

## PHILOSOPHY 470: THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

**Fall 2004**

**Class meeting time: T R 9:50-11:30 AM**

**Class location: KH-B2007**

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**Telephone: x 4180**

**Instructor: JeeLoo Liu**

**Office hours: T R 12:00 – 2:00 PM**

**or by appointment**

**Office: E & T 421**

### **Required Texts:**

BonJour, Laurence, *Epistemology: Classical Problems and Contemporary Responses* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.) 2002.

Packet of readings [PR] – from the recommended text, *The Theory of Knowledge; Classical and Contemporary Readings* (ed.) Louis Pojman.

**Recommended Text:** Louis Pojman (ed.), *The Theory of Knowledge; Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

### **Course Description:**

This course is intended to stimulate the student to reflect philosophically on the nature of knowledge by surveying several prominent topics of concern to contemporary (i.e., 20th century) philosophers of the analytic tradition. Topics include the concept of knowledge, theories of justification, and the possibility of knowledge or its impossibility (skepticism). Although concentrated on problems surrounding the concept of knowledge, the course should further the student's understanding of the general methods of analytic philosophy, and develop the student's ability to think and to write philosophically. This course will be conducted in the lecture/discussion style with heavy emphasis on the latter.

### **Grading Plan:**

**For graduate students (and self-motivated undergraduate students upon the instructor's approval):**

Term paper (5-6 pages)	20%
Mid-term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
<b>Six</b> Summaries (2-3 pages each)	20%
Presentation of course material	10%
Active Participation	10%

**For undergraduate students:**

Mid-term Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
<b>Four</b> Summaries (2-3 pages each)	20% <b>[First four assignments]</b>
Presentation of course material	10%
Active Participation	10%

**General Policies:**

1. To succeed in this course, you should keep pace with the syllabus. Your regular attendance is strongly emphasized, and you are also expected to finish the reading assignments prior to each class.
2. All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and free of spelling errors. If you don't proofread carefully, you may be asked to retype your essay.
3. Summaries must be handed in on time and in class (prior to lecture on the assigned reading). If you miss one assignment, you must hand in the missed one along with an extra summary of the next reading for the next class. No exception.
4. Take-home mid-term exam must be handed in on time. A 1/3 letter grade will be deducted for each 24-hour delay.
5. All summaries must be handed in **on the assigned date** and **in person**. Summaries will be graded as a set. On the final day of the quarter, hand in the whole set of your summaries in a folder. The grade of your homework will be based on your overall performance and improvement.
6. **For those writing the final paper:** preparation for the final paper is done in stages. During the paper conferencing week (11/9-11/11), you should meet with me during my office hours to discuss your paper topic. You should come prepared with your own paper topic. Following the conferencing session, you need to do some research to find relevant articles for your paper topic. You will give a five-minute topic presentation in the last week. Prepare a one-page handout containing the description of your paper topic. The final paper is due on December 6.
7. **Lecture/presentation:** Presentation will begin in the second half of the quarter. Each presentation takes about 30 minutes. Two students form a team to present the course material assigned for that day. Presentation gives students the chance to develop their ability to organize and present course materials.
8. To receive a final grade for the course, **all assignments must be completed.**

Class Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Content of discussion</u>	<u>Assignments for this class</u>
R 9/23	Introduction	BonJour, Chap. 2
<b>I. [The Concept of Knowledge]</b>		
T 9/28	BonJour; The concept of Knowledge Gettier; Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?  <b>Challenge: Come up with one Gettier-type counter-example for definition (b) and one for definition (c).</b>	BonJour, Chap. 3 [PR] 125-7 <b>[Summary #1]:</b>
R 9/30	Feldman; An Alleged Defect in Gettier Counter-Examples Lehrer & Paxon; Knowledge: Undefeated Justified True Belief	[PR] 127-8 [PR] 138-42
<b>II. [Foundationalism and Coherentism]</b>		
T 10/5	BonJour; Foundationalism and Coherentism	BonJour, Chap. 9
R 10/7	Audi; Contemporary Modest Foundationalism	[PR] 174-82 <b>[Summary #2]</b>
T 10/12	BonJour; A Critique of Foundationalism	[PR] 182-94
R 10/14	Dancy; A Defense of Coherentism	[PR] 206-15
T 10/19	Sosa; The Raft and the Pyramid; Coherence Versus Foundations in the Theory of Knowledge	[PR] 222-37 <b>[Summary #3]</b>
<b>III. [Externalism and Internalism]</b>		
R 10/21	BonJour; Internalism and Externalism	BonJour, Chap. 10
<b><u>Take-home Mid-term Exam</u></b>		
T 10/26	Goldman; Reliabilism: What Is Justified Belief?	[PR] 260-73 <b>Mid-term exam due</b>
R 10/28	Conee & Feldman; The Generality Problem for Reliabilism	[PR] 296-309
T 11/2	Lehrer; A Critique of Externalism	[PR] 273-86

**R 11/4** Steup; A Defense of Internalism [PR] 310-21  
[Summary #4]

**IV. [Naturalized Epistemology]**

**T 11/9** BonJour; Quine and Naturalized Epistemology BonJour, Chap. 11

**R 11/11** Quine; Epistemology Naturalized [PR] 287-95  
[Summary #5]

**T 11/16** Kornblith; Naturalistic Epistemology and Its Critics [PR] 322-33

**V. [Skepticism]**

**R 11/18** BonJour; Skepticism BonJour, Chap. 12

**T 11/23** Lehrer; Why Not Skepticism [PR] 56-63  
[Summary #6]

**R 11/25** **Thanksgiving Break**

**T 11/30** Lewis; Elusive Knowledge [PR] 334-47

**R 12/2** **Paper Topics Presentation**

**FINA EXAM      DECEMBER 9 (THURSDAY)      8:00 – 10:30 AM**