

**ADVANCE INFORMATION ON FINAL EXAM
WINTER 2005**

PHILOSOPHY 162

The final exam for this course will take place on Wednesday, March 16, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Peterson Hall 104 (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 on the midterm and the writing assignment, you have earned a Pass grade and you are not required to take the final exam.)

The first hour and a half of the exam will consist of short-answer questions testing comprehension of required course readings and handouts. These questions are to be answered in a paragraph-length "essay." You will have some choice as to what questions to answer.

The final one and one-half hours of the exam will consist of four essay questions drawn from the list below. You will be asked to write essays in response to two of the four questions posed.

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.

1. Should there be a legal right to physician-assisted suicide—that is, should a medical doctor be legally permitted to comply with the voluntary request of a competent adult patient for assistance in ending his life, under certain circumstances? Why or why not? Your essay should consider significant arguments from course readings on this issue. You should in particular pay attention to significant arguments from course readings that oppose the position you defend. You may want to specify what in your view the "certain circumstances," if any, should be.

2. Suppose I am a mildly retarded person in a contemporary democracy with a market economy. I cannot understand the complex ballot instructions, so cannot vote in elections for federal, state, or local government offices. I cannot pass the state-administered driver's license examination. I am unable to secure steady employment. My brother told me about Allen Buchanan's essay "Genetic

Intervention and the Morality of Inclusion." I now assert that I am the victim of injustice; society has treated me unfairly by its choice of dominant cooperative framework. What determines to what extent do I have a sound moral complaint, in your judgment? What are the reasons for your judgment? How would the argument Buchanan advances in this essay interpret and address this question?

3. Suppose I am badly off and badly in need of aid. Without aid, I will quickly die, or suffer some severe irrevocable deterioration in quality of life. Moreover, my average level of quality of life throughout my life so far has been horribly low. You are placed so that you are able to help me. (a) In your view, what are the main moral considerations that determine the degree (if any) to which, in these circumstances, you are obligated to help me? (b) What difference, if any, does it make to your obligation to help, if one adds the further fact that it's Arneson's fault that he is in this predicament or that Arneson's free and voluntary choice from a range of decent options led to his being now in this predicament. Your discussion should **defend** your responses to (a) and (b) and in particular should consider some significant arguments from course readings that bear on these questions.

4. In his essay "Cognitive Disability, Misfortune, and Justice," Jeff McMahan poses this puzzle: If we have an egalitarian obligation to help the disadvantaged, and a greater obligation to help the more disadvantaged, then people who are inevitably severely disadvantaged such as cognitively impaired individuals would seem to be always the people we are most obligated to aid, no matter how many resources we have already showered on them. How does McMahan resolve this puzzle to his own satisfaction in this essay? Either attack McMahan's proposed solution or defend his position from some plausible criticism.

5. Michael Walzer and Elizabeth Anscombe both agree that noncombatants (those not engaged in waging war) have serious rights not to be deliberately attacked by combatants in war. They disagree as to whether or not these rights may ever be overridden by competing moral considerations. Walzer's view on this issue is contained in his doctrine of "supreme emergency." State Anscombe's and Walzer's position on this issue and defend or attack one or the other or both.

6. In his essay "A Right to Self-Termination?" J. David Velleman argues that suicide for pain relief violates the duty of respect for rational nature that is the source of human dignity. State his argument to this conclusion. Should Velleman's argument be accepted or not? Address this question by considering one significant objection against it raised by Frances Kamm. State your own assessment of Velleman's position and defend your view.

7. Consider this response to P. Singer's principle for determining our duties to aid the needy. Singer had proposed: If it is in our power to prevent something bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally, to do it. The response accepts Singer's principle but amends it by adding that in assessing goods and bads, it is morally acceptable to give extra weight to whatever we personally happen to care about, to some extent, over and above the impersonally justifiable assessment of the goods and bads our actions might bring about. With the amendment, Singer's principle allows one to help one's own child or friend, whom one personally cares about a lot, rather than a stranger in greater need of help. Compare the amended Singer Principle to the views concerning our moral duty to aid distant needy strangers put forwarded by Jean Hampton and Richard Miller in course readings. What view is more plausible, the Singer Principle, the revised principle, Miller's view, or Hampton's? Why so?

Arneson's exam week office hours: Monday 1-4, Tuesday 12-4.

If you wish to be informed of your exam results, here are some options:

**Write your email address on your final exam; we will email you your exam and course grade.

**Write "Buckley Waiver OK" and sign your name on the front of your final exam; we will place your corrected final in a bin under the Philosophy faculty mail slots, opposite the elevator, 7th floor, H and SS.

**Bring a self-addressed envelope to the final exam; we will mail you your graded final exam.

**Exams can be retrieved from Arneson during his office hours, spring quarter.

Best wishes on all of your final exams. Have a good quarter break.--RJA