EXPERTISE: ITS NATURE AND USES
Philosophy 576
Fall 2015
W 3:30-6:30pm
Cohen 493

Professor: Alexander Guerrero
Email: aguerr@upenn.edu
Office: Cohen 424
Office Hour: W 11am-12pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an examination of the idea of expertise and its applications in scientific, legal, moral, and political contexts. One aim of the course is to consider proposals regarding the nature of expertise. What makes someone an expert? What is the relationship between expertise and knowledge? What is the relationship between expertise and experience? When is expertise possible in some context of inquiry or knowledge?

For the non-experts (and that is all of us, in some context or other): how can we identify that someone is an expert? When is it permissible or obligatory to rely on the testimony of experts? How can we harness the value of expertise?

We will consider these general questions, but we will spend much of the course engaging with these general questions by looking at more contextually specific questions.

Are there moral experts? Is there something particularly troublesome about relying on moral testimony? Should there be bioethics experts with a role in medical decisionmaking and allocation decisions?

Who should be able to count as an expert for the purpose of legal proceedings? How should we determine if someone is an expert for the purposes of legal decisionmaking?

What is the nature of scientific expertise? Is science a value-free enterprise? How is democracy compatible with the existence of expertise? How should we incorporate scientific expertise into political decisionmaking?

We will consider all of these questions and others throughout the course.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Philip Kitcher, Science, Truth, and Democracy (2001)

All other readings will be made available on the course website.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

I. TALKING

(A) Come to class, be prepared, talk regularly. (15% of grade)

(B) In addition to that, each person taking the class for credit will be required to be a “commentator” on one of the readings for one of the meetings of the course. This role should be treated as if you were serving as a commentator for a conference (like one of the American Philosophical Association conferences) and you have been assigned a paper on which to comment. (15% of grade)

You will have no more than 7 minutes total for your comments and you will be expected to make a handout.

You need only offer as much description and summary as is necessary to understand your critical points (which might be focused entirely on one part of one argument), and you should see your role as offering critical commentary on an argument or claim made by the author of the relevant reading.

You will need to practice giving your comments so that they can fit in the allotted time, and you will need to meet with me and send me your handout at least one day in advance of the course meeting at which you will offer your comments.

II. WRITING

Undergraduates have two options:

Option One: (a) 2000-2500 word paper, due 10/30 (30% of grade)
(b) 2500-3000 word paper, due 12/11 (40% of grade)

Option Two: 7000-7500 word paper, due 12/18 (70% of grade)

Graduate students have one option:

7000-9000 word paper, due 12/18 (70% of grade)

Details will be provided in class.

ACCESSIBILITY

I want this class to be a great and educational experience for all of you, and all of you are entitled to equal access to educational opportunities at Penn. Disabled students are encouraged to speak with me if that would be helpful and to avail themselves of the services provided by the Office of Student Disability Services: http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/sds/

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to be familiar with and to abide by Penn’s policy on academic and intellectual integrity: http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/index.html
# PLAN FOR COURSE AND READINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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Plato, *Charmides*, 164c to end (176d) |

## I. EXPERTISE IN GENERAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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| **9/2** | Analyzing Expertise | A. Harry Collins and Robert Evans, *Rethinking Expertise*, Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2 (2007)  

## II. EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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F. Sandra Harding, “Rethinking Standpoint |

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Authors and Titles</th>
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| 9/30 | Experience and Expertise | H. Hubert Dreyfus, “How Far is Distance Learning from Education?” from On the Internet (2008)  

### III. EXPERTISE AND MORALITY

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Authors and Titles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>References</td>
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Federal Rule of Evidence 702 and Notes: [https://www.law.cornell.edu/rules/fre/rule_702](https://www.law.cornell.edu/rules/fre/rule_702)  
Additional Reading:  
Frye v. United States (1923) (excerpt)  
Daubert v. Merrill Dow Pharmaceuticals Inc. (1993)  
### V. EXPERTISE AND SCIENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10/21</th>
<th>What Makes Someone a Scientific Expert?</th>
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<td>Additional Reading:</td>
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### VI. BRINGING EXPERTISE INTO POLITICS

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<th>10/28</th>
<th>Democratic Science and Scientific Democracy</th>
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<tr>
<th>11/4</th>
<th>Not just the Expert/Non-Expert problem: ignorance, its manufacture, and capture</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Jason Brennan, <em>Against Politics</em> (2015), excerpts</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/9</td>
<td>Institutional Possibilities and the Possibility of Principled Choice of Experts</td>
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