

# Philosophy 430

## Theory of Knowledge

**MWF 9:00 – 9:50**

Henry Administration Building 137

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Instructor:	<b>Jonathan Livengood</b>
Office:	Gregory Hall 403
Office Hours:	MWF 10:00 – 10:50 AM or by appointment
Email:	jlive@illinois.edu
Required Texts:	None
Optional Texts:	Carter & Littlejohn, <i>This is Epistemology</i> Goldman & McGrath, <i>Epistemology</i>

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“All men by nature desire to know.”  
-- Aristotle, *Metaphysics*

“To avoid looking into the support of any belief from a fear that it may turn out rotten is quite as immoral as it is disadvantageous.”  
-- Peirce, *The Fixation of Belief*

### Course Overview and Objectives

Theory of knowledge (also called “epistemology”) is the branch of philosophy concerned with the proper analysis of “knowledge,” the nature and structure of justification, problems of skepticism, critical evaluation of the sources of knowledge, questions about the aims of belief and inquiry, the nature of rationality, the ethics of belief, and so on. In this course, we will be focusing on the ethics of belief.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to describe what is meant by “the ethics of belief” and explain the core debate between Clifford and James, describe some of the main features of evidentialism and pragmatism in epistemology as well as some of their strengths and weaknesses, describe some important questions for any theory of belief to answer, sketch arguments for and against the claim that the aim of belief is the truth, describe the JTB analysis of “knowledge” and so-called Gettier challenge to that analysis, and much else.

## Course Requirements and Grading

Grades will be determined on the basis of participation exercises, a pre-writing exercise, two paper drafts, two peer reviews, and a term paper. I grade on a point-system out of 400 total points. The points are distributed across assignments as follows:

75	5 Participation Exercises at 15 Points Each
25	Pre-Writing Argument Sketch
100	2 Paper Drafts at 50 Points Each
100	2 Peer Reviews at 50 Points Each
100	Term Paper
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400	Total

## Class Schedule

This is the schedule of readings and due dates. Each set of readings should be read *by the date it appears in the list*.

### Dates

### Readings

#### *Ethics of Belief*

Mon., Aug. 26

None

Wed., Aug. 28

Clifford “The Ethics of Belief”

Fri., Aug. 30

James “The Will to Believe”

Mon., Sep. 2

**Labor Day! No Class!**

#### *Belief*

Wed., Sep. 4

Schwitzgebel “Belief”

Fri., Sep. 6

Williams “Deciding to Believe”

Mon., Sep. 9

Hieronomy “Controlling Attitudes”

Wed., Sep. 11

Setiya “Believing at Will”

Fri., Sep. 13

Vermaire “In Search of Doxastic Involuntarism”

Mon., Sep. 16

Turri et al. “Choosing and Refusing”

Wed., Sep. 18	Price “Three Norms of Assertibility”
Fri., Sep. 20	Shah “How Truth Governs Belief”
Mon., Sep. 23	McHugh “What Do We Aim At When We Believe?”
<i>Justification</i>	
Wed., Sep. 25	Sosa “The Raft and the Pyramid” Littlejohn and Carter “The Regress Problem”
Fri., Sep. 27	Alfano “Expanding the Situationist Challenge to ...”
Mon., Sep. 30	Feldman “Justification is Internal” Greco “Justification is not Internal”
Wed., Oct. 2	Huemer “Compassionate Phenomenal Conservatism”
Fri., Oct. 4	Siegel “Cognitive Penetrability and ...” Hanna “Against Phenomenal Conservatism”
Mon., Oct. 7	Alston “Deontological Conception,” §§1-5
Wed., Oct. 9	Alston “Deontological Conception,” §§6-8
Fri., Oct. 11	Ryan “Doxastic Compatibilism”
Mon., Oct. 14	Weatherson “Deontology and Descartes’s Demon”
<i>Knowledge</i>	
Wed., Oct. 16	Gettier “Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?” Russell “Knowledge, Error, and Probable Opinion”
Fri., Oct. 18	Goldman “A Causal Theory of Knowing”
Mon., Oct. 21	Unger “An Analysis of Factual Knowledge”
Wed., Oct. 23	Goldman “Discrimination and Perceptual Knowledge”
Fri., Oct. 25	Turri “Manifest Failure” Turri “From Reliabilism to Abilism”
Mon., Oct. 28	Kornblith “Knowledge in Humans and Other Animals”
Wed., Oct. 30	Goldman “Kornblith’s Naturalistic Epistemology”

Fri., Nov. 1	Horvath “Conceptual Analysis and Natural Kinds”
Mon., Nov. 4	Kim “Pragmatic encroachment in epistemology”
Wed., Nov. 6	Moss “Moral Encroachment”
Fri., Nov. 8	Roeber “The Pragmatic encroachment debate”
<i>Inquiry &amp; Testimony</i>	
Mon., Nov. 11	Fricker “Against Gullibility”
Wed., Nov. 13	Dormandy “Epistemic Authority”
Fri., Nov. 15	Dellsén “Excessive Testimony”
Mon., Nov. 18	Peirce “The Fixation of Belief” Peirce “How to Make Our Ideas Clear”
Wed., Nov. 20	Friedman “The Aim of Inquiry?”
Fri., Nov. 22	Carballo “Good Questions”
Mon., Nov. 25	<b>Fall Break! No Class!</b>
Wed., Nov. 27	<b>Fall Break! No Class!</b>
Fri., Nov. 29	<b>Fall Break! No Class!</b>
Mon., Dec. 2	Wedgwood “The Aim of Belief”
Wed., Dec. 4	Friedman “The Epistemic and the Zetetic”
Fri., Dec. 6	Zollman “Network Epistemology” Zollman “The Communication Structure of ...”
Mon., Dec. 9	Weatherall, O’Connor & Bruner “How to Beat Science” O’Connor & Weatherall “Why We Trust Lies”
Wed., Dec. 11	Bright “On Fraud”
Fri., Dec. 19	<b>Final Essay Due!</b>