

Review Sheet for Final Examination

The purpose of this sheet is to provide a brief list of learning objectives for the exam. It focuses principally on the sorts of material that will be covered on the longer essays and in some of the sort essay questions. It is not meant to cover all material assigned in the readings. *Some shorter questions will focus on material assigned in reading but not covered in class.* Remember that in studying the positions of a philosopher, you must be concerned with the particular claims of the philosopher, the reasons which are offered to support the claim, and the definitions of critical terms provided by the philosopher.

You may be asked to compare and contrast the positions we have studied in class. The concepts of compatibility and incompatibility play a crucial role in assessing philosophical positions as well as comparing and contrasting them with other positions. Statements are COMPATIBLE with each other when they can be held without contradiction.

For example, the statement (A) there are rationally discoverable moral standards is compatible with (B) the utilitarian claim that actions are good only when they promote good consequences for the greatest number. Statement (A) is also compatible with (C) Kant's claim that actions are inherently right or wrong. Statements are INCOMPATIBLE with each other when they cannot be held without contradiction: if one is false the other must be true (although both may be false). For example, statements (B) and (C) above are incompatible with each other. Also, for example, (at least in the world in which we live) it is incompatible to hold that Dr. Jones is a porcupine and that Dr. Jones is a giraffe. (Note that both these statements are false.)

1) Moral Judgments:

You should be able to: set forth the basic structure of a moral judgment such as "Smith ought (ought not) do B;"

Compare and contrast factual, aesthetic, and moral judgments in terms of what the judgments are about; how and whether they are true/false, and whether and in what sense there can be legitimate disagreements among judgments of the same kind;

Compare and contrast moral and non-moral imperatives including the distinction between moral judgments and reasoning and the sort of judgments and reasoning involved in etiquette and law;
define, compare and contrast the basic kinds of moral standards (invented and discoverable)

2) Cultural Relativism:

You should be able to: define compare and contrast moral absolutism, relativism, and pluralism.

You should be able to present and discuss the arguments for CR;

Discuss the claims that CR makes about the obligations of individuals in a culture to follow the moral norms of that culture;

Discuss why CR precludes criticizing the moral norms of one culture from those of another culture or criticizing the moral norms of a particular culture at one point in its history in terms of the norms of that culture at different points of its history.

3) Moral subjectivism

You should be able to: define moral subjectivism and set forth what this positions holds about the nature and possibility of moral standards;

discuss how the moral subjectivist would critique CR and argue that it collapses into subjectivism;

discuss why subjectivism denies that there is any basis for criticizing moral judgments;

4) Divine Command Theory

Hinman presents a chart on p. 79 outlining 6 possible views on the relation between a religious (faith) and rationally (faith independent) morality. You should be able to characterize each of these views. In particular, you should be able to carefully set forth, compare and contrast the strong and weak positions on the supremacy of religion with the weak compatibilist position.

5) Psychological Egoism

You should be able to define psychological egoism, set forth and contrast the strong and weak versions of these positions. In particular you should be able to discuss the ways in which these theories are justified;

You should also be able to discuss whether either form of psychological egoism provides support for ethical egoism or any other normative theory.

6) Outline of normative moral theories:

You should be able to set forth the basic principles and briefly compare and contrast the major normative ethical theories: teleological, consequentialist (ethical egoism and utilitarianism), and deontological. You should be able to discuss the features the nature of ethical theories in terms of the features of universalizability and consistency.

7) Ethical egoism:

You should be able to: define, compare and contrast: Personal Ethical Egoism. Individual Ethical Egoism and Universal Ethical Egoism;

Explain why only UEE can properly be considered a moral theory;

Explain how UEE (either as hedonistic egoism and rational egoism) is different from ethical subjectivism;

Explain how universal ethical egoists can cooperate with one another to resolve certain situations where their own self-interests might conflict;

Discuss the criticisms of UEE that in certain situations the universal ethical egoist cannot offer consistent advice without either violating the principle of UEE or abandoning it as a rational moral theory;

8) Utilitarianism

You should be able to:

Define utilitarianism and its basic principle;

Compare and contrast hedonistic, eudaimonistic, ideal and preference utilitarianism;

Set forth the five issues that any utilitarianism must address and the sorts of criticisms that might be raised about the ability of U to address these issues in a rational and non-arbitrary manner;

Set forth the criticism that utilitarian analysis might amount to little more than guesswork about what we should do;

Explain how the utilitarian can provide moral guidance before we act and the limitations to such guidance;

Discuss the criticism that utilitarianism might be incompatible with justice in the sense that it might require the sacrifice of an innocent person for the sake of the majority;

Discuss the relation between utilitarianism and impartiality and how this bears on the question of individuals considering the consequences of actions on themselves in deciding what to do;

Compare and contrast act and rule utilitarianism;