

Philosophy 522 – Philosophy of Probability
Fall, 2004

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This course will examine a range of philosophical questions concerning the use of probability concepts to organize and clarify scientific reasoning. The semester will be devoted to a careful reading of the book by Howson and Urbach (see below), which defends Bayesianism and attacks frequentism, the latter being at present the dominant school of statistics. If Howson and Urbach are right, many changes are needed in the practices of science.

Requirements:

Attendance in class and participation in discussion are required and will affect your grade.

A short paper (4-5 double-spaced pages on a topic to be assigned, hardcopy to be submitted in class) will be due on **September 23**. There will be two in-class exams, on **October 21** and **November 18**, and there will be a final.

Office Hours:

My office hours are W 1:30-3:30, or by appointment, in 5173 Helen C. White Hall.

Textbook available at University Bookstore:

Colin Howson and Peter Urbach, *Scientific Reasoning – the Bayesian Approach* (Open Court, 2nd edition).