

Externalism and Correspondence

University of Houston, Fall 2022
ILAS 16595-2350, Knowledge and Methods

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Course Description

The "Knowledge and Methods" course (ILAS 2350-16595) 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.

In Fall 2023, "Knowledge and Methods" course will focus on *epistemic externalism* and *truth as correspondence*. It will also examine *skepticism* and the *nature of knowledge*, including *justification*.

Time and Place

Weekly lectures take place on Tuesday (10-11:30 am) in the Classroom and Business Building (CBB), room 120. 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 10am-12 pm (excused absences require doctoral notes).
- 60% *Two 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*. The due dates are Oct 30 and Dec 8.
- 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 (Dec 10). All quizzes are available on *Blackboard Learn*.

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.

Schedule

Aug 23	Class Introduction
Aug 30	Descartes, <i>Discourse on Method</i> (11, 18-21), <i>Meditations</i> (59-63)
Sep 6	Moore, "Proof of an External World" (Fantl 4, 26-8), "Four Forms of Skepticism" (Fantl 29-30), "Certainty" (Fantl 31-4)
Sep 13	Stroud, "The Problem of the External World" (Fantl 3, 7-25)
Sep 20	Feldman, "The Traditional Analysis of Knowledge" (8-24) Lehrer, "What is Knowledge?" (1974: 1-23)
Sep 27	Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" (Fantl 192-3) Feldman, "Modifying the Traditional Analysis of Knowledge" (25-38)
Oct 4	Chisholm, "Internalism and Externalism" (75-84) Lehrer, "Externalism and the Truth Connection" (2000: 177-204)
Oct 11	Putnam, "Brains in a Vat" (1-21)
Oct 18	Putnam, "Meaning and Reference"
Oct 25	Putnam, "Two Philosophical Perspectives" (49-74) [first paper due Oct 30]
Nov 1	Ayer, "The A Priori" (71-87) Chisholm, "The A Priori" (26-38)
Nov 8	Ayer, "Truth and Probability" (46-8, 87-101)
Nov 15	Kirkham, "The Correspondence Theory" (119-41)
Nov 29	Russell, "Truth and Falsehood" (69-75) Newman, "Russell's Theory of Truth and Its Principal Problems" (88-107)
Dec 3	Newman, "The Correspondence Theory for Predicative Sentences" (53-87) Zalabardo, "Wittgenstein and Forms" (37-86) [second paper due Dec 8]

Bibliography

All the required readings are available on *Blackboard Learn*. Below is their complete list.

- Alfred Jules Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*. Dover, 1952.
Roderick Chisholm, *Theory of Knowledge*. Prentice-Hall, 1966.
René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*. Hackett, 1998.
Jeremy Fantl, Jaegwon Kim, Matthew McGrath, and Ernst 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.
José L. Zalabardo, *Representation and Reality in Wittgenstein's Tractatus*. Oxford 2015.