

PHL 201 : EPISTEMOLOGY - KNOWLEDGE, SCIENCE, AND THE HISTORY OF REASON

Transcript title

Knowledge, Science, and Reason

Credits

4

Grading mode

Standard letter grades

Total contact hours

40

Lecture hours

40

Recommended preparation

WR 121Z.

Course Description

Epistemology in the analytic tradition boils down to the "science of knowledge:" what does it mean to "know?" How do we know the things we supposedly know? What makes up the objects of possible knowledge? This course explores basic problems and different theories of knowledge along with related issues in metaphysics, for example: how to define the nature and limits of knowledge; rationalist vs. empiricist perspectives; assumptions about reality and existence; and arguments for and against the existence of God.

Course learning outcomes

1. Recognize and respond to questions or problems that are characteristic of epistemology.
2. Explain different philosophical positions or theories that are common to the Western tradition and articulate one's own points of view in a clear, consistent, concise and thorough manner.
3. Utilize basic tools of philosophic inquiry and argument.
4. Interpret primary source material and show how historical texts may be applied to contemporary debates or dilemmas.

Content outline

1. Introduction and the Analysis of Knowledge
2. Defeasibility Theory
3. Relevant Alternatives Theory
4. Causal Theory of Knowledge, Knowledge as Truth-Tracking, Internalism vs. Externalism
5. Skepticism and the Structure of Knowledge
6. Coherentism
7. Foundationalism
8. Theories of Perception
9. Empiricism
10. Direct Realism

11. Rationalism
12. Conventionalism

Required materials

Required textbook.

General education/Related instruction lists

- Arts and Letters