

PHIL 4352/5352 — THE INDISPENSABILITY OF INTUITION

Thursday 4:30-7:20,

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Course Description: This course is about the nature of epistemic justification and reasons. It is centered around a few papers written by the instructor which form the basis for an upcoming Cambridge University Press book. Taken together, these papers cover a lot of interesting and important philosophical material. The unifying thread in this work is a focus on our cognitive acts (e.g., belief formation and retention) rather than our cognitive states (e.g., beliefs themselves). One might call this approach “act-first epistemology”. By its nature, act-first epistemology must bridge the gap between traditional epistemology and action theory. In so doing, it will cast many traditional views on both sides in a new light.

In addition to this over-arching framework, the class will discuss the nature of rational intuition. The focus, however, will not be on intuition as a source of a priori knowledge but, rather, the role of intuition in everyday “empirical” knowledge. Hence, the indispensability of intuition.

Course Objectives: A significant objective of this course is to provide the students with a genuine sense of philosophy as a living discipline – not the mere study of ideas, but the production of novel contributions to the field. In addition, students will attain both a better understanding of a number of foundational topics in epistemology and action theory and further develop their capacity to critically engage ideas.

Materials:

Optional

- Course Packet of suggested background readings, available on the course site. Google Scholar is also your friend.

Requirements and Expectations

This course is an upper division/graduate philosophy course. Students will be expected to have academic skills commensurate with its level including: the ability to read complex primary source material, the ability to write clear, well-constructed critical essays, and the ability to engage in articulate and respectful discourse. In addition, I expect all students to be prepared and attentive in class. This means coming to class having done reading assignments and having thought about their significance, and while in class being an active listener and contributor. Although I will not take attendance, I do expect you to attend every class meeting. You are responsible for all material and announcements made in class, whether you are present or not. No late assignments will be allowed without a University excuse.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have or suspect you have a physical, learning, or psychological disability and require accommodations, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services located in the Union Bldg East, room 106 (747-5148).

Evaluation – PHIL 4352:

- **Article Report 1 (10%)**
- **Article Report 2 (10%)**
- **Article Report 3 (10%)**
- **Critical Essay (50% of total grade):** ~5,000 words
- **Participation (20%)**

Evaluation – PHIL 5352:

- **Article Report 1 (10%)**
- **Article Report 2 (10%)**
- **Article Report 3 (10%)**
- **Critical Essay (50% of total grade):** ~10,000 words
- **Participation (20%) - 15 total classes. You must be counted as attending 10 for full credit.**

The grading scale for this class is given below:

A	B	C	D	F
>89.5%	>79.5%	>69.5%	>59.5%	≤59.5%

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a concern for everyone. By joining the UTEP community every student agrees to abide by the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable to another person.

Cheating

- Copying from the test paper of another student
- Communicating with another student during a test
- Giving or seeking aid from another student during a test
- Possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during tests (i.e. Crib notes, class notes, books, etc)
- Substituting for another person to take a test
- Falsifying research data, reports, academic work offered for credit

Plagiarism

- Using someone's work in your assignments without the proper citations

- Submitting the same paper or assignment from a different course, without direct permission of instructors

Collusion

- Unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments.

Course Schedule: This is a schedule of topics for the semester. This material is designed to help you participate better in class discussion and give you direction for research papers. Class discussion will not be based exclusively on the listed readings. In general.

Section	Readings/Topics
General Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moffett, Marc, "Action theory as epistemology" • Moffett, Marc, "Intuitions as evidence"
Section 1: Presentationality	<p>1. Foundationalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Howard-Snyder, "Foundationalism" <p>2. Current Views of Presentationality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bealer, "The Incoherence of Empiricism" (pp. 101 – 104) • Bengson, "The Intellectual Given" (pp. 709 – 725) • Chudnoff, "Presentational Phenomenology" <p>3. Acquaintance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russell, "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description" • Textor, "Acquaintance, Presentation and Judgement: From Brentano to Russell and Back Again." <p>4. Metaphysics: Existence and Immanence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loux, Chapter 1: The Problem of Universals • Linsky & Zalta, "In defense of the contingently nonconcrete" <p>5. Direct Perception & Perceptual Error</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johnston, "The Obscure Object of Hallucination" • Crane, "What is the Problem of Perception"
Section 2: Foundationalism and Basic Reasons	<p>6. The Ontology of Reasons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turri, "The Ontology of Reasons" • Mitova, "Truthy Psychologism About Evidence" <p>7. Presentational Dogmatism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huemer, "Compassionate Phenomenal Conservatism" • Pryor, "The Skeptic and the Dogmatist" <p>8. Primitive Actions & Non-deliberative Responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jones, Ch. 1: A Theory of Primitive Action • Hursthouse, "Arational Actions" • Wedgwood, "Primitively Rational Belief Formation" <p>9. Doxastic Voluntarism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McHugh, "Exercising Doxastic Freedom" • Alston, "The Deontological Conception of Epistemic Justification" <p>10. Transference Principle for Justification</p>
Section 3: Epistemic Agency, Inference, and Intuition	<p>11. The "Impurity" of Intuitions in Philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bealer, "A Theory of Concepts and Concept Possession" <p>12. Epistemic Agency</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setiya, "Epistemic Agency: Some Doubts" • McGrath, "A Limitation on Agency in Judgment" • McHugh, "Epistemic Responsibility and Doxastic Agency" <p>13. Inference, Agency, and Intuition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boghossian, "Blind Reasoning" • Boghossian, "What is an Inference?" • Boyle, "Making Up Your Mind and the Activity of Reason"
<p>Section 4: Intuition in Perception</p>	<p>14. Philosophy of Perception: Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish, <i>Philosophy of Perception</i> <p>15. Cognitive Penetration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silins, "Cognitive Penetration and the Epistemology of Perception" • Lord, "Enriched Perceptual Content" <p>16. Intuitively Enriched Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McLear, "Kant on perceptual content" • Descartes, Meditation II (Wax Argument)