A seminar on Kantian epistemology and pistology (the theory of faith or acceptance). Topics include: the nature and ethics of assent (holding-for-true); the nature of knowledge; fallibilism and infallibilism about epistemic justification; cognition and spontaneity; noumenal ignorance; opinion and common sense; epistemic autonomy; and the structure of practical arguments, both pragmatic and moral.

In the final weeks of the seminar we will consider how some of these themes are treated by two of Kant’s most influential successors – J.G. Fichte and G.W.F. Hegel. Along the way, we will look at some broadly Kantian efforts in contemporary epistemology by authors like Mark Schroeder and Kurt Sylvan.

Assignments:
1. **Short reflections:** Everyone taking the course for credit is asked to submit five 1-2 page reflections. Often these will simply elaborate a question about the reading, but they can also involve criticism or constructive work. These are due on Wednesday night before class at 11.59pm, and should focus on the readings for the following day’s class. Graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis, they are worth (combined) 30% of the grade. As long as you’re doing the required reading, it shouldn’t be hard to achieve full credit for this.

2. **Presentation:** Ph.D. students have the opportunity (but not the obligation) to give a short presentation to the seminar. The presentation should include a handout or other aide, and last for around 30 minutes, followed by 30 minutes of discussion. Presenters should plan to meet with me to talk over the presentation at least a couple of days before it occurs.

3. **First paper:** Those who don’t give a presentation and are taking this for a grade should plan to submit a 10 double-spaced page paper (which can be a development of a short reflection) by May 5. This paper (or the presentation) is worth 20% of the grade. I will return these papers very quickly so that you can use the feedback as you write the final paper.

4. A **final paper** (of around 20 double-spaced pages) is due on May 18. People who write the first paper are strongly encouraged to make this a revised version of the same. For those taking the course for a grade, this is worth 50%.

Books:
These books are not on order at Labyrinth, because I assumed many people already have them. But you can order them from Labyrinth for a quick delivery, or from Biblio.com or some other online bookseller. All other items on the reading list (including those from the Phenomenology and Logic) will be posted on Blackboard.
Primary:
Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* ed. Guyer/Wood (Cambridge)
Fichte, *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre and other Writings*, ed. Breazeale (Hackett)
Hegel, *Faith and Knowledge*, ed. Harris and Cerf (SUNY)

Recommended:
Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, ed. Gregor (Cambridge)
Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, ed. Pinkard (Cambridge)

Useful background:
Frederick Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Harvard, 1993)
Michelle Kosch, *Fichte’s Ethics* (Oxford 2018)

Schedule and Tentative Reading List:

2/6: Course Introduction, Kant on Justification and Knowledge
  - Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Canon of Pure Reason (A795/B823-A831/B859)

Optional background:
  - Andrew Chignell, “Assent and Its Epistemic Justification”

2/13: Bolinger on Belief, Acceptance, and Moral Encroachment¹
  - Renée Jorgensen Bolinger, “Varieties of Moral Encroachment” (manuscript)
*visiting speaker: Renée Jorgensen Bolinger (Princeton)*

Optional background:

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¹ Due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict, Sarah McGrath’s “Moral Encroachment” seminar will be encroaching on our meeting time and place (albeit quite morally), and so I propose to have an extra meeting of our seminar during reading week on May 7. The Feb 13 session is optional, but since the topic of McGrath’s seminar is related to ours, I would encourage you to come. Guest speaker is UCHV/Politics professor Renée J. Bolinger.
2/20: Kant on Belief, Acceptance, and Moral Encroachment
- Kant, “What does it Mean to Orient Oneself in Thinking?” (1786)
- Kant, Critique of Judgment, 5:461-474

Optional background:

2/27: Cognition, Spontaneity, and Comprehension
- Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, selections
- Kant, Real Progress (1790), selections
- Kant, selections from various logic lectures
- Karl Schafer, “Reason: The Capacity for Comprehension” (draft)

Optional background:
- Andrew Chignell, “Knowledge and Cognition, Theoretical and Practical” (draft)
- Andrea Kern, Sources of Knowledge (ch. 6-7) (2017)
- Clinton Tolley, “Kant on the Place of Cognition in the Progression of Representations,” Synthese (2017)

3/5: Certainty, Testimony, and the Fallibilism Controversy
- Kant, Lectures on Logic, selections
- Andrew Chignell, “Certainty, Fallibility, and a Backup Plan”

Optional Background:
- Daniel Whiting, “Knowledge is not Belief for Sufficient (Objective and subjective) Reason,” Logos & Episteme (2015)

3/12: **Objects of Moral Belief: The Arc of History, Global Justice, and the Highest Good**
- Kant, *Idea for a Universal History* (1784), selections
- Rachel Zuckert, “Loneliness and Ambiguity in Kant’s Philosophy of History,” in *Kant and the Possibility of Progress*, ed. Wilford and Stoner (forthcoming)
- J. Colin Bradley, “Kant on the Necessity of Global Justice” (draft)
*visiting speaker: Colin Bradley (Princeton)*

**Optional Background:**
- Andrew Chignell, “Three Kinds of Moral Belief in Kant” (draft)

3/19: **Spring Break**

3/26: **Sources of Epistemic Normativity**
- Reza Hadisi, “Title tbd” (draft)
- Alix Cohen, “Kant and the Ethics of Belief” (2014)
*visiting speaker: Reza Hadisi (Princeton/Arizona)*

**Optional background:**
- Andrew Chignell, “Kant on the Value of Truth” (draft)

4/2: **Practical Cognition, Aesthetic Cognition, and Symbols of the Supersensible**
- Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, selections
- Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, selections
- Karl Schafer, “Practical Cognition and our Knowledge of Things-in-Themselves”
- Andrew Chignell, “Reason’s Needs, Symbols, and Hopes” (draft)

**Optional background:**
4/9: Transition to German Idealism: Intellectual Intuition
- Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, selections
- Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, sections 76-77
- Kimberly Brewer, “Necessitarianism in §76 of the Third *Critique*”
  *visiting speaker: Kimberly Brewer (Indiana University)*

Optional background:
- Reed Winegar, “Kant on God’s Intuitive Understanding: Interpreting CJ section 76’s Modal Claims”

4/16: Fichte
- Fichte, “On the Ground of our Belief in a Divine Governance of the World-Order” (1798)
- Fichte, “Appeal to the Public” (1799)
- Fichte, “From a Private Letter” (1800)

Optional background:

4/23: Fichte
- Fichte, “On the Vocation of Man” (1800) Part III (“Faith”)
- Rory Phillips, “Title tbd” (draft)
  *visiting speaker: Rory Phillips (UC-London)*

4/30: Early Hegel
- Hegel, “Relationship of Skepticism to Philosophy” (1802), selections
- Hegel, *Belief and Knowledge* (1802), section I (Kantian Philosophy) and III (Fichtean Philosophy), but skim section II (Jacobian Philosophy)

Optional background:
- Andrew Chignell, “Real Repugnance and Belief about Things-in-Themselves: A Lockean Problem in Kant and Hegel” *German Idealism Yearbook* (2009)

5/7: Hegel
- Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), selections
- Hegel, *Logic* (selections)
- Jake McNulty, “Title tbd”
  *visiting speaker: Jake McNulty (NYU)*
May 13-14: Mini-workshop on Kant and the Ethics of Belief
Participants:
Yoon Choi (Marquette)
Alix Cohen (Edinburgh)
Reza Hadisi (Princeton/Arizona)
Markus Kohl (UNC-Chapel Hill)
Colin McLear (Nebraska)
Lawrence Pasternack (Oklahoma State)
Melissa Zinkin (Binghamton)

May 15-16: Princeton Kant Conference: The Self