

Part I: Philosophical Technique (45 minutes)

1. Name the Warburton entry exhibited by the following passages and explain what it is about each passage that makes you think it exhibits the entry you have named rather than another.

(a) What kind of question does the Prosecution Lawyer ask Mr. Innocente?

Mr. Innocente: I have never used drugs.

Prosecution Lawyer: Don't insult us any longer, Mr. Innocente. How long has it been since you stopped using cocaine?

(c) Which philosophical tool has this philosopher used in his argument:

“How we acquire knowledge is difficult to explain; everyone agrees about that. But some philosophers, like Plato, explain knowledge by saying that we have some kind of relation (intellectual ‘sight’) with strange, indeed extravagant objects (Forms). Other philosophers, like Quine, explain knowledge by saying that we have a straightforward relation (the senses) with everyday objects (matter). I agree with Quine. I think an explanation is better whenever it avoids ontological extravagance. So long as an explanation can explain the same phenomena with fewer oddities, it is better.”

(d) What fallacy does this argument commit?

“No conclusive evidence has been presented yet that fossil fuel emissions are responsible for the increase in global temperatures. I must therefore conclude that fossil fuel emissions have no effect on global temperatures.”

(b) What kind of argument is the following:

We must not allow more than one student in each class to get an “A”. After all, if we allow several students to get an “A,” then getting a “C” or even a “B” will begin to seem like a bad grade to the others. Teachers will then have to start giving “A’s” even to mediocre students in order to avoid the impression that they are too harsh. Once that happens, our University will no longer have any standards at all. And once word gets out that we have no standards, no one will hire our graduates, no high-school students will apply, and our funds will dry up. In short, if we allow more than one student in each class to get an “A,” it will be the death knell of our University.

(e) What is the problem with this reasoning?

“I reject Chistianity, Islam, and Judaism. I haven’t done so lightly, either. Over the last several years I’ve investigated each. I spoke with one of its proponents, and refuted him. For Christianity, I spoke with the Pit Preacher and refuted him easily; for Islam, I spoke with Osama bin Laden – his religion is full of holes; for Judaism, I spoke with some of the West Bank settlers. There were insoluble problems with each of their religions.”

(d) What is the flaw in Ms. Credulous’s reasoning?

Ms. Credulous: I’m only going to visit acupuncturists from now on; I’ve had it with Western Medicine.

Mr. Doubtfire: Why?

Ms. Credulous: I have one friend with cancer who received radiation and chemotherapy for months until she died, with no appreciable difference. I have another friend who got acupuncture for six months and went into complete remission. She’s lived cancer-free for a decade now.

2. Use sentence variables to represent the arguments exhibited within the following passage. After you have done this, name the deductive inference rules (or argument types, from Weston Ch. 6) by which each conclusion has been derived.

P1. If snow is white, then grass is green or the sky is blue.

P2. If grass is green or the sky is blue, then pork is nasty.

C1, P3. If snow is white, then pork is nasty. (from P1 and P2)

P4. Either snow is white or Joe has a moustache.

P5. Joe does not have a moustache.

C2, P6. Snow is white. (from P4 and P5)

C3, P7. Pork is nasty. (from P3 and P6)

P8. If snow is white and pork is nasty, then UNC is no.1 in the USA.

C4, P9. UNC is no.1 in the USA. (from P6, P7, and P8)

P10. If snow is white and UNC is no.1 in the USA, then either logic is fun or Bush is clever.

C5, P11. Either logic is fun or Bush is clever. (from P6 and P9)

P12. If logic is fun, then philosophy is tastier than spinach.

P13. If Bush is clever, then philosophy is tastier than spinach.

C6. Philosophy is tastier than spinach. (from P11, P12, and P13).

(a) The argument(s) represented with variables:

(b) The deductive inference rules (or argument types, from Weston Ch. 6) by which each conclusion has been deduced.

C1. _____

C2. _____

C3. _____

C4. _____

C5. _____

C6. _____

Part II: Essay Questions (45 minutes each)

List A. God

Pascal thinks that we cannot know whether God exists or not. And yet he concludes that it is still a good idea to believe that He does exist. In order to argue for this conclusion he presents an argument that has come to be known as “Pascal’s Wager”. How does this argument go? Is it sound? Pascal’s Wager resembles a puzzle that we examined early in the course. What was this puzzle and how did it work? Briefly, what was Socrates’ solution to this puzzle?

List B. Mind

Descartes’ second argument for dualism exploits the different epistemic access I have to my mind as opposed to my body. Before arguing that dualism commits a “category mistake,” Ryle levels three standard objections against dualism. What are these three objections? Do they succeed? As you evaluate them, don’t forget that Russell offers a reply to the third objection. What is Russell’s argument in this reply? What is the obvious problem with this argument? What further, and much deeper, objection might Salmon offer against Russell’s argument?

List C. Free-Will and Identity.

State in full detail the position of Soft Determinism (or “Compatibilism”). What objection would Plato make to this position? How does Plato think about freedom? In Plato’s view, who is the freest sort of person, and who the most slavish? What is the assumption of Plato’s argument for these views? Is it true?

What is Descartes’ argument that we determine the identity of objects with our reason? What are two problems we found with this argument? Even if it were sound, why could Chaplain Miller not use it to explain how we determine the identity of someone’s soul on two different occasions: that is, when we perceive that two “person-stages” exhibit the same psychological characteristics on these occasions?