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Office Hours: Wednesday 1:30-2:30 and by appointment

There will be two parts to the course. During the first part (roughly weeks 1-9) we will cover a diverse array of topics in metaphysics and epistemology. Devoting a few classes to each topic, we will first read and discuss papers that provide the appropriate background for the topic and then explore our own thoughts and ideas. A tentative list of topics is found below but subject to change. The second part of the course will be used to learn how to identify, explore, and develop a research thesis. During that time, you will be tasked with identifying a topic of interest, formulating a research question, and developing your own about that questions. Each of these steps will be shared and presented with the rest of the class (see details below).

Readings:
Readings will all be posted online.

Goals and Grading Criteria:
As there are two very different parts of the course, I’m going to identify two different sets of goals and grading criteria for each part.

Part 1: We will survey a variety of different topics (roughly 4-5) in metaphysics and epistemology with the goal of familiarizing you with the types of inquires that occur in these fields.

a. 4 Short written responses (15%)
b. Week 6 exam (15%)
c. Week 9 exam (15%)

List of Tentative Topics: Personal Identity; Epistemology of Democracy and Diversity; Knowledge and Deliberation; Nature of Creativity;

Part 2: The second part of the course will be used to engage in a research project.

1. Class Discussion and Participation (10%)  
a. Both leading your own discussion as well as your participation as other lead discussion will count for this part of the grade.
2. Research proposal (5%)
3. Paper outline (5%)
4. Research presentation (10%)
5. Research paper (25%)
Research Project Requirements:

1. Leading Class Discussion
   a. As you go about identifying a topic of interest, you will need to identify a handful of papers (at most 3) that your research will interact with.
   b. You will select two of these papers for us to read together as a class. You will be tasked with leading the class discussion for these papers.
   c. Discussion handout: I will provide more details later in class, but in leading the class discussion, your main task is to ensure that we understand the main arguments and theses of the paper. In addition, you should have a set of questions ready to help guide the class discussion.

2. Research proposal
   a. Identify a research topic
      i. You need to be able to describe a problem or question in a few (one to three) sentences.
      ii. The question or problem must be well-formed. Well-formed questions are those that are posed in such a way that you know what would constitute a satisfactory answer.
   b. Summary of your initial intuitions
      i. You will be asked to provide a short initial summary of your intuitions regarding the problem or question that you have identified.

3. Paper Outline:
   a. Your paper outline will help me to understand the structure of the paper, but will also consist of a short summary of each of the sections of the paper.

4. Research Presentation: You will have the opportunity to present your research prior to editing and handing in your final paper.

5. Final Paper