

**Phi 335 Epistemology**  
Hanover College, Winter 2014  
1:00-1:50pm, MWF, CLA 301

Jared Bates

307 Classic Hall, 866-7257 (office), 866-6502 (home), bates@hanover.edu

Winter 2014 Office Hours: 9-10 MWF, 1-2 T, and by appointment

<http://vault.hanover.edu/~bates/epistemology/>

**Course Description**

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies the nature, limits, and value of knowledge. This course will focus on questions about the aim of belief: Does belief have a proper aim? If so, what is it? (Or, if there is more than one, what are they?) What does the aim of belief, or the lack thereof, tell us about the nature of belief? What does the aim of belief tell us about other epistemic concepts, such as epistemic rationality or justification? What does the aim of belief tell us about other epistemic values, such as the aim of inquiry or the value of knowledge? The goal of this course is for you to be able to think and write about central questions concerning the aim of belief in an informed and intelligent way. Writing assignments will help you gain the required mastery of the course material to further this end.

**Texts**

Various articles available online or as handouts. See Reading Schedule.

**Course Requirements & Grading**

This semester, students will write eight argument analysis papers on the reading assignments, lead a class discussion, complete one major thesis-defense project, attend and participate regularly in class discussions, and take a comprehensive final exam. The argument analyses, class discussion assignment and thesis-defense project are detailed on separate handouts. The final exam will be scheduled for the week of 15 Apr. The below grading scheme presupposes regular attendance and class participation; lack thereof will result in a lowered grade.

<u>Point Distributions</u>	<u>Letter Grade Distribution</u>
8 short papers, 25pts ea 200	A 448-480 B+ 416-431 C+ 368-383 D+ 320-335
Thesis-defense project 150	B 400-415 C 352-367 D 304-319
Discussion leader 30	A- 432-447 B- 384-399 C- 336-351 D- 288-303
Final exam 100	F 0-287
<b>Total: 480</b>	

**Special Information**

- Americans with Disabilities Act: If you have any special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need course materials or tests in alternative formats, notify me immediately. All reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs.
- Academic Dishonesty: Academic honesty is essential to the intellectual life of the College. Thus, academic dishonesty, such as cheating and plagiarism, is a basis for disciplinary action. No suspected case of academic dishonesty will be taken lightly; all will be handled in accordance with the student conduct code.

- Dropping this course: The deadline for discretionary withdrawal from any class is 5:00pm, Fri, 7 Mar.
- Degree Requirements: This course counts as an elective toward the Philosophy major or minor.

### Reading Schedule

Date	Readings	Important Dates
6 Jan	Ernest Sosa, "The place of truth in epistemology" <a href="http://fitelson.org/epistemology/sosa.pdf">http://fitelson.org/epistemology/sosa.pdf</a>	
13	* Ralph Wedgwood, "The aim of belief" <a href="http://fitelson.org/epistemology/wedgewood.pdf">http://fitelson.org/epistemology/wedgewood.pdf</a>	
20	* Nishi Shah, "How truth governs belief" <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/3595547">http://www.jstor.org/stable/3595547</a>	
27	* Asbjørn Steglich-Petersen, "No norm needed: on the aim of belief" <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/3840969">http://www.jstor.org/stable/3840969</a>	
3 Feb	* Kathrin Glüer and Åsa Wikforss, "Against belief normativity" <a href="http://people.su.se/~wikforss/Ch%206%20Gluer%20&amp;%20Wikforss%20final.pdf">http://people.su.se/~wikforss/Ch%206%20Gluer%20&amp;%20Wikforss%20final.pdf</a>	
10	* Thomas Kelly, "Epistemic rationality as instrumental rationality" <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/20140564">http://www.jstor.org/stable/20140564</a>	
17	* Stephen R. Grimm, "Epistemic goals and epistemic values" <a href="http://faculty.fordham.edu/sgrimm/Site/Papers_and_Presentations_files/Grimm-2008-PPR-Epistemic%20Goals%20and%20Values.pdf">http://faculty.fordham.edu/sgrimm/Site/Papers_and_Presentations_files/Grimm-2008-PPR-Epistemic%20Goals%20and%20Values.pdf</a>	21 Feb: Research tutorial assignment due
24	--	Winter Break
3 Mar	* David Papineau, "There are no norms of belief" <a href="http://www.davidpapineau.co.uk/uploads/1/8/5/5/18551740/there_are_no_norms_of_belief.doc">http://www.davidpapineau.co.uk/uploads/1/8/5/5/18551740/there_are_no_norms_of_belief.doc</a>	7 Mar: Initial consultation deadline
10	Ryan T. McKay and Daniel C. Dennett, "The evolution of misbelief" <a href="http://ase.tufts.edu/cogstud/dennett/papers/evolmisbelief.pdf">http://ase.tufts.edu/cogstud/dennett/papers/evolmisbelief.pdf</a> pp.493-527	10 Mar: Topic and bibliography hard copy and presentation due
17	Ryan T. McKay and Daniel C. Dennett, "The evolution of misbelief" <a href="http://ase.tufts.edu/cogstud/dennett/papers/evolmisbelief.pdf">http://ase.tufts.edu/cogstud/dennett/papers/evolmisbelief.pdf</a> pp.527-561	21 Mar: Draft deadline
24	* William G. Lycan, "Epistemic value" <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/20116154">http://www.jstor.org/stable/20116154</a>	
31	In-class presentations	31 Mar: Paper due 4 Apr: Class cancelled
7 Apr	In-class presentations	
14	--	Final Exam Week

NB: The reading schedule lists each week of the semester by Monday's date. Readings cover the entire week and should be completed before class on Monday. This schedule is subject to change.