

Meetings: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:10-2:30pm in Frelinghuysen Hall, room B4

Instructor: Pamela Robinson

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Course Description

This course is about knowledge and justified belief. We will try to discover what distinguishes knowledge from true belief, how much knowledge we have, and which of our beliefs are justified and/or rational for us to hold.

Books and Readings

The course text is Richard Feldman's *Epistemology*. Other required readings will be made available on Sakai.

If you don't have perfect grammar, you're strongly advised to work through Janis Bell's *Clean, Well-Lighted Sentences* as soon as you can. I also urge you to check our writing center at <http://wp.rutgers.edu/tutoring/writingcenters/581-tutoring>.

Tentative Course Schedule *Many more readings will be added as the course progresses

 *Worksheet due-dates will also be decided

Week 1 *Introduction to the Course*

Meetings September 3

Week 2 *The Traditional Analysis of Knowledge*

Meetings September 8, 11

Readings Chapters 1 and 2 (Feldman), "Philosophical Terms and Methods" (Pryor)

Individual practice quiz on September 8

Week 3 *Fixing the Traditional Analysis of Knowledge*

Meetings September 15, 17

Readings Chapter 3 (Feldman), "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" (Gettier)

Individual/team quiz on September 15

Week 4 *Evidentialism*

Meetings September 22, 24

Readings Chapter 4 (Feldman)

Individual/team quiz on September 22

Required practice short assignment due by 11:59pm on September 23

Week 5 Alternatives to Evidentialism

Meetings September 29, October 1

Readings Chapter 5 (Feldman)

Individual/team quiz on September 29

Week 6 High-Standards' Skepticism

Meetings October 6, 8

Readings Chapter 6 (Feldman)

Individual/team quiz on October 6

1st short assignment due by 11:59pm on October 7

Week 7 'Ordinary-Standards' Skepticism

Meetings October 13, 15

Readings Chapter 7 (Feldman), minus the appendix

Individual/team quiz on October 13

Week 8 Science and Epistemology

Meetings October 20, 22

Readings Chapter 8 (Feldman)

Individual/team quiz on October 20

2nd short assignment due by 11:59pm on October 21

Week 9 Contextualism

Meetings October 27, 29

Readings Appendix to Chapter 7 (Feldman)

Individual/team quiz on October 27

Week 10 Epistemic Relativism

Meetings November 3, 5

Readings Chapter 9 (Feldman), parts 1-2
Excerpt from *Fear of Knowledge* (Boghossian)

Individual/team quiz on November 3

3rd short assignment due by 11:59pm on November 4

Week 11 Knowledge First

Meetings November 10, 12

Readings Excerpts from *Knowledge and its Limits* (Williamson)

Individual/team quiz on November 10

Week 12 *Formal Epistemology (part 1)*
Meetings November 17, 19
Readings tbd

Individual/team quiz on November 17

4th short assignment due by 11:59pm on November 18

Week 13 *Formal Epistemology (part 2)*
Meetings November 24 (we're not meeting on the 26th due to Thanksgiving)
Readings tbd

Individual/team quiz on November 24

Week 14 *Disagreement*
Meetings December 1, 3
Readings Ch. 9 Section 3 (Feldman)

Individual/team quiz on December 1

5th short assignment due by 11:59pm on December 2

Week 15 *Epistemic Rationality: Puzzles*
Meetings December 8, 10
Readings tbd

Final individual quiz on December 10

6th short assignment due by 11:59pm on December 12

Assessment

This is a serious course in which the grade you receive will be the grade you earn. Merely attending every class and completing every assignment does not guarantee a passing grade. You will have the opportunity to earn up to 1000 points over the course of the semester (not including bonus points, which may in exceptional circumstances earn students a score above 1000). Your final score divided by 10 is your final percentage. The percentage will be converted into a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	90-100%	B+	85-89.9%	C+	75-79.9%	D	60-69.9%
		B	80-84.9%	C	70-74.9%	F	0-59.9%

Failing work earns a grade of F.

Work that constitutes a minimal pass earns a D.

Satisfactory work earns a C.

Work that is highly satisfactory but cannot fairly be described as 'good' earns a C+.

Good work earns a B.

Work that is very good but not quite excellent or outstanding earns a B+.

Excellent or outstanding work earns an A.

Students will be assessed on the basis of their performance on the following tasks:

<i>Work*</i>		<i>Maximum Points</i>
Short Assignments	5 × 100	500
Weekly Individual quizzes	10 × 10	100
Weekly Team quizzes	10 × 10	100
Worksheets		150
Participation		100
Peer review		50
(Total)		1000

**Detailed information about each of these items will be provided in class*

Academic Dishonesty

In order to preserve the credibility of Rutgers and to protect you from unfair competition from cheaters, I promise to deal with any cases of academic dishonesty in a way that leaves the cheater off much worse than he or she would be as a result of merely failing the assignment or course. It is the responsibility of all students to familiarize themselves with the official Rutgers policies on this matter. (See <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/policy-on-academic-integrity>.)

Attendance and Lateness

If you miss class or arrive late for any reason, you are responsible for finding out from other students what information and materials you missed. If you are absent or late, you don't need to give me an excuse. When you return to class, I will assume that something important came up and that you have already been caught up on all the missed material. Of course, all absences will harm your participation score and will undermine your team's performance to some extent.

Disruptive Behavior

Students must not disrupt the class environment by either (i) engaging in secondary discussion or otherwise making secondary noise or (ii) using electronics (including laptops) in class. Students who disrupt class in these ways will be warned on the first occasion, lose 10 points on the second occasion, and lose 50 points on each subsequent occasion.

Electronic Devices

No personal electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) may be used during class at any time without my prior approval. Approval will only be given to students with a doctor's note informing me of a condition that requires such devices.

Missed Quizzes

Quizzes will begin within the first ten minutes of class. Missed quizzes cannot be made up or retaken. Since there will be 12 weekly quizzes in total and only the best 10 will count toward the total quiz score, you have two 'free passes' available for occasions on which you must miss class or you arrive too late to take a quiz. Students are strongly advised to use those two free passes wisely and to ensure that they do not miss three or more quizzes in this course.

There will be a 13th individual quiz on the very last day of class, drawing on material from the whole course. If (and only if) it improves your grade, I will use your score on this quiz to replace (up to) the two lowest scores you've earned on individual quizzes that you've written (rather than missed).

Late Assignments

Late assignments will not be accepted. Because there are 6 assignments in total and only the best 5 count toward your total assignment grade, you *may* choose to miss one. However, students aspiring to get a good assignment grade are strongly advised to write the first 5 assignments.

Proofreading

As this is a university-level course, there should be no errors in punctuation, grammar, or spelling in any written work. It is the student's responsibility to proofread carefully.