

Ideas of Origin and Origin of Ideas

Honors College at Florida International University

IDH 1001-1002

Instructors: Regina Bailey, Ruben Garrote, TJ Liguori and Umer Rahman

Tuesday 2:00pm – 3:15pm (RB 120) Thursday 2:00pm – 3:15pm (TBD)

Final Exam: (TBD)

Classrooms and Professor Contacts:

Lecture classes meet on Tuesdays in Fall (RB 120) and Spring (TBD). Individual pods will meet on Thursdays.

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Overview

“The only intuition that is given a priori is that of the mere form of appearances, space, and time” (Immanuel Kant – The Critique of Pure Reason). During fall, we will be exploring major discourses in epistemology, including those over the structure of knowledge, skepticism, definition, justification, and related notions. The goal of this course is to understand where knowledge comes from and how to tell the difference between *“knowing”* and other states of judgement like opinions, beliefs, and assumptions. A medical doctor’s diagnosis, for example, must be more than just unsubstantiated opinions. In the court of law, we presume that rulings are made based on knowledge of the facts. Engineers must know that a road is structurally and materially sound even before it is built. In this context, we may ask, *“do you really know that?”* To answer this, we must understand where knowledge comes from and what it means to actually know something.

Required Texts

Most of the readings will be online. Professors will make all the reading material available via syllabus and or email.

Reference Books are as follows:

- Epistemology: An Anthology by Ernest Sosa | Second Edition | ISBN: 9781405169660
- The Structure of Scientific Revolutions by Thomas S. Kuhn | 3rd Edition | ISBN: 0026458083
- Proofs and Refutation by Imre Lakatos | ISBN: 9781107534056
- The problems of Philosophy by Bertrand Russell | ISBN: 1514341018
- Critique of Pure Reason by Immanuel Kant | ISBN: 0521657296
- The Archaeology of Knowledge by Michel Foucault | ISBN: 0394711068

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe and discuss seminal issues in the theory of knowledge covered in this course.
- Incorporate into their reflections on contemporary social, moral, political, scientific, issues, etc. Apply pertinent concerns raised in class with respect to: what knowledge is, how it is acquired and understood, and the role it plays in society.
- Students will learn and effectively implement complex research strategies using online and print media.
- Students will pose open-ended questions and define their own learning goals relevant to course material. They will be able to formulate and execute plans for realizing these goals individually and in collaboration with other students.
- Students will learn to use writing, reading, movement, group discussion, and project-based techniques to gain mastery of course material.
- Students will develop and sustain an ongoing writing, research and creative practice to gain fluency and engage in problem solving around course-related subject matter, defined by themselves or others.
- Students will understand human cultural phenomena from a variety of disciplines and perspectives.
- Students will use writing, research, and analysis to understand and articulate their personal experiences in a broader historical and cultural context.
- Students will gain appreciation of the breadth of the performing / visual arts as cultural mediums (including the limitations) for accessing target populations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Please take the time to read through the description of each course requirement. If you have any questions, talk to us early in the semester.

Requirement (Fall 2016)	Grading
Reading Presentation: Each group will be assigned a week where they will present the class on the readings.	20%
Weekly reflection papers: Each student will write a page long reflection paper on the weekly reading. Total papers: 10.	4% each 40% total
Final Presentation	20%
Attendance and class participation	20%

Grading Scale

This scale displays the minimum number of points that you need to earn for each letter grade.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+
D	D-	F						
93	89	85	80	75	70	65	60	55
50	45	<45						

CLASS SCHEDULE - Fall

Date	Activity
Aug 23	Introductions and reading through the syllabus.
Aug 25	Discussion Theme: A brief intro to the analysis of knowledge (epistemology).
Aug 30	General Discussion (Epistemology: What we know... Sources of knowledge... and Views...)
Sep 1	Discussion Theme: Social in nature connecting learned concepts to everyday news, events and relevance.
Sep 6	Allegory of the Cave by Plato (Allan Bloom Translation) Reading: Bloom, "Plato's Republic" http://www.inp.uw.edu.pl/mdsie/Political_Thought/Plato-Republic.pdf
Sep 8	Discussion Theme: In-depth analysis: Allegory of the Cave
Sep 13	Skeptical Arguments Reading: Descartes, Meditations I & II http://selfpace.uconn.edu/class/percep/DescartesMeditations.pdf
Sep 15	Discussion Theme: Meditations within today's context
Sep 20	Skeptical Arguments cont. Reading: Moore, "Certainty" http://selfpace.uconn.edu/class/ana/MooreCertainty.pdf Stroud, "The Problem of the External World" http://joelvelasco.net/teaching/4330/stroud-externalworld.pdf
Sep 22	Discussion Theme: Why is skepticism important? How does Ethics play within skepticism? Convocation
Sep 27	The Gettier Problems Reading: Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge"? http://www-bcf.usc.edu/~kleinsch/Gettier.pdf Zagzabski, "The Inescapability of Gettier Problems" http://philpapers.org/archive/ZAGTIO.pdf
Sep 29	Discussion Theme: Can knowledge be justified true belief? What are its conditions and methods?
Oct 4	Epistemic Justification Reading: Goldman, "What is Justified Belief?" https://www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/kk3n/epistclass/goldmanjust.pdf

Oct 6	Discussion Theme: Continuation of thought building on Justified True Belief (JTB) within the context of conditions and attributions.
Oct 11	Science and the scientific method Popper, "Science as Falsification" Listen: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztmvtKLuR7I or Read: https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/liu10/files/2010/08/KPopper_Falsification.pdf
Oct 13	Discussion Theme: Proofs and its methods. What is real science and math?
Oct 18	Science, pseudoscience and the scientific method (cont.) Reading: Kuhn, "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" http://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/students/envs_5110/structure_of_scientific_revolutions.pdf
Oct 20	Discussion Theme: Can we explain attainment of knowledge outside of science and math? Is there a demarcation?
Oct 25	Naturalized Epistemology Read: Quine "Epistemology Naturalized" http://joelvelasco.net/teaching/3330/Quine-Epistemology-Naturalized.pdf
Oct 27	Discussion Theme: What are some natural scientific methods that explain epistemology?
Nov 1	Naturalized Epistemology (cont.) Read: Kim, What is "Naturalized Epistemology"? http://blog.wbkolleg.unibe.ch/wp-content/uploads/Kim.pdf
Nov 3	Discussion Theme: Continuation of the naturalized epistemology
Nov 8	Induction and Deduction Read: Russell, "On Induction" http://www.ditext.com/russell/rus6.html Haack, "The Justification of Deduction" https://social.stoa.usp.br/articles/0016/4213/Haack_1976.pdf
Nov 10	Discussion Theme: Explorations of methods in Induction and Deduction. Observation vs. Logical Reasoning
Nov 15	Final Presentation Workshop
Nov 17	Group Work
Nov 22	Presentations
Nov 24	--Happy Thanksgiving --
Nov 29	Presentation (Cont.) and Overview of the next semester
Dec 1	Pod Party!!!
Finals Week	December 5 – 10

Attendance/Classroom Etiquette

Class attendance is an important component of your grade. You will be allowed one unexcused absence or one unexcused instance of tardiness, no questions asked, with no-penalty. **Note well:** this is one absence **OR** one lateness, not one of each (the logical OR function, not the logical AND function). Any additional absence will incur a 12-point penalty per occurrence. Additional lateness occurrences are penalized as follows; 0-5 minutes = no penalty, 5-20 minutes = 6 points, >20 minutes = 12 points. If you notify your professor BEFORE class, these penalties may be excused for emergency situations at the discretion of the professor. If you do not notify the professor before class, there is no possibility of waiving the penalty. Since professors will only consider waving the penalty for extreme emergencies, we suggest that you save your one excused absence until the end of the semester.

Although the one unexcused absence will not affect your class participation grade, there will be no make-ups for missed quizzes. You have to be in class or you will receive a zero for the quiz.

Be diligent about checking email. We assume students are aware of all announcements, assignments, and course changes communicated through email.

The use of laptops, cellular phones, smart watches or any other device for voice or text communication is prohibited for the duration of the class. **UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, YOU MUST TURN OFF AND PUT AWAY ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.**

Writing

Write like it matters because it does. All written work must consistently adhere to the Chicago Manual of Style and correctly cite all sources. Do not plagiarize. Do not copy and paste text from the internet, change a word here and there, and think no one will notice. CITE YOUR SOURCES. This will help you.

Purdue Owl: Avoiding Plagiarism

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>

Revise and proofread *all* written work before submitting. Read it aloud to a friend. Read it aloud to yourself. Read it out loud in the mirror. I mean really do it, don't just mentally do it. You will be amazed at how helpful this is. Students who need extra help with their writing will be instructed to use the university's free tutoring services and may receive extra credit for doing so. They can access these services through the On-Campus Learning Center at PC 247 and the Online Learning Center at w3.fiu.edu. All students must adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of The Honors College and Florida International University.

The Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab) is another excellent resource:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>