

Modern Philosophy: REAL Mid-Term Exam

START DATE AND TIME: _____ END DATE AND TIME: _____

This exam has three sections. They are not all worth an equal amount of points, and you should not spend an equal amount of time on them. THIS EXAM IS CLOSED BOOK AND CLOSED NOTE, AND YOU SHOULD NOT CONSULT THE INTERNET, ANY OTHER ELECTRONIC RESOURCES, OR TALK TO ANYONE ABOUT THE EXAM (UNTIL AFTER TUESDAY).

A. Quotation Identification (10 points). (Answer 5 of 9 questions; 2 points each; 10 points total). *Identify the author of FIVE of the following EIGHT quotations. (If you do more than 5, I will grade only the first 5, so you should cross out the one's you are least sure of.) You do not need to provide any explanation for your choice. You may write your answers on the exam sheet or in your blue book. Be sure to indicate clearly which name goes with which quotation, and if you write on the exam sheet, please put your name on the sheet when you turn it in with your blue book. Reminder: The philosophers we have read thus far are deGournay, Montaigne, Descartes, Elizabeth, Hobbes, Margaret Cavendish, Machiavelli, Anne Conway, and Spinoza.*

1. In proportion as a body is more apt than other bodies to act or be acted upon simultaneously in many ways, so is its mind more apt than other minds to perceive many things simultaneously. [Therefore,] the human mind is capable of perceiving a great many things [because] the human body is affected by external bodies in a great many ways.
2. When a body is once in motion, it moves (unless something else hinder it) eternally; and whatsoever hinders it, cannot in an instant, but in time, and by degrees, quite extinguish it . . . ; so also it happens in that motion which is made in the internal parts of a man . . . For after the object is removed, or the eye shut, we still retain an image of the thing seen, though more obscure than when we see it. And this is . . . call[ed] imagination.
3. Several years have passed since I first realized how numerous were the false opinions that in my youth I had taken to be true, and thus how doubtful were all those that I had subsequently built upon them.
4. [The ruler] should not make himself uneasy at incurring a reproach for those vices without which the state can only be saved with difficulty, for if everything is considered carefully, it will be found that something which looks like virtue, if followed, would be his ruin; whilst something else, which looks like vice, yet followed brings him security and prosperity.
5. Every body is a spirit, and nothing else, neither differs any thing from a Spirit, but that it is more dark; thereby by how much the thicker and grosser it is become, so much the more remote it is from the degree of a Spirit, so that this distinction [between body and spirit] is only modal and gradual, not essential or substantial.
6. God cannot properly be said to be the remote cause of individual things . . . For . . . all things that are, are in God, and depend upon God in such a way that they can neither be nor be conceived without him.
7. All matter is partly animate, and partly inanimate, and all matter is moving and moved, and there is no part of nature that hath not life and knowledge, for there is no part that is not a commixture of animate and inanimate matter.
8. Having thus recalled the goodness of God, the immortality of our souls, and the greatness of the universe, there is one more truth the knowledge of which seems to me quite useful. This is that . . . one must . . . think that one does not know how to subsist alone and that one is, in effect, one part of the universe, and more particularly even one part of this earth, one part of this state, and this society, and this family.
9. I am present to my body not merely in the way a sailor is present in a ship, but . . . most tightly conjoined and, so to speak, commingled with it, so that I and the body constitute one single thing.

MORE QUESTIONS ON BACK PAGE!

B. Short Answer Question (50 points). *Answer TWO of the following FOUR questions. Your response is worth up to 25 points, and should be approximately 2-3 paragraphs long.*

1. Given the necessary existence of God (I, P11), how does Spinoza prove that “There can be, or be conceived, no other substance but God” (I, P14)? (You don’t need to explain how he proves the existence of God, only how he proves P14 *from* P11.)
2. Give at least two of Conway’s arguments for the existence of a “mediator.”
3. In the *Meditations*, how does Descartes respond his initial worry that the existence of the external (physical) world might be illusory?
4. For Hobbes, what are the conditions in the state of nature that require the establishment of a commonwealth?

C. Philosophical Essay (40 points). *Answer ONE of the following THREE questions. The purpose of this essay is to develop your own response to an important philosophical question, in dialogue with the philosophers we have read over the course of the semester. You should discuss at least two philosophers in your response, and you should explain the views of these philosophers clearly. You should also criticize or endorse key aspects of those views, and you should use this analysis to develop an answer that you find plausible. Your response is worth up to 50 points.*

1. What is the relationship between mind and body? In your answer, be sure to explain Elizabeth’s central challenge to Descartes, and explain how at least two of the philosophers we have studied so far would respond to that challenge. Then offer your own account, including your own response to Elizabeth and an explanation of how your account is better than the alternatives.
2. Recently, there have been protests across the country against racist violence in the police force. Some of these protests have turned violent. Drawing on at least two of the philosophers we have read this semester, discuss the morally best response to racist police brutality. (Focus your response on laying out the moral framework that provides the best response; don’t focus too much on details about the particular cases unless you justify the specific moral relevance of these particular details.)
3. How many substances are there? Why should we care?

At the bottom of the page, please write out and sign the following statement: “I took less than 3 hours to complete this exam and did not consult the text, notes, or internet while taking the exam. I have done nothing else that could be construed as cheating on the exam.” (If you have special accommodations that give extra test time, replace “3 hours” with the agreed upon amount of time.)

Extra Credit (worth up to 2 points): Write a joke or cartoon that illustrates an important philosophical idea from the course so far (worth one point) and that is actually funny (worth a second point).