

Final Exam Study Sheet

General Information:

1. The final exam is a three-hour take-home exam, consisting of three essays. *It must be taken in a single, three-hour session.*¹
2. *The final will be closed book, and notes are not allowed.*
3. Students are permitted, and in fact are encouraged, to work together in preparing for the final exam. *However, this work must be collaborative. It is impermissible for students to email each other outlines or drafts of answers to the study questions.*
4. *Students are prohibited from looking at the final exam until they sit down and take it. Once a student has looked at the exam, they cannot refer back to their notes or the assigned readings for the course.*
5. The final exam is due in my Eliot mailbox by 5PM on Thursday, 12/15.² As a matter of official college policy, **no late exams will be accepted under any conditions.**
6. Students can take their exams at any time of their choosing prior to the deadline.
7. *Students who have taken the exam are prohibited from communicating any information about its contents to students who have not yet taken the exam.*
8. *Compliance with these conditions is governed by the **Honor Principle**.*

Exam Information:

1. All questions on the exam will be taken *verbatim* from the following study questions.
2. All students will be asked to write one exam essay in epistemology from a choice of two questions.
3. All students will be asked to write one exam essay on personal identity from a choice of three questions.
4. Students who wrote their third paper in the philosophy of mind will be required to write one exam essay from a choice of three questions on free will, determinism, and moral responsibility.
5. Students who wrote their third paper on the topic of free will, determinism and moral responsibility will be required to write one exam essay from a choice of three questions in the philosophy of mind.³

Study Questions:

1. Epistemology

1. What is inference to the best explanation? Present in premise-conclusion form how Russell, by drawing on inference to the best explanation, would respond to the following claim: The hypothesis that you are a systematically deluded brain in a vat is just as reasonable as the hypothesis that material objects (like tables and chairs) exist. Clearly outline what you take to be the deepest problem for this response to the external world sceptic.

2. Present the four clauses in Nozick's account of knowledge and explain how he would respond to the following sceptical argument:

(1) In order for me to know that I have a hand, I must know that I am not in a skeptical scenario.

(2) I cannot know that I am not in a skeptical scenario.

(3) I cannot know that I have a hand.

Setting counterexamples to one side, clearly outline what you take to be the deepest problem for Nozick's response to the external world skeptic.

¹ Students with documented learning disabilities who have not yet been in contact with me about special accommodations should contact me by email as soon as possible.

² I'd be grateful if you also sent me a version in Word or PDF format as an email attachment.

³ By doing some simple calculations, you'll see that you only need to prepare answers to nine of the study questions in order to be fully prepared for the exam: Three questions in epistemology, three questions on personal identity, and three questions in the philosophy of mind or on free will, determinism, and moral responsibility.

1. Epistemology (cont.)

3. What is inductive inference? What is the pragmatic response to the problem of induction? In answering this second question, be sure to outline why a proponent of the pragmatic response to the problem of induction maintains that it is reasonable for us to use inductive inference as a means of forming beliefs about the future. Present what you take to be the deepest problem for the pragmatic response to the problem of induction.

4. What is Goodman's "New Riddle of Induction"? In explaining Goodman's New Riddle, be sure to devise two *gruesome* predicates, like Goodman's predicates 'grue' and 'bleen'. Why might one think that Goodman's New Riddle establishes that (1) does not entail (2):

(1) All observed As have been Bs (for a large sample observed across variegated conditions).

(2) We have reason to believe that the next A will be a B.

Briefly evaluate what you take to be the best response to Goodman's New Riddle.

2. Philosophy of Mind

1. What is substance dualism and how does it differ from property dualism? Carefully reconstruct and evaluate one of Descartes' arguments for substance dualism.

2. How would Lewis analyze our concept of human nausea? Explain why this analysis of our concept of human nausea, taken by itself, is *neutral* between substance dualism and materialism. Supply an empirical premise, which, in conjunction with this analysis, entails that materialism about human nausea is correct in the actual world. Clearly outline what you take to be the deepest problem for Lewis' analysis of our concept of human nausea.

3. How would Lewis respond to the following argument:

(1) If 'Human pain = C-fiber firings' is true, then 'Necessarily: Human pain = C-fiber firings' is true.

(2) 'Necessarily: Human pain = C-fiber firings' is false.

(3) 'Human pain = C-fiber firings' is false.

Clearly outline what you take to be the most serious problem for Lewis' response to this argument.

4. What does Jackson mean by 'physicalism'? Reconstruct Jackson's argument about black-and-white Mary in premise-conclusion form, being sure to explain why he thinks it entails the falsity of physicalism. Clearly outline what you take to be the deepest objection to Jackson's argument.⁴

5. What does Searle mean by 'strong AI'? Carefully reconstruct Searle's Chinese room argument and explain why he thinks it establishes the falsity of strong AI. Present what you take to be the most compelling objection to Searle's argument and present what you take to be Searle's best response.⁵ Is Searle's response successful? Why or why not?

3. Free Will, Determinism, and Moral Responsibility

1. Give a clear definition of 'determinism'. Provide a compact reconstruction (in premise-conclusion form) of Ayer's argument for the claim that determinism is necessary for moral responsibility, and thus for free will. Has Ayer successfully shown that determinism is necessary for free will? If not, why not? Again, if not, is there a weaker claim that Ayer does succeed in establishing?

2. What is the conditional analysis of free will and what is determinism? Explain why determinism is *compatible* with free will, given a conditional analysis of the latter. Do you think the conditional analysis of free will is plausible? Explain.

⁴ In characterizing 'physicalism' you need not appeal to the notion of information. It's fine if you frame your characterization in terms of the notion of a fact.

⁵ It is perfectly permissible to present an objection that Searle addresses (e.g., the systems reply, the robot reply) or an objection developed by Haugeland or Block.

3. Free Will, Determinism, and Moral Responsibility (cont.)

3. What is the principle of alternate possibilities? Relying only on the case of Jones₄, clearly outline Frankfort's objection to this principle. Give a clear statement of the revised version of the principle of alternate possibilities that Frankfort accepts and explain why, given this revised principle, one might think that morally responsible conduct is possible in a deterministic world?

4. Consider the following two claims:

(1) S could not have refrained from performing A.

(2) S's performing A results from a deterministic process that traces back to factors beyond S's control.

In §2 of "Determinism Al Dente," Pereboom argues that (2) is logically stronger than (1)? Why does Pereboom think that (2) entails (1), but that Frankfort cases, like the case of Jones₄, show that (1) does not entail (2)? Is Pereboom correct in thinking that (2) is logically stronger than (1)?⁶

5. Why might one think that we lack freedom of the will if the following claims are both true:

(I) Every event has a cause.

(II) Every cause is an event.

How would a proponent of agent-causation respond to these claims? Briefly outline an agent-causal account of free will and evaluate what you take to be the most serious objection to it.

4. Personal Identity

1. Give a precise statement, in the form of a biconditional, of the view that personal identity over time consists in sameness of immaterial soul. Reconstruct Locke's arguments for the following two conclusions:

(1) Sameness of immaterial soul is not necessary for personal identity over time; (2) Sameness of immaterial soul is not sufficient for personal identity over time. Do you find Locke's arguments compelling? Why, or why not?

2. Give a precise statement, in the form of a biconditional, of the view that personal identity over time consists in having the numerically same body. Reconstruct Locke's arguments for the following two conclusions: (1) Sameness of body is not necessary for personal identity over time; (2) Sameness of body is not sufficient for personal identity over time. Do you find Locke's arguments compelling? Why, or why not?

3. In "The First Night" of *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*, Perry (through the character of Weirob) provides an *epistemic* argument against the view that personal identity consists in sameness of immaterial soul. Reconstruct and evaluate Perry's epistemic argument.

4. Give a precise statement, in the form of a biconditional, of Locke's positive view of personal identity over time. Provide a definition of a transitive relation. Drawing on the assumption that personal identity is a transitive relation, provide an example where Locke's view leads to a contradiction. Is there a way of refining, or slightly modifying, Locke's view so that it does not lead to a contradiction in the case you describe?

5. According to Parfit, person X at t_1 can survive as person Y at t_2 even though X at t_1 is not the numerically same person as Y at t_2 . What is Parfit's argument for this claim? Do you agree with Parfit that you can survive into the future even if nobody will be identical to you?

⁶ Claim X is logically stronger than claim Y when X entails Y but Y does not entail X.