epistemology”
- \* January 27<sup>th</sup> Internalism & Externalism  
Laurence Bonjour “Externalist Theories of Empirical Knowledge”
- February 1<sup>st</sup> Internalism & Externalism  
Alvin Goldman, “Discrimination and Perceptual Knowledge”
- \* February 3<sup>rd</sup> Internalism & Externalism  
Robert Brandom, “Insights and Blindspots of Reliabilism”
- February 8<sup>th</sup> The Ethics of Belief  
William K. Clifford, “The Ethics of Belief”
- \* February 10<sup>th</sup> Epistemic Duties  
William James, “The Will to Believe”
- \* February 15<sup>th</sup> Epistemic Duties  
Richard Feldman, “Epistemological Duties”
- February 17<sup>th</sup> **Class cancelled – first essay due (please deposit in my mailbox in the philosophy department)**
- February 22<sup>nd</sup> & February 24<sup>th</sup> **No classes – reading week**

- March 1<sup>st</sup>      The Ethics of Belief  
                     Richard Feldman, “The Ethics of Belief”
- \* March 3<sup>rd</sup>      The Ethics of Belief  
                     Stephen Nathanson, “Nonevidential Reasons for Belief: A Jamesian View”
- March 8<sup>th</sup>      Evidentialism  
                     Richard Feldman, *Epistemology*, Chapter 4, Section 4.1 (class handout)  
                     Nishi Shah, “A New Argument for Evidentialism”
- \* March 10<sup>th</sup>      Evidentialism  
                     Peter van Inwagen “It is Wrong, Everywhere, Always, and for Anyone, to Believe Anything upon Insufficient Evidence”
- March 15<sup>th</sup>      Disagreement  
                     Thomas Kelly, “The Epistemic Significance of Disagreement”
- \* March 17<sup>th</sup>      Disagreement  
                     Richard Feldman, “Epistemological Puzzles About Disagreement”
- March 22<sup>nd</sup>      Disagreement  
                     David Christensen, “Epistemology of Disagreement: the Good News”
- \* March 24<sup>th</sup>      Disagreement  
                     Adam Elga, “Reflection and Disagreement”
- March 29<sup>th</sup>      Disagreement  
                     Roger White, “Epistemic Permissiveness”
- \* March 31<sup>st</sup>      Disagreement  
                     Marc Moffett, “Reasonable Disagreement and Rational Group Inquiry”
- April 5<sup>th</sup>      Responsible Knowers  
                     Richard Foley, “What am I to Believe?”
- \* April 7<sup>th</sup>      Responsible Knowers  
                     Richard Foley, “Epistemic Rationality as Invulnerability to Self-Criticism”
- \* **Second Essay Due**