

## PHH 4300 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Dr. Sally Ferguson

### Course Overview:

One of the main areas of philosophy, which has enjoyed a long history and is the subject of a great deal of contemporary research, is *epistemology*, or the study of knowledge. In this course we will be introduced to some of the central questions in epistemology, which include:

- Is it possible to know anything?
- Can the senses provide us with knowledge?
- What are the components of knowledge?
- What justifies our knowledge claims?
- Is there knowledge that is independent of experience?
- What is knowledge in science?

### Outline of Study:

- Introduction
- Skepticism
- Knowledge of the External World
- The Analysis of Knowledge
- Exam One
- Foundationalism and Coherentism
- Existentialism and Internalism
- A Priori Knowledge
- Justification of Induction
- Exam Two

### Required Texts:

Louis P. Pojman, editor: *The Theory of Knowledge: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, (Wadsworth, 1993)

### Homework and Exams:

There are two (5 page) papers that students will be required to write as well as two short-answer and essay examinations. The examinations must be written in “blue books” – examination booklets that are available at the UWF bookstore. Students are responsible for bringing their own blue books to the exams. Late written assignments and make-up exams will only be allowed in cases of legitimate need, and authentication of excuse will be required (e.g., doctor’s note.) Arrangements should be made in advance except in cases of emergency, and as soon as possible in the case of emergency.

Each student will be expected to have read the applicable material in advance of class, and to be prepared to contribute to the discussion of the material. In class we will be discussing the issues raised in the reading, and expanding on them.

### Grading Policy:

The grade in this course will be determined on the basis of two short-answer and essay examinations, each worth 30% of the final grade, and two (5 page) papers, each worth 20% of the final grade. Students should retain all of their written work for the course until after they have received their final grade.

### Attendance:

Class attendance is mandatory, and will be taken. Attendance records are used for the purposes of “bumping up” final grades. Those with good attendance records, if their final grade is on the borderline between grades, will be “bumped up”. Those with poor attendance records will stay right where they are. Those who are chronically absent can expect to see their final grade diminished accordingly.