

Phil 2110
Knowledge
Second Essay Topics

Write 5-7 pages (1250-1750 words) on **one** of the following topics.

You should answer the questions simply and straightforwardly, in your own words.
You should write with as much clarity, precision and care as you can.

There is no need to consult any secondary sources for this paper.
But if you do consult any sources, you must appropriately cite all sources you consult.

Due Monday 25 October by 4:30 pm.
Submit one copy of your assignment on paper to Ms Loletta Li, Main Building room 302.

I am happy to confer with you about your paper, and to talk with you about your work in progress.

1. In "Proof of an external world", Moore claims that he does not need to prove his premises in order to prove that there are external things. Why does he think so? Is he right about this? Why or why not?

2. Why does Stroud believe that "The consequences of accepting Descartes's conclusion as it is meant to be understood are truly disastrous. There is no easy way of accommodating oneself to its profound negative implications." ?
Is Stroud right about this? Why or why not?

3. According to Stroud, "if somebody knows something, p, he must know the falsity of all those things incompatible with his knowing that p (or perhaps all those things he knows to be incompatible with his knowing that p.)" (29-30) Explain what Stroud means. An example will help. What is Stroud's argument for this claim? What do you think? Should we accept this claim or not?

4. Stroud discusses an example about a man being in Cleveland. What is the purpose of this example? Does this example show what Stroud thinks it shows? Why or why not?

5. In the *Meno*, Socrates tries to explain why knowledge is better than mere true belief (true belief which is not knowledge). What is Socrates's explanation? Is this explanation correct? Why or why not?

6. Is one of these two states better than the other?

(1) knowing that p

(2) having a true justified belief that p without knowing that p

Explain and justify your answer.