

Philosophy 3610
Theory of Knowledge
Spring 2009
TR 2:00-3:15 p.m.
Peabody 220

Instructor:

Dr. Ashley Sherman
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Office Hours: MW 12:30-2:00 p.m.
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Purpose:

This course is an introduction to the problems of epistemology. We shall address questions such as: What is knowledge?; Is knowledge possible?; How is knowledge possible?; What can be known?; How can we justify our claims to know?; and What are the ethical considerations in believing something without adequate evidence?

Text:

Louis P. Pojman, *The Theory of Knowledge: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, third edition, Wadsworth, Inc., 2003, paperback.

Supplemental readings will also be required.

Attendance:

Attendance is required. Any student whose total number of absences exceeds five, after the conclusion of drop/add, may be administratively withdrawn from the class without notice. If a student is administratively withdrawn at any point in the semester, that student will receive a WF for the course.

Punctuality:

You must arrive to class on time. Excessive tardiness will not be tolerated and may result in an administrative withdrawal (WF) for non-attendance.

Classroom Environment:

Please remember that this is a classroom environment, and you are to behave accordingly. This means that you must refrain from private conversation and any other disruptive behavior. If you fail to respect the academic environment, you will be asked to leave the classroom and will be marked absent for that day. Turn off your cellphone before coming to class.

Academic Honesty:

The University's policies regarding academic honesty are, of course, in effect. I will report any case of suspected academic dishonesty, and shall propose a sanction of an F in the course.

Reading Assignments:

The schedule of reading assignments and exams is given below. A reading should always be completed prior to the class meeting for which it is assigned. Participation is expected, so come to class prepared to ask questions and discuss the material. If the class is unprepared on any given day, the instructor will cancel that class. You will then be responsible for the material yourself.

Exams and Paper:

There will be two exams, each of which will count 1/3 of your final grade. Please bring a blue-book on exam days.

Make-up exams will only be given under the most pressing circumstances. In order to take a make-up exam, you must present documentation verifying your emergency. Furthermore, you must notify the instructor no later than the day of the scheduled exam regarding your absence. If you miss an exam or fail to present the proper verification, you will receive a zero for that exam.

You will also be required to write one paper which will count 1/3 of your final grade. The paper topics can be found on WebCT. Your paper is due by the beginning of class on April 7. I do not accept late papers. If you do not turn your paper in on time, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

Optional Final:

You will be given the opportunity to take a cumulative optional final. This exam will replace the lowest grade of the semester. If the optional final is your lowest grade, it will be dropped.

This syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Schedule:

1/8 Introduction

1/13 Russell (5-9)

1/15 Locke (75-88)

1/20 Berkeley (88-96)

1/22 Stace (96-100)

1/27 Russell (115-121)

1/29 Review

2/3 Descartes (22-39)

2/5 No new reading

2/10 Moore (49-56)

2/12 Lehrer (56-63)

2/17 Review
2/19 **First Exam**

2/24 Gettier (125-127)
2/26 Goldman (129-138)

3/3 Lehrer and Paxson (138-142)
3/5 Review

3/10 Spring Break
3/12 Spring Break

3/17 Audi (174-182)
3/19 Bonjour (182-194)

3/24 No new reading
3/26 Dancy (206-215)

3/31 Annis (248-257)
4/2 No new reading

4/7 Clifford (515-518); **Paper Due at the beginning of class**
4/9 James (518-526)

4/14 Meiland (526-536)
4/16 Review

4/21 **Second Exam**
4/23 Course Evaluations

4/28 Review for Optional Final

Optional Final: To be taken during the time scheduled by the University for the final exam for this course.