

**ADVANCE INFORMATION ON FINAL EXAM PHILOSOPHY 13
FALL, 2007**

The final exam for this course will take place on Friday, December 14, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in CSB 002 (our regular classroom).

The final exam will comprehend all course materials (required readings, lectures, and handouts) but will emphasize the material covered after the midterm exam.

No use of books or notes will be permitted at any time during the final exam.

The final exam counts for 40 per cent of your overall course grade. (If you are enrolled in this course on a Pass/Not Pass basis, you must earn a C- or better grade on the final exam in order to get a Pass grade in the course, with one exception: If you have an A- or better average grade going into the final, you have earned a Pass grade and you are not required to take the final exam. Check with your TA on this.)

The first hour and a half of the exam will consist of short-answer questions testing comprehension of course readings. You will have some choice as to what questions to answer.

The final hour and a half of the exam will consist of four essay questions drawn from the list of eight questions that begins toward the bottom of this page. Four questions from this list will be posed on the actual exam, and you will be asked to answer two questions.

The short-answer section of the final exam counts for one-half of your exam grade and the essay section for one-half.

ESSAY QUESTIONS.

On the actual final you will be asked to answer one A question and one B question.

A1. In his essay "Moral Luck" Thomas Nagel writes, "Kant believed that good or bad luck should influence neither our moral judgment of a person and his actions, nor his moral assessment of himself." Call the position Nagel attributes to Kant the no-moral luck thesis. What conditions must be satisfied for an act a person performs to have moral worth according to (a) Kant's account in section I of the *Groundwork* and Nomy Arpaly's account in her essay "Moral Worth." Are (a) Kant's account of moral worth and (b) Arpaly's account compatible with the no-moral-luck thesis? In each case, if so, how so, and if not, is this a defect in the account or not?

A2. Suppose that a just war against a democratic state cannot be fought successfully by standard military means, but can be won by attacking noncombatants and thereby terrorizing the citizens of the democratic state, who will pressure their elected officials to order a stop to the aggression. Explain how to determine whether or not such an attack on noncombatants would be morally permissible according to (a) act utilitarianism and (b) the Humanity formula of Kant's Categorical Imperative doctrine. Defend (a) act utilitarianism or (b) Kant's Humanity formula or (c) some third principle that you articulate, in the light of its implications regarding the moral assessment of terrorist attacks on noncombatants.

A3. Consider the principle that might be called the "Copper Rule" (so-called because it shines less brightly than the Golden Rule): Do unto others as they do unto you. In other words, the Copper Rule says one should return good for good and evil for evil. Assume this factual claim is true: If a sufficiently large proportion of people regularly acted in conformity with the Copper Rule, evildoing would be greatly diminished, compared to what we see in present-day actual circumstances. Given this factual claim, would act consequentialism recommend that one should regularly act in conformity with the Copper Rule? Why or why not? Given this factual claim, would Kant's Categorical Imperative principle recommend that one should regularly act in conformity with the Copper Rule? Why or why not? For each case, state your reasoning. (You might find Korsgaard's essay "The Right to Lie: Kant on Dealing with Evil" helpful in approaching this question.)

A4. Suppose a person suffers a very bad head injury and learns that within a few months she will lose her mental capacities to think, choose, and act. She could continue to live for years and would be capable of simple experiences of pleasure and pain. Her close relatives assure her that they will keep her comfortable, feed her candy, and so on, so that her future experiences would be mostly pleasant. However, the person now is horrified by the prospect of continued life as a passive, dependent animal, and proposes to commit suicide to prevent such a life. State the maxim on which the person in this example would be acting. Would this proposed suicide be morally permissible according to (a) the Universal Law formula of Kant's Categorical Imperative principle, (b) the Humanity formula of Kant's Categorical Imperative principle, and (c) utilitarian morality as developed by John Stuart Mill? In each case, why or why not? Which view seems more defensible to you and why? (If all of a to c strike you as indefensible, explain your reasons for this response.)

B1. Suppose that you became a convinced act consequentialist, and decided to live in complete conformity with act-consequentialism. (For simplicity, suppose your moral values, your ideas about what constitute morally better and morally worse states of the world, stay the same.) What kinds of changes, if any, would you have to make in the way you are living now? Are there actions you currently regard as morally permissible that you would have to give up? Are there actions that you currently regard as morally forbidden that you would have to begin doing? In the light of these various changes, are you inclined to think that act-consequentialism is a mistaken moral theory? If so, in what ways, and why? Or do these changes seem morally correct to you? If so, in what ways, and why?

B2. Is it morally permissible, or perhaps morally required, to be partial to your friends, family members, associates, and fellow members of one's own national community? (Being partial is giving greater weight to the interests of those to whom one has special ties than to the interests of others in deciding what to do?) Is it morally permissible, or perhaps morally required, to be partial to anyone to whom one feels a special tie of affiliation? Thomas Hurka proposes a partial response to these questions in his essay "The Justification of National Partiality." State and assess his response.

B3. In chapter one of *On Liberty*, Mill affirms the Liberty Principle, which (roughly put) states that the only morally acceptable ground for social coercion is to prevent someone from harming nonconsenting others. Suppose someone's conduct causes offense to nonconsenting others—meaning that people are caused to have unpleasant sensations if they must witness the conduct. Should offense to others count as harm to others for the purposes of applying the Liberty Principle? How does Mill treat examples of offense to others that he discusses in *On Liberty*? Can Mill allow some offense to count as harm without allowing that the likings and dislikings of society should be a law to individuals?

B4. If individuality (individual self-development) as characterized in chapter 3 of *On Liberty* is a great human good, does utilitarian moral principle recommend that one should be allowed to develop and exercise one's individuality even in ways that impose costs on others? Assume that your best strategy for achieving individuality is to establish and operate a factory that produces a novel product, and the operation of the factory unavoidably imposes costs on others—for example, the factory might dump pollutants on those in the neighborhood of the factory, or small pollution costs diffused across many people over a wide area, or costs that will fall on future people due to soil contamination, or large or small risks of any of these three types of harms. Explain how Mill's utilitarianism would recommend responding to these types of harm and risk of harm, and assess the adequacy of Mill's approach.