What is knowledge? What are the principal types of knowledge, and what does a person's knowing a claim or proposition \( p \) amount to? Philosophers have commonly supposed that a person's having justification, or warrant, for believing that \( p \) is a necessary condition of his/her knowing that \( p \).

Accordingly, this course will be concerned with theories of justification as well as of knowledge, along with the question of whether there can be knowledge without what is called epistemic justification. Views in ancient, early modern, and contemporary philosophy—also one Eastern view—will be surveyed.


Grading: Midterm exam: 20%. Two one-to-two-page homework assignments: 20%. (Three opportunities to turn in two papers: see below.) Rewritten homework (a graded paper to be rewritten taking into account comments and composing with fresh perspective): 15%. Attendance: 5%. Final exam: 40%.

**SYLLABUS**

12 July  

13 & 14 July  
Plato. *Meno's paradox*: knowledge of \( X \) as true opinion about \( X \) plus being able to give a *logos*, a "definition" or "reason" or "account" of \( X \) (the *logos of knowledge*). Analysis and simples. Socratic "intellectualism." What is an opinion or belief?

**Reading**: Selections from Plato's *Meno* in *Human Knowledge (HK)*, pp. 35-38 and also from the *Meno* as the first reading (#1) in the course packet, and from Plato's *Theaetetus*, HK 58 (201c-202d). Moser and vander Nat, "The Belief Condition," HK 2-6. W.V. Quine and J.S. Ullian, "Belief and Change of Belief," from their *The Web of Belief*, (#2) course packet.

15 & 16 July  
Perception and reality. What do we see? The argument from illusion in favor of sense data. Empiricism and ontology; phenomenalism. *"Proof" of external objects*.


**Homework 1** (due Mon 19 July at the beginning of class): Does Moore succeed in proving an external world? Outline his argument.

19 & 20 July  
Conceptions of *truth*. The correspondence theory. The coherence theory. The pragmatist theory. The semantic conception.
21 & 22 July


Homework 2 (due Fri 23 July at the beginning of class): What options are available to think of some of our reasons for our beliefs standing as in principle not in need of other reasons to support, warrant, or justify them? What is the best thing to say on this issue (be sure to consult the reading from BonJour as well as Ayer in answering)? If you wish, you may address briefly the further issue of how might these beliefs justify our everyday knowledge of such things as tables and chairs?

23 July

Open discussion. Review.

26 & 27 July

Coherentism; Quine's "web of belief." Particularism and methodism in epistemology. Anti-foundationalist arguments.

Reading: W.V. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," sections 5 and 6 (the remainder of the paper is recommended), HK 288-93; Ernest Sosa, "The Raft and the Pyramid: Coherence versus Foundations in the Theory of Knowledge," HK 380-96.

28 & 29 July


30 July

Review for the hour exam. Review glossary 1.

EXAM, Monday 2 August (please bring a blue exam book).

3 Aug

Empiricism and meaning. Logical positivism and the verificationalist criterion of meaning.

4 Aug
Ludwig Wittgenstein's argument against private meanings and Waismann's "essential incompleteness of an empirical description." Ordinary-language philosophy to the rescue of certainty (about things other than "basic propositions").


**Homework 3** (due Thur 5 Aug at the beginning of class): Designate at least a paragraph from the reading from Wittgenstein in the course packet (not the selection in HK) and explain what the author is trying to say, using your own examples. Is he right?

---

5 & 6 Aug

Sources of knowledge, according to the classical Indian school of Nyaya: perception, inference, analogy, and testimony.


---

9 Aug

Is it internalism versus externalism in epistemology or a synthesis/combination?

**Reading:** Laurence BonJour, "Externalist Accounts of Justification," in *EJ* 24-41.

**Homework 4** (due Tues 10 Aug at the beginning of class, may be turned in earlier): How would the Nyaya philosopher best answer, using the resources of her inheritance, the "speckled-hen objection" to foundationalism that a human being is unreliable concerning how many speckles a hen has (1, 2, etc., 48?) who is right in front and known perceptually? Is there epistemic justification in unselfconsciously trusting perception to generate knowledge (as is shown in unhesitating effort to act)?

---

10 & 11 Aug

Epistemology and psychology. Varieties of externalism: naturalism, reliabilism, and virtue epistemology.


---

12 & 13 Aug

**REVIEW FOR THE FINAL EXAM**

**REWrittEn HOMEWORK DUE 5 PM FRI 13 AUG, WAG 316** (you are encouraged to turn it in earlier).

---

16 Aug

**Final exam:** 16 Aug (evening), 7 - 10 pm. Location to be announced.