

This exam will last two hours and have two sections: (I) Greek Philosophical Terms, and (II) Essays.

I. Greek Philosophical Terms (30 minutes total; 5 minutes each)

This section will ask you to discuss Aristotle's use or coinage of Greek philosophical terms. There will be six questions, and each question will ask either about one term or one set of terms chosen by me from the list below. In each case, provide some English approximation(s) of each term. Then, in a paragraph, discuss their significance: that is, mention the Aristotelian context in which they occur, draw precise distinctions between them and neighboring terms, briefly show how they function in major Aristotelian arguments, provide some illustrative examples, where appropriate, and so on:

κατηγορία	αίτια	σοφία	οἶκος, πόλις
οὐσία	ἕλη	μέρος, ὅλος	δοῦλος, δουλεία
εἶδος, γένος, διαφορά	μορφή	νόησις νοήσεως νόησις	παῖς, γύνη, μητρικός,
καθόλου, τὸδε τι	κινεῖν	εὐδαιμονία	πολιτῆς
λόγος, τί ἐστίν, ὀρισμός	τέλος	ἀγαθόν	δημοκρατία, πολιτεία
πρότερον	τύχη, τὸ αὐτόματον	ἔργον	τυραννίς, μοναρχία
ἀνάγκη	δύναμις, ἐντελέχεια	ἄνθρωπος	ἀριστοκρατία,
σχῆμα	τέχνη	ἡδονή	ὀλιγαρχία
ἐπιστήμη	νοῦς	τίμη	ῥήτωρ
συλλογισμός, ἀπόδειξις	τὸ νῦν	ἀρετή	δυμός
συλλογισμός, ἐπαγωγή	ἄπειρον, πέρας	θεωρία	ποιήσις
δόξα, ἔνδοξα	θεός	ἦθος, διάνοια	μίμησις
ἀπλῶς	φυσικός, διαλεκτικός	φρόνησις	τραγωιδία
ἀρχή	ψυχή, σῶμα	ἀκρασία	ψυχαγωγίην
φύσις, φυσικά, φυσικός	ὄργανον	φιλία	περιπατεία,
κίνησις, ἐνέργεια, πράξις	ὄρεξις, αἴσθησις	αὐτάρχεια	ἀναγνωρησις
	πάθος	ζῶν πολιτικόν, ζῶν	κάθαρσις
	φαντασία	λογιστικόν	φόβος, ἔλεος
	νοῦς		ἁμαρτία

II. Essay Questions (90 minutes total; 45 minutes each)

This section will ask you to answer two essay questions, which I shall choose from the following list. Endeavor to write clearly and legibly, providing sufficient details to demonstrate the depth of your understanding of Aristotle's philosophy. These details will often include distinctions and arguments, examples and analogies. Also, do not fail whenever called for to place the question in a wider context. What is its philosophical significance—for Aristotle, or for philosophy more generally?

1. The *Categories* discusses different kinds of predication, with the goal of determining the necessary conditions of primary substance. After all, once we know the necessary conditions of primary substance, we shall locate it more easily when the time comes to look for it. What, then, are these necessary conditions, and what is Aristotle's rationale for choosing them? Be sure to discuss the following distinctions: homonymy versus synonymy, predications that are 'said of' versus those that are 'said in,' genus versus species, and universals versus particulars. To the *Categories*' list of necessary conditions,

- the *Metaphysics* adds others. What are these additional criteria? What are the candidates Aristotle considers for primary substance when he finally comes to the question? How do these candidates fare against the full list of criteria? What is primary substance? How does the answer to this question underwrite Aristotle's whole philosophy?
2. Socrates sought definitions of the virtues, and Plato developed a theory of Forms to explain what those definitions were defining. Aristotle cannot accept Plato's theory of Forms, for several reasons, including the famous 'Third Man' argument at the end of the *Topics*. What is this argument? What are some of the other arguments he adduces against forms in *Metaphysics* and *On Ideas*? Without Platonic Forms, next, how does Aristotle understand the task of definition, which he nonetheless preserves? What role, moreover, do definitions play in his philosophy? In this section, be sure to distinguish the four predicables, as well as the differences between nominal and real definition, genus, species, and differentia. In a final section, describe Aristotelian forms. How are they related to matter, how is the form/matter distinction related to other distinctions in his philosophy, and what roles do Aristotle's forms thus play in this philosophy?
 3. What contribution to Aristotle make to the subsequently famous debate between freedom and necessity. First of all, in *De Interpretatione* he presents an argument for fatalism. Why does this argument—which is of such importance to ethics, for instance—occur in a treatise about the logic of statements? Recapitulate it, using his famous example of the sea-battle tomorrow. Is this argument sound? How does Aristotle object to it? How does he think a proponent of fatalism would reply to this objection? How does Aristotle think he refutes this reply? In the final analysis, what is the value of this argument? At some point in your analysis you should introduce the Law of Excluded Middle, showing how it is a necessary and sufficient condition for the Law of Non-Contradiction (if not by logical symbolism, then at least by a persuasive example). Secondly, how does the debate arise again in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, this time over the question of voluntary action? How does Aristotle explain practical decision? Does this explanation permit freedom? Or is Aristotle a fatalist despite himself?
 4. We spent the first third of our course on the *Organon*. What are the treatises in this collection of difficult texts, what main subject does each address, and why are they collected together, let alone in this order? How would you characterize Aristotle's superordinate goal in this collection? And how do these individual texts—not to mention their individual distinctions and arguments—contribute to the achievement of this goal? Do you see any relation between the goal and arguments of the *Organon*, on the one hand, and the other Aristotelian treatises we subsequently read, on the other? What role, in short, does Aristotle's logic and epistemology play in his wider philosophy?
 5. What are two paradoxes raised by Aristotle for the notion of the present (in time)? Similarly, what are two paradoxes about motion (in space) that he borrows from Zeno? How does he propose to solve all of these paradoxes? In short, what fundamental error do all of these paradoxes make, and how does he propose to correct that error? What technical distinction from his wider philosophy does he bring to bear on these problems of space and time? Does he thus solve these problems in a principled manner, coherent with his wider philosophy, or are his solutions *ad hoc*? How, in other words, does Aristotle's philosophy of space and time fit with his wider philosophy?
 6. What is an unmoved mover, and why does Aristotle think there must be one? At the end of his *Physics* he presents an argument that entails, if anything, that there must be *at least*

- one* unmoved mover. Why does he think there that there will be no more than one such being? How sound is this reasoning? At the end of his *Metaphysics* he presents another set of reasons for believing that there is an unmoved mover. What are these reasons, and do they fare any better than those adduced at the end of the *Physics*? Be sure to discuss and explain his claim that this unmoved mover is pure actuality, as well as his strange claim that its understanding is an understanding of understanding.
7. Two common positions in the philosophy of mind are *monism* and *dualism*. The first asserts that mind and body are the same substance, often reducing the mind to the body and its operations. The second asserts that mind and body are different, separable substances, often adding that the mind survives bodily death. Which position, if either, does Aristotle advance in *De Anima*? Be sure to consider and explain his definition of soul at the beginning of Book 2, according to which “the soul, then, must be substance as the form of a natural body that is potentially alive.” (In this connection, you may find it helpful to present his analogies to the axe and the eye.) But be sure also to consider his distinction between active (or productive) and passive *nous* in 3.5.
 8. What are the similarities, and what are the differences, between Aristotle’s theory of perception and his theory of intellection (or understanding)? Begin by explaining how we perceive, for example, the color red. Be sure to include the following notions in your explanation: the organ, the sensitive faculty, the object and its matter, the object and its qualitative (or sensible) form, potentiality and actuality, light; you may also wish to use Aristotle’s analogy of wax and a signet ring. Next explain how we understand, for example, the essence of raccoon. Be sure to include the following notions in this explanation: *nous*, the raccoon and its matter, the raccoon’s substantial (or intelligible) form, potentiality and actuality, productive (or active) *nous*.
 9. Aristotle wrote the *Nicomachean Ethics* in order to help us not just to understand what happiness is, but to become happy. He thus begins by considering a number of candidates for happiness: pleasure, wealth, honor, virtue, and study. Why does he quickly dismiss the candidates he dismisses, and which two candidates remain? In order to begin to decide between these two candidates, he outlines the human good—that is to say, the best life for humans—and thus the human function. Retrace this outline, and show how it helps to frame the subsequent doctrines of the treatise. What is our best life, and why? Does Aristotle understand happiness correctly; finally, does he help us to become happy? Be sure to distinguish the virtues of character from virtues of thought, and also be sure to present the theory of pleasure he uses ultimately to adjudicate their rival claims to supremacy.
 10. Aristotle defines virtue as follows: “Virtue, then, is (a) a state that decides, (b) <consisting> in a mean, (c) the mean relative to us, (d) which is defined by reference to reason, (e) i.e., to the reason by reference to which the intelligent person would define it.” He then adds, “It is a mean between two vices, one of excess and one of deficiency.” Explain this definition by first discussing each of the theoretical concepts it involves. Next, illustrate this definition by presenting an example of an instance of virtue, say an instance of courage. Finally, explain how, once armed with this distinction, we not only understand virtue, but may more easily become virtuous.
 11. Socrates held two paradoxical ethical doctrines: that *akrasia* was impossible, and that the virtues were a unity. According to the first, knowledge of the good is so powerful in the soul that it is both necessary and sufficient for doing the good. According to the second,

- possession of any one of the cardinal virtues is both necessary and sufficient for possessing the others. These two doctrines—summarized together under the title “Socratic intellectualism”—entailed one another: since knowledge of the good was necessary and sufficient for doing it, to have one virtue was necessary and sufficient for having knowledge of the good, and this entailed having all the virtues. But as we saw in class, and in Book 7 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle developed sophisticated responses to both doctrines of Socratic intellectualism. Explain these responses, their inter-relation, and the way in which they epitomize Aristotle’s approach to philosophical paradoxes.
12. Aristotle begins his treatment of love and friendship by discussing two questions: (i) Are friends similar or dissimilar? (ii) Are there different species of friends or just one? How does he answer these questions? What is his consequent account of friendship? Using this account, he addresses three tricky problems about love and friendship: (iii) Is the version between people derived from the version one has with oneself? (iv) Is this self-love good? (v) And finally, does the happy person need friends at all? How does Aristotle answer these questions, sensitive to the competing reasons people had presented on both sides of them. With his answers secure, explain why he thinks friendships of decent people deepen with time, despite the fact that they correct each other. Indeed, how might Aristotle’s notion of mutual correction fit with his preceding discussion of *akrasia*? Finally how might Aristotle’s notion of friendship complement Socrates’ original quest for self-knowledge?
 13. “Some are slaves everywhere,” wrote Aristotle in *Politics*, “some nowhere.” What is the full meaning of this statement, and why was it revolutionary for the domestic and foreign politics of fourth-century Greece? How, moreover, does the doctrine of natural slavery expressed by it rest upon Aristotle’s understanding of human nature? How, finally, does that understanding of human nature rest upon his understanding of the soul, the natural world, being, and logic. In other words, how does a very practical doctrine such as that of natural slavery depend on theoretical doctrines in psychology, physics, and metaphysics?
 14. What is the purpose of political community, according to Aristotle? How does this purpose manifest itself in the constitution of the best city? Generally speaking, what kind of life should this constitution promote? More specifically, which kind of constitution does Aristotle think will best promote this life? To the surprise of many, he advocates rule of the majority. Why? He has three reasons why he considers this the best form of government. What are they? Be sure to distinguish this proper majoritarian constitution, which he calls ‘polity,’ from democracy, which he considers its perversion. In order to explain this distinction, be sure to describe the crucial distinction between rule for the good of the subjects *coincidentally* from rule for their good *essentially*.
 15. Aristotle considers both rhetoric and poetry to be crafts. Crafts, he says in *Rhetoric*, deal with universals, not particulars. First recall this distinction between universals and particulars from earlier in the Aristotelian corpus. What are crafts, and why do they deal with universals, not particulars? Now explain how Aristotle uses the notions of craft, universals, and particulars to define rhetoric. Provide a similar explanation of the craft of poetry, presenting some of its main principles. Be sure to discuss his claim, in *Poetics*, that poetry deals with universals, unlike history. Why is history no craft, in Aristotle’s view?