

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary  
Epistemology *PHIL6310*  
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### **Seminary Mission Statement**

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

### **Course Description**

The course introduces students to basic principles of epistemology and how to apply them as part of a Christian intellectual life. Attention will be given to epistemology in religious experience, theological construction, philosophical explanation, and apologetic and evangelistic presentation.

### **Course Purpose**

The purpose of this course is to challenge students to think through issues related to knowledge and to come to their own preliminary conclusions as to what it means to know, how knowledge is best arrived at, and why.

### **Core Values Addressed**

The course will address the core value of *Doctrinal Integrity* directly and *Spiritual Vitality* indirectly. Reflection on what it means to know is intimately related to the knowledge of God, Scripture, and the nature and purpose of Creation and indeed all of life. For the Christian, philosophy is ultimately a matter of loving God with the mind (Matthew 22:37-40)—and to love God one must know God. The core value for the 2015-2016 academic year is *Mission Focus*.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will be introduced to the basic principles of epistemology by attending class lectures.
2. Students will be introduced to the basic principles of epistemology by reading the primary text and assigned readings.
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic principles of epistemology when tested through quizzes and exams.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic principles of epistemology by identifying examples of epistemic theories and practices they encounter in the reading.

### **Methodology**

The course will utilize classroom lectures and discussion, reading assignments, and quizzes/exams.

## Grading

Grades will be assigned on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale.

## Evaluation

Reading Report 1	20%
Reading Report 2	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	30%
<u>Personal Perspective</u>	<u>10%</u>
	100%

## Texts

### REQUIRED

Cullison, Andrew. *The Bloomsbury Companion to Epistemology*. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015.

Pojman, Louis P. *The Theory of Knowledge: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2001.

Pojman, Louis P. *What Can We Know? An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*. Second Edition. Wadsworth/Thomson, 2001.

### OPTIONAL

Pojman, Louis P. *What Can We Know? An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*. Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2001.

Plantinga, Alvin. *Warrant, The Current Debate*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

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Plantinga, Alvin. *Warranted Christian Belief*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Alston, William. *A Realist Conception of Truth*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997.

———. *Perceiving God: The Epistemology of Religious Experience*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991.

<b>EPISTEMOLOGY SCHEDULE</b>		
8/26		Introduce Course, Assign Reading Reviews
8/26		Epistemology 101
9/2		Epistemology 101
9/2	Kevin Cox	<i>What Can We Know</i> , Chapter 1; Cullison 1-19
9/9	Trey Norsworthy	<i>What Can We Know</i> , Chapter 2 & 3
9/9	Patrick Cochran	<i>Theory of Knowledge</i> , 49-70 Moore, Lehrer, Malcolm
9/16	Chris Loy	<i>What Can We Know</i> , Chapter 4
9/16	Eli Price	<i>Theory of Knowledge</i> , 71-120
9/23	Josh Hagans	<i>What Can We Know</i> , Chapter 5
9/23	Kevin Cox	<i>Theory of Knowledge</i> , 125-55
9/30	Richie Clark	<i>What Can We Know</i> , Chapters 6 and 7
9/30	Trey Norsworthy	<i>Theory of Knowledge</i> , 157-206
10/7	Josh Hagans	<i>Theory of Knowledge</i> , 206-56
10/7	Eli Price	<i>What Can We Know</i> , Chapters 8 and 9
10/14	Chris Loy	<i>Theory of Knowledge</i> , 310-63
10/14	Patrick Cochran	<i>What Can We Know</i> , Chapter 12
10/21	<b>FALL BREAK</b>	
<b>10/28</b>		<b>Midterm Exam</b>
10/28		<i>What Can We Know</i> , Chapter 15
11/4	Richie Clark	<i>Theory of Knowledge</i> , 507-54
11/4		Selected Readings
11/11		Miscellaneous
11/18	<b>ETS/EPS/SBL/AAR</b>	
11/25	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>	
12/2		Personal Perspectives
12/9		Personal Perspectives
12/16	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	

## Bibliography

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Wolterstorff, Nicholas. 1999. *Epistemology of Religion*. In: Greco and Sosa 1999, 303–324.

### **Internet Resources**

[Epistemology Page](#), maintained by Keith De Rose (Yale University).

[The Epistemology Research Guide](#), maintained by Keith Korcz (University of Louisiana/Lafayette).

"[Direct Warrant Realism](#)", an online manuscript, by Keith De Rose (Yale University).

"[Foundationalism, Sense-Experiential Content, and Sellars's Dilemma](#)", colloquium paper by M. Steup (St. Cloud State University), delivered at the 2001 APA/Pacific meetings.