

***Knowledge and its Limits* and its Limits**

Fall 2024

Wednesdays 12–3pm, 32-D831

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Description:

In classic turn-of-the-millennium style, the blurb on the back of *Knowledge and its Limits* (published in 2000) said that it was "a new way of doing epistemology for the twenty-first century". Time for a quarterly assessment. We'll read a handful of chapters from the book, and then branch off into contemporary work that follows up on, refines, and critiques its ideas in various ways. Themes will include internalism vs. externalism, introspection and iteration principles, probability, normality, feasibility, and a dash of narrativity. We'll have celebrity-guest appearances from Rachel Fraser and Maria Lasonen-Aarnio.

Readings: all readings will be made available on the course website:

https://www.kevindorst.com/fa24_grad_epistemology.html

Requirements:

Attendance at all classes.

A presentation on one of the readings during the semester (you lead half the class session).

A draft of your term paper by **December 17** (11:59pm)

A final, revised paper (in response to our feedback) by **February 3, 2025**

Disability Accommodations: If there's any issue to touch base about, let us know! Disability and Access Services: <https://studentlife.mit.edu/das>

Self-care and well being: Grad school is hard. So please, get into the habit of building self-care into your schedule— whether it's in the form of exercise, time talking to friends/family, or even just to relax. Do it! You'll find that you are much more productive if you do. MIT also has resources (<https://medical.mit.edu/services/mental-health-counseling>). Or call 617-253-2916—a line that's open 24 hours a day. For grad-student-specific resources: the Office of Graduate Education (OGE), GradSupport provides consultation, coaching, and advocacy to graduate students on matters related to academic and life challenges. Contact GradSupport at gradsupport@mit.edu or at (617) 253-4860.

Schedule

Sep 4 Internalism and Externalism

- Wedgwood 2002, "[Internalism Explained](#)" (Kevin)
- Kail, [Introduction](#), [Chapter 2](#), and [Chapter 3](#) (Jack)

Sep 11 Luminosity

- Kail: [Chapter 4](#) (Kevin)
- Srinivasan 2015, “[Are We Luminous?](#)” – [STUDENT]

Sep 18 Iteration

- Kail: [Chapter 5](#) (Kevin)
- Das and Salow 2018, “[Transparency and the KK Principle](#)” — [STUDENT]

Sep 25 Evidence [Kevin traveling]

- Kail: [Chapter 9](#) (Jack)
- Smithies 2014, “[The Phenomenal Basis of Epistemic Justification](#)” — [STUDENT]

Oct 02 Knowledge and action [Kevin traveling]

- Hyman 2015, [Chapter 6](#) (Jack)
- Hyman 2015, [Chapter 7](#) and [Chapter 8](#) [STUDENT]

Oct 09 Knowledge, safe knowledge, and cheap, plastic scales

- Jack’s paper (Jack)

Oct 16 Narrative epistemology

- Rachel chapters [STUDENTS]

Oct 23 Rachel visits

Oct 30 Probability

- Kail: [Chapter 10](#) (Kevin)
- Salow (2018), “[The Externalist’s Guide to Fishing for Compliments](#)” [STUDENT]

Nov 6 Probability

- Dorst 2020, “[Evidence: A Guide for the Uncertain](#)” (Kevin)

Nov 13 Normality

- Goodman and Salow 2023, “[Epistemology Normalized](#)” (Jack)

Nov 20 Feasibilist epistemology

- Maria chapters [STUDENTS]

Nov 27 (No class—holiday)

Dec 04 Feasibilist epistemology

- Maria chapters [STUDENTS]

Dec 11 Maria zooms in

December 17: PAPER DRAFTS DUE