

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

MA PHILOSOPHY NEW REGULATIONS for Internal Students

GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

Answer THREE questions. Questions should be chosen from at least two sections. You may not take questions from an area which is the subject of either of your other two papers.

Please write the titles of your other two papers at the top of your answer paper.

SECTION A: EPISTEMOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

1. Is the difference between knowledge and mere true belief the presence of justification? If not, what further factor, if any, must be added to true belief to explain what knowledge is?
2. Does knowledge have foundations?
3. Can you know that you are not now a brain-in-a-vat? If so, how?
4. Does induction need justification?
5. What is the new riddle of induction? What is the best response to it?

SECTION B: ETHICS

6. Do moral judgements describe an objective reality? Do they aim at being true?
7. Is it irrational or immoral ever to refrain from producing the greater good?
8. Does the permissibility of abortion turn solely on the question whether a foetus is a person?

9. 'I can be responsible for A only if I could have done other than A.'

Discuss.

10. Is it ever permissible to violate rights?

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SECTION C: LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS

11. 'There must be more to the meaning of a name than what it refers to since the identity statement, "Samuel Clemens is Mark Twain" may be informative while the statement, "Mark Twain is Mark Twain" cannot be.'

Discuss.

12. What does it mean to claim that a term is a rigid designator? If proper names are rigid designators does that show that proper names are not descriptions?

13. What are the relata of causation?

14. 'Since I could survive in another body through successful brain transplantation, I cannot be identical with any animal.' Discuss.

15. Is there a useful distinction between the analytic and the synthetic?

SECTION D: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

16. 'What I would choose in a position of ignorance places no rational constraint on what I ought to do as things are.' Discuss.

17. Does fairness require more than Rawls' Difference Principle?

18. Do all forms of redistributive policies violate individual liberties?

19. Must political obligation be explained in terms of consent? Can it be?

20. Should the only constraint on our liberty be the avoidance of harm to others?

SECTION E: SYMBOLIC LOGIC

Answer all elements of this question. The maximum score for each element is indicated in square brackets.

21.

- (a) When is an argument sound?
- (b) Give an example of a valid but unsound argument.
- (c) Is the following argument valid, 'John is smart, although stupid, so he should do well'?

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- (d) What connective has the widest scope in the following sentence, 'If neither the car nor bike starts, we'll have to walk'?

[4]

Give definitions of the following descriptions of sentences or sets of sentences.

- (a) A tautology.
- (b) A logical theorem.
- (c) A contradiction.
- (d) Consistent.

[4]

II. Use any formal proof method of your choice to show that ii is a logical consequence of i.

- i. If the president does not have the appropriate authority or if he does not want to take responsibility, then the riots will not stop spreading unless the rioters become tired of rioting and the local authorities

begin to take conciliatory actions.

- ii. If the president does not want to take responsibility and the rioters are not tired of rioting, then the riots will spread.

[5]

III. Translate the following arguments into first order predicate calculus (Predicate in Guttenplan) as fully as possible, providing an interpretation or key in each case. Show that they are valid.

- (a) Babies are illogical. Nobody is despised who can manage a crocodile. Illogical persons are despised. Therefore babies cannot manage crocodiles.
- (b) All cricket balls are spherical. So no cricket balls are non-spherical.
- (c) Either I am happy or you are. The happy are lucky. Therefore someone is lucky.

[12]

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IV. Write a paragraph on each of the following:

- (a) The paradoxes of material implication;
- (b) The proper analysis of 'The Pope's wife is Australasian';
- (c) The relation between the validity of an argument and the cogency of a piece of reasoning.

[15]

END OF PAPER