

## Understanding

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## Course Description

The study of knowledge and justification has dominated much analytic epistemology during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a number of epistemologists have advocated an “understanding turn” in epistemology. For some, this means to resurrect the tradition of regarding understanding as a central focus of epistemology, while for others this means to establish such a tradition. The first part of this course consists in introducing the recent understanding turn in epistemology, which is still an ongoing process. Meanwhile, philosophers of science have also started paying more attention to scientific understanding. The second part of this course will introduce some important recent research on scientific understanding.

The goal is to train the students to examine the phenomenon of understanding from both an epistemological, as well as a philosophy-of-science, angle. Students should benefit from the training of this course, as this cross-discipline approach has in recent years gained a more prominent position in the literature.

## Course Requirement

Attendance and participation are mandatory. I will start taking attendance from the third week (09/25). The point of taking attendance is to help, not to punish. So, I will give you 3 personal days (days which you don't need to excuse your absence). After that, 1 points of the attendance grade will be deduced for each absence.

Class participation consists of asking questions and giving comments. The latter, though highly recommended, is not mandatory. Participation will be weighed by both quantity and quality.

## Grading

Attendance	10%
Participation	30%
Exam x 2	60%

## Tentative Schedule (subject to change, with notice)

09/11	“Understanding in Epistemology” ( <i>Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> )
09/18	Linda Zagzebski’s “Recovering Understanding” (2001)
09/25	Jonathan Kvanvig’s “Knowledge and Understanding” (2003)

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10/16	Stephen Grimm’s “Is Understanding A Species of Knowledge?” (2006)
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10/23	Duncan Pritchard's "Understanding" (2010)
10/30	Stephen Grimm's "Understanding as Knowledge of Causes" (2014)
11/06	Alison Hill's "Understanding Why" (2015)
11/13	Midterm Exam
11/20	Michael Strevens' "No Understanding without Explanation" (2013)
11/27	Catherine Elgin's "Understanding and the Facts" (2007)
12/04	Michael Strevens' "How Idealizations Provide Understanding" (2017)
12/11	Insa Lawler's "Scientific Understanding and Felicitous Legitimate Falsehoods" (2019)
12/18	Stephen Grimm's "Understanding and Transparency" (2017)
12/25	J. D. Trout's "Understanding and Fluency" (2018)
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01/08	Final Exam