

University of Houston, Spring 2022  
**Externalism and Correspondence**  
Knowledge and Methods (ILAS 2350-16593)

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### Course Catalogue Description

The "Knowledge and Methods" course (ILAS 2350-18042) surveys the cognitive methods pertaining to our understanding of diverse disciplines (including natural sciences, mathematics, philosophical logic, social sciences, cultural studies, and the arts). It aims to raise students' awareness of the distinctive research methods of the diverse disciplines associated with their chosen majors and minors.

This semester (Spring 2022), the course analyzes the relationship between *epistemic externalism* (Descartes, Moore, Putnam, Stroud) and *correspondence theory of truth* (Russell, Kirkham, Newman), including the related issues on the *nature of knowledge* (Ayer, Chisholm, Lehrer) and *epistemic justification* (Feldman, Gettier).

### Time and Place

Weekly lectures take place on Tuesday (11:30-1 pm) in the Classroom and Business Building (CBB), room 122. Class's relevant materials (updated syllabus, readings, papers' guidelines, final exam, class schedule changes) are available on *Blackboard Learn*. Weekly, the teaching fellow (Dr. Tierney) organizes office hours (TBD) to clarify the class subjects. He is also available by appointment for individuals or groups on *Microsoft Teams*.

### Requirements and Assessments

Much of the course consists of understanding and writing about the assigned readings. Each lecture has reading assignments, which students should complete before class as lectures will presuppose familiarity with the texts' materials. The readings are complex and require close study. Also, lectures can introduce material not included in the readings, so attendance at every lecture is crucial if you want to do well. Check the class's schedule regularly since the readings can change a week before class. Below is the breakdown of your final grade.

- 20% *Attendance and Participation*. Students must be timely in class on Tuesday between 11:30-1 pm (excused absences require doctoral notes).
- 60% *Three Papers* (2000 words each). The teaching assistant will suggest modifications for resubmission if needed. Late submissions are accepted within one week but penalized. Detailed guidelines are available on *Blackboard Learn*.
- 20% *Quizzes*. Students must take a quiz on the class materials every Thursday and a comprehensive quiz (closed notes and closed books) on the same materials at the end of the semester. All quizzes are available on *Blackboard Learn*.

### Bibliography

All the required readings are available on *Blackboard Learn*. Their sources appear below.

- Alfred Jules Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*. Dover, 1952.
- Anthony L. Brueckner, "Brains in a Vat." *The Journal of Philosophy* 83/3, 1986: 148-67.
- Roderick Chisholm, *Theory of Knowledge*. Prentice-Hall, 1966.
- René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*. Hackett, 1998.
- J. Fantl, J. Kim, M. McGrath, and E. Sosa (eds), *Epistemology: An Anthology*. Blackwell, 2008.
- Richard Feldman, *Epistemology*. Prentice-Hall, 2003.
- Richard L. Kirkham, *Theories of Truth*. MIT 1992.
- Keith Lehrer, *Knowledge*. Oxford, 1974.
- Keith Lehrer, *Theory of Knowledge*. Westview Press, 2000.
- Andrew Newman, *The Correspondence Theory of Truth*. Cambridge, 2004.
- Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*. Cambridge, 1981.
- Hilary Putnam, "Meaning and Reference." *The Journal of Philosophy* 70/19, 1973: 699-711.
- Bertrand Russell, "Truth and Falsehood." In *The Problems of Philosophy*. Cambridge 1912: 69-76.

## Schedule

Jan 18	Class Introduction
Jan 20	Descartes, <i>Discourse on Method</i> (11, 18-21)
Jan 25	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> (59-63); Moore, "Proof of an External World" (Fantl 4, 26-8)
Jan 27	Moore, "Four Forms of Skepticism" (Fantl 29-30), "Certainty" (Fantl 31-4)
Feb 1	Stroud, "The Problem of the External World" (Fantl 3, 7-25)
Feb 3	Lehrer, "What is Knowledge?" (1974: 1-18)
Feb 8	Feldman, "The Traditional Analysis of Knowledge" (8-24)
Feb 10	Lehrer, "What is Knowledge?" (1974: 18-23)
Feb 15	Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" (Fantl 192-3)
Feb 17	Feldman, "Modifying the Traditional Analysis of Knowledge" (25-38)
Feb 22	Chisholm, "Internalism and Externalism" (75-84)
Feb 24	Lehrer, "Externalism and the Truth Connection" (2000: 177-188)
Mar 1	Putnam, "Brains in a Vat" (1-21)
Mar 3	Lehrer, "Externalism and the Truth Connection" (2000: 189-204)
Mar 8	Putnam, "Meaning and Reference"
Mar 10	Brueckner, "Brains in a Vat"
Mar 22	Putnam, "Two Philosophical Perspectives" (49-74)
Mar 24	Goldman, "Internalism Exposed" (Fantl 379-93)
Mar 29	Ayer, "The A Priori" (71-81)
Mar 31	Ayer, "The A Priori" (81-87)
Apr 5	Ayer, "Truth and Probability" (46-8, 87-95)
Apr 7	Ayer, "Truth and Probability" (95-101)
Apr 12	Kirkham, "The Correspondence Theory" (119-34)
Apr 14	Kirkham, "The Correspondence Theory" (134-41)
Apr 19	Russell, "Truth and Falsehood" (69-75)
Apr 21	Newman, "Russell's Theory of Truth and Its Principal Problems" (88-107)
Apr 26	Newman, "The Correspondence Theory for Predicative Sentences" (53-71)
Apr 28	Newman, "The Correspondence Theory for Predicative Sentences" (71-87)

## Writing Support

The UH Writing Center works with undergraduates enrolled in any course who want help with their writing. Whether you need support with any part of your paper or check your final draft, the UH Writing Center can complement the class assistance with additional aid. To learn more about one-on-one consultations or to book an appointment, visit the [Writing-Center-Webpage](#). Here is the link for CLASS's students: [UH-Writing-Center](#).

## University Policies

Students must comply with the university policies pertaining to ethics and academic honesty. See the following links and read the documents thoroughly: [Student-Conduct-Policy](#) and [Academic-Honesty](#). For counseling and psychological services, visit [CAPS](#). Request for special accommodations is available here: [Adjustments/Auxiliary-Aids](#). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the University of Houston has issued extraordinary policies listed at the end of the syllabus.