General knowledge is interesting knowledge, involving judgments that group particulars items under a common heading. This and that are boring by themselves, but interesting in both being cookies. But what is it that makes this and that cookies? Presumably they share the features of cookies—for instance, being sweet. But what is it for separate items to share a common trait? Is there something—sweetness—separate from the particular cookies, but existing in both of them? Or is sweetness just a conventional grouping, having no more reality than the name we give it? These questions vexed medieval philosophers writing in both Arabic and Latin. In response they developed sophisticated conceptual tools for addressing them—tools that reveal the relation between logic, metaphysics, the nature of language, the nature of mind, and the nature of God. This course will explore the development of the problem of general knowledge through the Middle Ages, with particular focus on the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Readings from Porphyry, Boethius, Abelard, Ibn Sina, Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Ockham.