

Study Questions—Exam II Philosophy 150/Spring 2014

1. Explain the difference between the metaphysics of Plato and Aristotle. Use an example to clarify the differences between Plato's Forms and Aristotle's substance.
2. Explain one of Aristotle's criticisms of Plato's theory of Forms. Is Aristotle's argument successful? Why or why not?
3. Explain Aristotle's concept of substance and the notion of ontological dependence. From Aristotle's *Categories*, how does he attempt to establish the primacy of substance over all the other categories? What is his argument?
4. Explain Aristotle's distinction between 'essential' and 'accidental' properties and relate to his definition of substance as that which remains the same throughout change.
5. Are there problems with Aristotle's notion of a substance remaining the same throughout change?
6. Explain the meaning of "grammar is the guide to ontology" and relate to Aristotle's notion of the primacy of substance.
7. What is epistemology? How does Descartes begin his *Meditations on First Philosophy* as an epistemological project?
8. Explain how Descartes attempts to discover certain truth from one indubitable premise in his *Meditations on First Philosophy*? What role does the Evil Genius play in this argument? How does the Evil Genius figure in Descartes' famous insight "I think therefore I am." Explain what this means.
9. What is Descartes' method of doubt in Meditation I?
10. What is the point of the analysis of the piece of wax in Descartes' Meditation II? How does this relate to the distinction between *res extensa* and *res cogitans*?
11. Does the color, red, really exist in nature, i.e., is the rose really red? Discuss with respect to Descartes' Meditation II.
12. What are primary and secondary qualities?
13. What is the mind-body problem and how does it originate in the philosophy of Descartes? Why is the relation between mind and body a problem? Explain with regard to Descartes' distinction between *res extensa* and *res cogitans*.
14. Explain one of Descartes' arguments for the distinction between mind and body in Meditation VI.
15. What was Descartes' solution to the mind-body problem? Was Princess Elisabeth satisfied with Descartes' solution? Why or why not?
16. Was Descartes' successful in providing an answer to the Princess? Why or why not?
17. What is epiphenomenalism? Explain this theory?
18. What is the difference between dualism and monism?
19. What is the central argument for subjective idealism? Is it persuasive?
20. What are the other versions of idealism?
21. How does an idealist generally explain the physical world?
22. Explain the difference between eliminative and reductive materialism.

23. What is Folk Psychology? What is the materialist's argument with respect folk psychological explanations?
24. What is the meaning of the phrase "faith seeking reason"?
25. Explain St. Anselm's Ontological Argument. How does this argument attempt to prove the existence of God? What are the relevant criticisms? Do you think the argument is sound?
26. Compare St. Thomas Aquinas's Cosmological Argument with William Paley's Teleological Argument. In what ways are the arguments similar and in what ways are they dissimilar? Explain any relevant criticism of the arguments.
27. Do you think that a logical proof for the existence of God is a legitimate means of justifying religious faith? Why or why not?
28. Explain the orthodox Judeo-Christian concept of God, i.e., classical theism. How does this concept of God differ from the God of religion, i.e., Biblical narrative?
29. What is the problem of evil and how does it arise from the orthodox conception of God, i.e., traditional or classical theism? What is the atheist's strategy in attempting to demonstrate that the Judeo-Christian concept of God is incompatible with the existence of evil? Explain the contradiction in the argument.
30. How have philosophers and theologians attempted to solve the problem of evil? Which solution, if any, do you think works best? Explain your reasons.
31. What is philosophy?