

Study Questions—Exam II

Philosophy 150

1. What is metaphysics? How is metaphysics distinguished from science on the one hand and religion on the other?
2. What is the *Mythos to Logos* thesis? What is the difference between an anthropomorphic and a non-anthropomorphic explanation? How does this relate to the origin of metaphysics?
3. What is ontology? How does the dispute between Plato and Aristotle relate to ontology?
4. Explain the difference between abstract and concrete entities and give examples of each.
5. Explain the difference between knowledge and opinion in Plato's "Allegory of the Cave" and the Divided Line. How does Plato's metaphysical theory of Forms relate to Socrates' quest for universal definitions?
6. Explain one of Plato's arguments for the existence of the Forms. What are the Forms? Why does Plato think that the Forms are the ultimate reality?
7. Explain one of Aristotle's criticisms of Plato's theory of Forms. Is Aristotle's argument successful? Why or why not?
8. Explain Aristotle's concept of substance and the notion of ontological dependency. How does Aristotle attempt to establish the primacy of substance over all the other categories? What is his argument?
9. What is the meaning of the phrase "grammar is the guide to ontology"? How does this relate to Aristotle's conception of substance?
10. Explain Aristotle's distinction between 'essential' and 'accidental' properties and relate to his definition of substance as remaining the same throughout change.
11. Why does Aristotle think humans are "rational animals"? Relate to his teleological conception of nature.
12. How does Aristotle explain change? Are there any problems with this theory?
13. Explain one criticism of Aristotle.
14. Answer question #12 on page 73 of *Reflections on Philosophy*.
15. What is epistemology? How does Descartes begin his *Meditations on First Philosophy* as an epistemological project?
16. 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? What Descartes successful in this attempt to discover truth?
17. What is Descartes' method of doubt in Meditation I?
18. 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*?
19. What are primary and secondary qualities?
20. 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*.

21. Explain one of Descartes' arguments for the distinction between mind and body in Meditation VI.
22. What is Descartes' solution to the mind-body problem? Was Princess Elisabeth satisfied with Descartes' solution? Why or why not? Was Descartes' successful in providing an answer to the Princess? Why or why not?
23. What is Descartes' theory about the pineal brain? Was this a successful theory? Why or why not?
24. In your view, did Descartes provide a convincing argument for the distinction between mind and body? Did he provide a convincing argument for the unity of mind and body? If not, where did he go wrong?
25. Answer question #1 on pages 335-6 of *Reflections on Philosophy*.
26. What is philosophy? Explain with regard to one of the philosophical problems discussed in this course.