

Short answer test – History of Philosophy and Ethics

Write your answers into this document and upload it as Word or pdf under Assignment 1. Don't worry about the numbering being messed up, as long as it is clear which question you are answering.

Length guide: approximately 1-3 sentences for each sub-question.

Tips: when answering the questions, make sure you demonstrate that you understand the ideas, that you have an overview of how a concept or idea relates to a philosopher or philosophical position, and use examples to illustrate.

1. Ontology and epistemology

- A) What is the difference between ontology and epistemology?
- B) Do you think either is more fundamental? Why / why not?

2. Normative and descriptive

- A) What is the difference between normative and descriptive claims?
- B) What did David Hume say about their relationship (the naturalistic fallacy)?

3. Relativism

- A) Explain epistemic relativism.
- B) What are the two versions of moral relativism and in what way are they different and similar?
- C) Do you find relativism a plausible position or not and why?

4. Plato's ontology and epistemology

- A) What would you say characterises Plato's ontology?
- B) Explain what it means that Plato is a rationalist and how this is reflected in his philosophy.
- C) Which other rationalist philosophers do you know?

5. Plato's moral and political philosophy

- A) What are the main virtues of a person and a state, according to Plato?
- B) In what way is the state 'a giant person'?

6. Aristotle's ontology

- A) Explain the role of change in Aristotle's ontology.
- B) How did Aristotle and Plato differ on their views on change in ontology?
- C) What is TELOS and how does something reach its TELOS (4 causes)?

7. Virtue ethics

- A) How did Aristotle define a virtue?
- B) How do we become morally good people, according to virtue ethics?
- C) Which other philosophers do you know who were virtue ethicists?
- D) What is the role of happiness in virtue ethics?

8. Descartes

- A) In what way was Descartes a dualist, and how does his dualism relate to Plato's dualism?
- B) Was Descartes a rationalist or empiricist and in what way is this expressed in his philosophy?
- C) What did he mean by saying 'I think, therefore, I am'?

9. Astell

- A) Astell was concerned with virtues. How?
- B) Astell was a rationalist and a dualist, like Descartes. In what way?
- C) Do you think Astell was a feminist philosopher? Why / why not?

10. Hume

- A) What is empiricism and how does it express itself in Hume's philosophy?
- B) What is the problem of induction?
- C) Present Hume's analysis of causation.

11. Wollstonecraft

- A) What is Wollstonecraft's view on education for girls?
- B) Mention some similarities and differences between Wollstonecraft and Astell's feminist views.

12. Kant's epistemology

- A) What does it mean that philosophical and mathematical knowledge is synthetic a priori, according to Kant?
- B) What is the difference between Ding für Mich and Ding an Sich?

13. Duty ethics

- A) Explain the humanity principle in duty ethics.
- B) What are some differences between duty ethics and virtue ethics?

14. Utilitarianism

- A) What is the greatest happiness principle?
- B) Explain the difference between act and rule utilitarianism.
- C) What is non-anthropocentric utilitarianism?

15. Arendt

- A) What does Arendt say about pluralism and why is it so important?
- B) What is her view on evil?
- C) Why do you think her views were controversial in her time?

16. Final reflections

- A) Which philosopher or philosophical idea in this course did you find most interesting and why?
- B) Which philosopher or philosophical position would you have liked to learn more about in this course and why?
- C) The course reading was replaced with podcast episodes. Could you offer some feedback on how this worked and if you think it should be continued or improved?