

Introduction to Philosophy
Topics for Exam 1

On the exam date, you will be given 40 multiple-choice questions (2 points each) closely related to the following questions. In addition, there will be ten true/false questions (2 points each) aimed at assessing your grasp of the main points of the readings. You will not be allowed books or notes. And you ought not cheat.

1. Name and define the three main areas of philosophy.
2. What is Plato's method of philosophical analysis and what is it good for?
3. What are validity and soundness? Provide an example, if possible, of an argument that is valid but not sound. Provide an example, if possible, of an argument that is sound but not valid.
4. How would Peter Singer argue that we (moderately well-off people) ought to donate money to UNICEF or OXFAM? Briefly assess the validity and soundness of this argument.
5. Case #1: You receive an envelope and a request for \$50 from UNICEF. If you send the money, it is likely that 30 impoverished children will be spared disease, suffering, and death. Like most relatively well-off Americans, you toss the envelope in the trash.
Case #2: You are driving in a rural area in your new VW Bug. You come across an injured young woman. She was once a medical student and is knowledgeable about her injury. She tells you, in honesty, that while trespassing she cut her leg badly on some barbed wire and that her leg will need to be amputated unless you drive her to the nearest hospital. You realize that her bloody leg will cause about \$480 of damage to your leather seats. You wish her good luck and drive off without her.
How would most Americans react to your behavior in each case? What might be the *source* of these reactions? What method should we use to determine whether the reactions are *justified*?
6. What are metaethics, theoretical ethics, and practical ethics? What is the distinction between a hypothetical and a categorical imperative?
7. What are consequentialism and deontology? What distinguishes the various forms of consequentialism? Name and describe the forms of consequentialism and deontology that we discussed in class.
8. In class we considered an example in which a loner wandered into a hospital just as five innocent victims of an auto accident arrived. The doctors had the opportunity to save the five victims at the expense of the loner. We then considered an example in which you had the opportunity, by switching the track of an oncoming train, to save five innocent people at the expense of one. What are the intended purposes of these examples?
9. What is a moral agent, and what is a moral subject?
10. What is the distinction between *would* and *should* (or *ought*)?
11. We considered several proposals for analyzing rightness, e.g., x is right iff most members of our society believe that x is right. For each such analysis, be prepared to identify counterexamples to the necessity claim (the claim that the condition on the right-hand side of the definition is *necessary* for x to be right) and to the sufficiency claim (the claim that the condition on the right-hand side is *sufficient* for x to be right).
12. How does Singer argue that it is wrong to assign unequal value to the interests of animals based on species membership?
13. What is Singer's challenge? In class we considered several attempts to meet the challenge, and we employed a certain method to evaluate each attempt. What is the method and how did we apply it?
14. Identify and evaluate the general moral principle to which the following line of argument implicitly appeals: "It is natural for humans to eat meat. Therefore, eating meat is morally acceptable."
15. What is moral relativism?
16. I like scary movies, long walks on the beach barefoot, tofu ice-cream, and Jägermeister. My friend doesn't like any of these things. Does this show that what is right and wrong is relative to a person or group of people? Explain.
17. Explain the three objections to moral relativism that we discussed in class.
18. Explain the freewill dilemma.
19. What is compatibilism in the debate over freewill?