Phil 100B: Epistemology   Professor Aaron Zimmerman

Study Sheet for Final Exam

<u>Short Answers (1 sentence-1 paragraph)</u>: You'll have to answer 10 out of 15 (3 points each)
1. What is an "empirical proposition"?
2. Define 'logically possible' and 'physically possible' and provide an example of something that is logically possible but physically impossible.
3. Write down the *single premise closure principle*.
4. Write down Stroud's *weak exclusion principle* and describe its application to the case he describes in which one doesn't know that a bird in the yard is a goldfinch because one can't "rule out" the possibility that it is a canary.
5. Write down Stroud's *strong exclusion principle* and explain why our mathematical knowledge is a counterexample to it.
6. Write down the positive definition of "analytic truth."
7. Write down the positive definition of "synthetic truth."
8. Write down the positive definition of "a priori knowledge."
9. Write down the positive definition of "a posteriori knowledge."
10. Write down Moore's proof of the external world.
11. List the three necessary conditions that Moore gives for some argument's constituting a *proof* of its conclusion.
12. Is it possible for someone to have *only* (i.e. inaccurately) dreamt that she has had dreams? Explain your answer.
13. Describe one of Gettier's counterexamples to the claim that justified true belief is sufficient for knowledge.
14. Write down Harman's "Principle P."
15. Write down Harman's "Principle Q."
16. Describe *the paradox of the preface* and Harman's response to it.
17. What is *inference to the best explanation*? Write down the general form of inference and provide an example of it.
18. Explain the difference between *undermining* and *rebutting* defeaters.
19. Provide one of Harman's examples in which evidence someone does not possess makes it the case that she does not know a true proposition that she justifiably believes and has inferred using no false lemmas.
20. Define 'foundationalism'.
21. Define 'coherentism'.
22. Define 'infinitism'.
23. What is the *basing* relation? That is, define what it is for S to believe P on the basis of her believing Q. (You can write down either the classic conception or the extended conception that allows, with Chisholm, that the non-inferentially justified introspective belief that one is, say, in pain is typically "based on" the pain in question.)
24. What is it for a linguistic expression to be "factive"? Provide an example of a factive construction.
25. What is the *sense data inference*?
26. Explain Chisholm's distinction between the *doxastic* and *phenomenal* senses of 'appears'. Give examples of each.
27. Define 'classical foundationalism' (or 'traditional foundationalism') and raise a problem for it.
28. Write down the definition of "Wittgensteinian (Brute) Foundationalism."
29. What is a *phenomenalist reduction*?
30. Write down Goldman's definition of 'conditional reliability'.

<u>Short Essay Questions (2 blue book pages)</u>: You'll have to answer 2 out of 3 (15 points each).

1. Describe Kyburg's lottery paradox and explain how what Harman calls "Rule S" allows one to respond to it. Is a response to the paradox based on Rule S satisfactory? Explain why it is or is not.

2. Explain Goldman's reliabilist theory of justification by listing and explicating its base, recursive, and closure clauses. Explain the case of the clairvoyant as we described it in class. Is it a counterexample to reliabilism? Why or why not? Are the clairvoyant's initial intuitions comparable to our initial perceptual judgments? Does the comparison support a coherentist conception of perceptual justification? Why or why not?

3. Consider the following claim with regard to a subject S, one of her beliefs B, and one (or more) of its properties ϕ.

> (*) Beliefs having ϕ are much more often true than not.

If S is justified in holding or maintaining B, must (*) be true so that B has some property that renders it more likely true than not? If S is to be justified in holding or maintaining B must S know or be justified in believing that B has some such property ϕ? Defend your answers to these questions with arguments and make sure to use examples!

Longer Essay Questions (3-5 blue book pages) You'll have to answer 2 out of 3 (20 points each).

1. Quine argues that we ought to just do our best to **describe** (in a systematic way) how we come to make our perceptual judgments and hold our other various beliefs. We should no longer pursue the quest for certainty; we should instead limit ourselves to various projects in psychology and the sociology of science. Is Kim right that this an overreaction to the failure of Descartes and Carnap to establish certainty in science? Describe the method of reflective equilibrium (MRE). Is this a good method for epistemologists to utilize? How might it be integrated with the psychological and sociological projects Quine recommends as successors to traditional epistemology? Is MRE overly conservative?

2. Do normative facts (e.g. facts about who is justified, warranted or rational in believing what) supervene on non-normative facts (e.g. the facts identified by neuroscience)? Can we ever justify evaluating X and Y differently when they are exactly alike in description? Make sure to define 'supervenience" in the course of your discussion. If the normative facts supervene on the non-normative facts does this show that we can provide an analysis of our concept of epistemological justification in non-normative terms? Defend your answer. Do we *need* an analysis of justification of the sort Goldman sought if we're to successfully use MRE to improve the rationality or justification of our beliefs, or can we do without conceptual analysis?

3. Explain the Pyrrhonian Problematic and the foundationalist response to it. Is the foundationalist response defensible? Explain why or why not by explaining the arguments of Bonjour (if you give a negative answer) or Chisholm (if you give a positive answer). What role does interpretation or conceptualization play in the generation of our introspective beliefs? Does the involvement of conceptualization render our introspective judgments inferential in justification? How much of what Quine and Kim call "traditional foundationalism" must a theorist accept to endorse a foundationalist response to the Pyrrhonian problematic? (See Bonjour for the answer to this last question.)

4. What is it for a rule of inference to be valid? What is modus ponens? Assuming that modus ponens is valid, how, according to the traditional Cartesian foundationalist, do we know that it is valid? How, according to the traditional Cartesian foundationalist, can a subject use introspection and conceptual understanding to infer with certainty that there is a chair in front of her? Discuss Quine's critique of traditional foundationalism (so understood). Raise at least one general problem for the traditional foundationalist's account of how a subject might come to know that there is a chair in front of her on the basis of introspection and conceptual understanding alone.

5. Is it possible for S to be justified in believing p at t whereas S* is not justified in believing p at t even though S and S* are intrinsically identical (i.e. duplicates)? Explain why certain reliabilist theories of justification entail that this is possible. Bonjour thinks that a person is justified in holding a certain belief only if that person does not deserve epistemic blame or criticism for holding it. Is Bonjour's view incompatible with the possibility of intrinsic duplicates differing as

to the justification of their beliefs? Can it be a matter of luck whether someone is immune to epistemic criticism? Defend your answers with arguments.