



VALUES AND KNOWLEDGE (PHI 6935)

Graduate Seminar ▪ Fall 2020

Tuesdays 2:30-5:30

Zina Ward

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Course Description: In this seminar we will explore the question: how does what we value shape what we know? In other words, is knowledge independent of what is (or what we take to be) valuable? This question has been approached from different angles by different subfields of philosophy. Epistemologists have debated whether standards for knowledge ascription depend on the practical and moral stakes; philosophers of science have examined the role of non-epistemic values in scientific knowledge production; and moral philosophers have discussed whether ethical considerations bear on what we ought to believe. We will read papers from each of these debates with an eye toward figuring out if fruitful connections can be drawn between them.

Format: This seminar unfortunately must be conducted remotely. We'll meet weekly via Zoom at the scheduled time on Tuesday afternoon. The Zoom link for our meetings is posted on Canvas.

Using Zoom: I strongly prefer that all participants have their camera turned on during seminar, if bandwidth allows. Given the number of people on the Zoom call, everyone will need to have their microphone muted unless they're speaking. We'll tentatively plan on using Zoom's built-in discussion features such as the "raise hand" feature to conduct discussion.

Office Hours: None of my office hours this semester will be held in my physical office. Send me an e-mail if you would like to meet and we can find a mutually convenient time to talk over Zoom. Depending on current conditions and public health guidelines, I may be open to meeting one-on-one in an outdoor location if you wish.

Assessment: Your grade for the seminar will be determined by: (1) an end-of-term research paper, and (2) weekly responses to the readings.

- (1) *Research Paper* (80%): You must submit a term paper of roughly 5,000-6,000 words on a subject of relevance to the seminar. The research paper is due Dec. 8.

I recommend that you start thinking of possible topics for your paper early in the semester. To make sure you're on the right track, you must submit a paper proposal on Canvas by Nov. 13. Your proposal should include: (i) a one-sentence *question* that your paper will attempt to answer; (ii) a tentative *thesis* of one or two sentences; and (iii) a paragraph-length *description* of how you intend to argue for the thesis.

- (2) *Weekly Responses* (20%): Each week, you must submit a thought about one or more of the readings (e.g., an objection, a counter-example, a connection to an earlier reading, an idea about how the week's readings relate, a re-working of an argument, an illuminating case study). This should be the length of a single paragraph (no more than two paragraphs, please). Your response needs to be submitted to Canvas by the end of the day on Monday before each Tuesday seminar meeting. I don't much care if you get it in by midnight – just be sure it's there when I wake up on Tuesday! (I'm asking you to submit via Canvas so it's

easy to keep track of all your responses.) Please also come to seminar prepared to discuss your thoughts. I may ask you to share your contribution in order to stimulate discussion.

These weekly responses take the place of (traditional) student seminar presentations. My hope is that they encourage you to read the assigned papers in an engaged, critical mode. It's important to be on the lookout for problems, extensions, ambiguities, novel applications, and so on. Given the challenges associated with conducting class over Zoom, your weekly responses will also help us scaffold discussion and keep everyone involved in seminar each week.

Readings: All readings are available on Canvas. I have posted each week's readings in the order I recommend you read them. They are in the same order on this syllabus.

Summary of Deadlines:

every Monday evening	weekly responses
November 13	research paper proposal
December 8	final research paper

Auditing: I welcome auditors to attend the seminar. However, auditors must also e-mail me weekly responses (see above) so that they can be included equally in discussion.

University Policies:

1. *University Attendance Policy*

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

2. *Academic Honor Policy*

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (For more details see the [FSU Academic Honor Policy and procedures for addressing alleged violations.](#))

3. *Americans With Disabilities Act*

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services; and
- (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Office of Accessibility Services has been provided. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact:

Office of Accessibility Services
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167

(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
Email: oas@fsu.edu
<https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas>

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Reading Schedule

(subject to revision)

Week 0 (Aug. 25) First Meeting (no reading)

Week 1 (Sept. 1) Introduction to Seminar Themes: Clifford versus James

Clifford (1887), "The Ethics of Belief" (focus on Part I)
James (1896), "The Will to Believe"

UNIT I: VALUES IN SCIENCE

Week 2 (Sept. 8) The Argument from Inductive Risk

Rudner (1953), "The Scientist *Qua* Scientist Makes Value Judgments"
Jeffrey (1956), "Valuation and Acceptance of Scientific Hypotheses"
Douglas (2000), "Inductive Risk and Values in Science"

Week 3 (Sept. 15) Inductive Risk in Climate Science

Winsberg (2012), "Values and Uncertainties in the Predictions of Global Climate Models"
Parker (2014), "Values and Uncertainties in Climate Prediction, Revisited"
Betz (2013), "In Defence of the Value-Free Ideal"
Optional: Bright (2017), "Du Bois' Democratic Defence of the Value Free Ideal"

Week 4 (Sept. 22) Underdetermination

Kuhn (1977), "Objectivity, Value Judgment, and Theory Choice"
Longino (1990), "Chapter 3: Evidence and Hypothesis" from *Science as Social Knowledge: Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry*
Intemann (2008), "Increasing the Number of Feminist Scientists: Why Feminist Aims are Not Served by the Underdetermination Thesis"
Optional: Turnbull (2017), "Underdetermination in Science: What It Is and Why We Should Care"
Optional: Anderson (2004), "Use of Value Judgments in Science: A General Argument, with Lessons from a Case Study on Divorce"

Week 5 (Sept. 29) Cognitive Attitudes in Science

- Elliott and Willmes (2013), "Cognitive Attitudes and Values in Science"
Cohen (1989), "Belief and Acceptance"
Steel (2015), "Acceptance, Values, and Probability"
Optional: Brown (2015), "John Dewey's Pragmatist Alternative to the Belief-Acceptance Dichotomy"

UNIT II: PRAGMATIC ENCROACHMENT

Week 6 (Oct. 6) Case-Based Arguments

- DeRose (1992), "Contextualism and Knowledge Attributions"
Stanley (2005), *Knowledge and Practical Interests*, Introduction and Chapter 5
Optional: Kim (2017), "Pragmatic Encroachment in Epistemology"

Week 7 (Oct. 13) Theoretical Arguments

- Fantl and McGrath (2010), "Pragmatic Encroachment"
Fantl and McGrath (2007), "On Pragmatic Encroachment in Epistemology"
Worsnip (2015), "Two Kinds of Stakes"

Week 8 (Oct. 20) Experimental Philosophy

- Nagel (2010), "Epistemic Anxiety and Adaptive Invariantism"
Sripada and Stanley (2012), "Empirical Tests of Interest-Relative Invariantism"
Buckwalter and Schaffer (2015), "Knowledge, Stakes, and Mistakes"
Optional: Brown (2013), "Experimental Philosophy, Contextualism and SSI"

Week 9 (Oct. 27) Degrees of Belief and Outright Belief

- Ganson (2008), "Evidentialism and Pragmatic Constraints on Outright Belief"
Gao (2019), "Credal Pragmatism"
Jackson (2019), "How Belief-Credence Dualism Explains Away Pragmatic Encroachment"

Week 10 (Nov. 3) Pragmatic Encroachment in Science

- Miller (2014), "Science, Values, and Pragmatic Encroachment on Knowledge"
Gerken (2018), "Pragmatic Encroachment on Scientific Knowledge?"
Kukla (forthcoming), "Situated Knowledge, Purity, and Moral Panic"

UNIT III: THE ETHICS OF BELIEF

Week 11 (Nov. 10) From Pragmatic to Moral Encroachment

- Pace (2011), "The Epistemic Value of Moral Considerations: Justification, Moral Encroachment, and James' 'Will to Believe'"
Fritz (2017), "Pragmatic Encroachment and Moral Encroachment"
Basu (2019), "Radical Moral Encroachment: The Moral Stakes of Racist Beliefs"
Optional: Basu (2019), "What We Epistemically Owe to Each Other"

Week 12 (Nov. 17) Evidentialism

Feldman (2000), "The Ethics of Belief"

Shah (2006), "A New Argument for Evidentialism"

Dotson (2018), "Accumulating Epistemic Power: A Problem with Epistemology"

Week 13 (Nov. 24) Objections to an Ethics of Belief

Huss (2009), "Three Challenges (and Three Replies) to the Ethics of Belief"

Worsnip (2020), "Can Pragmatists be Moderate?"

Fritz and Jackson (forthcoming), "Belief, Credence, and Moral Encroachment"

Week 14 (Dec. 1) TBD, based on class interest

Possible topics: the ethics of belief and doxastic involuntarism; epistemic and practical normativity (e.g. Berker 2018); contemporary perspectives on Clifford/James debate