

## **Abstract: The (Serious) Metaphysics of Epistemic Normativity**

Abstract: Consider the omniscient being and the blank slate. One has perfect, complete, immaculate knowledge, the other none at all. We are all somewhere in between. Perhaps we once were blank slates; no matter, none of us has been for a long time. Our knowledge increases or diminishes, both overall and with regard to specific subject matters. Interpersonal comparisons are possible too; each of you now knows more than I knew as a child, and there are subjects about which you know more than me and others about which I know more than you. We also differ from the omniscient being and the blank slate in that there is, in all of us, some admixture of error. It's not just that how much we know can increase or diminish, and in principle be compared to how much some other person knows. It is that we can go wrong to a greater or lesser extent. All this points to the idea that there is a quantitative dimension to knowledge and error, one that (I will argue) is poorly understood.

In this talk, I will outline the problem, which ties together epistemology and metaphysics, with a particular eye to showing (i) how the standard way this quantitative dimension is understood is mistaken, (ii) how an appeal to similarity suggests a better route, and how (iii) this approach threatens a perspectival or interest-dependent sense of the quantitative dimension of knowledge and error. The aim will be to collapse an issue in epistemology to an issue within metaphysics.