Instructor: David Barnett
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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 3pm - 6pm or by appointment

Course Description: Can you know something even if you have no evidence that it is true? Is it rational to hold political or religious beliefs that you would have rejected had you been raised in a different family or culture? In this introductory course in epistemology, we will examine these and other questions about what you really know and what you can rationally believe. In addition to these sorts of questions, we will step back and consider the general question of what it is to know something, and what it is to believe something rationally. We will even consider skepticism, the philosophical view that you do not know anything at all.

Readings: Readings can be found at the course website, at: http://www.davidjamesbar.net/?page_id=321

Grading:
25% class participation
35% midterm paper (6 pages, due April 29)
40% final paper (6 pages, due June 3)

Class Schedule

Week 1	The Ethics of Belief
M (March 28)	class introduction
W (March 30)	William Clifford, 'The Ethics of Belief' John Pollock, 'Knowledge and Justification'
F (April 1)	William James, 'The Will to Believe'
Week 2	Epistemic Reasons and the Voluntariness of Belief
M (April 4)	Sarah Paul, 'The Courage of Conviction'
W (April 6)	Pamela Hieronymi, 'The Wrong Kind of Reason'
F (April 8)	Susanna Rinard, 'No Exception For Belief'
Week 3	Disagreement
M (April 11)	Katia Vavova, 'Irrelevant Influences'
W (April 13)	Richard Feldman, 'Reasonable Religious Disagreement'
F (April 15)	Tom Kelly, 'Disagreement and the Burdens of Judgment'
Week 4	Reflection and Akrasia

M (April 18)	Adam Elga, 'On Overrating Oneself…and Knowing It'
W (April 20)	Maria Lasonen-Aarnio, 'Higher-Order Evidence and the Limits of Defeat'
F (April 22)	Sophie Horowitz, 'Epistemic Akrasia'
Week 5	External World Skepticism
M (April 25)	Rene Descartes, First and Second Meditations John Pollock, 'A Brain in a Vat'
W (April 27)	G. E. Moore, 'Proof of an External World'
F (April 29)	James Pryor, 'The Skeptic and the Dogmatist' **Due: midterm paper**
Week 6	External World Skepticism, continued
M (May 2)	Roger White, 'Problems for Dogmatism'
W (May 4)	Yuval Avnur, 'Closure Reconsidered'
F (May 6)	David Barnett, 'Perceptual Justification and the Cartesian Theater'
Week 7	Internalism and Externalism
M (May 9)	Richard Feldman, 'Justification is Internal'
W (May 11)	John Greco, 'Justification is Not Internal'
F (May 13)	Jennifer Lackey, 'Memory as a Generative Epistemic Source'
Week 8	Memory
M (May 16)	David Barnett, 'Is Memory Merely Testimony from One's Former Self?'
W (May 18)	**class cancelled**
F (May 20)	Matthew McGrath, 'Memory and Epistemic Conservatism'
Week 9	Memory, continued
M (May 23)	**class cancelled**
W (May 25)	**class cancelled**
F (May 27)	Michael Titelbaum, 'Continuing On'
Week 10	Epistemic Dilemmas
M (May 30)	Alexander Jackson, 'Appearances, Rationality, and Justified Belief'
W (June 1)	Brian Weatherson, 'Memory, Belief, and Time'
F (June 3)	no reading **Due: final paper**