

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

DESCRIPTION

The department has two Comprehensive Examinations: (i) Value Theory and (ii) Metaphysics and Epistemology. The two comprehensive examinations are not merely history examinations, although they are grounded in historical texts from Plato to Nietzsche. This means that questions normally include both an expository and a critical component; that is, they require the examinee to demonstrate both an accurate understanding of the views of the philosopher(s) in question and an ability to critically engage those views. All questions are drawn from a list (one for each exam) that is made available beforehand as an aid for those preparing for the exam.

Each examination will be offered twice a year, during the week before the beginning of classes in the Fall and Spring semesters. Each examination will consist of nine questions, three on the Ancient-Medieval period, three on the period from the 17th-19th centuries, and three on the entire period from Plato-Nietzsche. Students must answer **one** question from **each** of the three periods, to constitute three answers in total.

Normally, each examination will be six hours in length and will be evaluated by a committee consisting of four members of the graduate faculty of the department. In all decisions, a majority opinion of the committee prevails. If a committee is evenly divided, the examination is a “fail”.

EXPECTATIONS

Full-time graduate students are expected to sit the examination in a timely manner. There are two requirements relevant to timely completion of the exams. The first requirement is that students must have passed **at least one** exam by no later than the January exam of their second year—that is, by no later than the exam following the third semester in the program. Second, students must have passed **both** exams by no later than the January exam of their third year, that is, the exam following the fifth semester in the program. Those who fail to satisfy either of these two requirements will be considered not to be making satisfactory progress in the program.

Regulations concerning the Comprehensive Exams are also detailed in the *Graduate Studies in Philosophy Regulations*. Please familiarize yourself with these Regulations.

READING LISTS

Reading lists for both exams are listed on the following pages. Most of the readings for both lists can be found in one or another of the following anthologies:

1. F. E. Baird and W. Kaufmann, eds., *Philosophic Classics*, 5 vols. (Prentice Hall)
2. S. M. Cahn, ed., *Classics of Western Philosophy* (Hackett)
3. M. L. Morgan, ed., *Classics of Moral and Political Theory* (Hackett)
4. M. Cohen, P. Curd, and C. D. C. Reeve, eds., *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy: From Thales to Aristotle* (Hackett)
5. A. Hyman and J. Walsh, eds., *Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (Hackett)
6. A. B. Schoedinger, ed., *Readings in Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford)
7. R. Cummins and D. Owen, eds., *Central Readings in the History of Modern Philosophy: Descartes to Kant* (Wadsworth)
8. Richard Bosely and Martin Tweedale, eds., *Basic Issues in Medieval Philosophy*, 2nd ed. (Broadview)

The Leibniz essays in the M&E list can be found in:

9. Ariew & Garber, eds., *G.W. Leibniz: Philosophical Essays* (Hackett) or Ariew & Watkins eds., *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources* (Hackett)

VALUE THEORY EXAM READING LIST

Plato, *Republic*

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*; *Politics* I, II.1-5, 9, III-IV, VII.1-3, 13

Epicurus, *Letter to Menoecus*; *Principal Doctrines*

Epictetus, *Encheiridion*

Augustine, *City of God*, Book XIX

Aquinas, selections from *On Kingship* I.1-2, 6, II.3; *Summa Theologica* I-II qq. 90, 91, 94-96 (on law)

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Introduction, Book I, Chaps. 1-3, 6, 13-21

Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*; Letter concerning Toleration

Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, Book II, Part 3, Sec. 3; Book III, Part 1, Secs. 1-2; Book III, Part 2, Secs. 1-2

Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*; *On the Social Contract*

Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Chaps. 1-4, 10 (on utility and pleasure)

Mill, *On Liberty*; *Utilitarianism*

Marx, "Alienated Labor" (from *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*); "Ideology in General, German Ideology in Particular" (from *The German Ideology*); *Manifesto of the Communist Party*

Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*; *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface, First and Second Essays

METAPHYSICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY EXAM READING LIST

Plato, *Meno*; *Phaedo*; *Republic*, Books V-VII; *Parmenides*, 127-135; *Theaetetus*; *Timaeus*, 27-52

Aristotle, *Categories*, Chaps. 1-5; *Posterior Analytics* I.1-3, II.19; *Physics* I.7, II.1-3, 7-9, IV.10-14; *De Anima*, Books II and III; *Metaphysics* I.1-4, 6, 9, IV.1-2, VI.1, VII.1-6, 13-17, VIII.1-2, XII.6-10

Epicurus, *Letter to Herodotus*

Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* VII.45-54, 132-59 (on Stoics)

Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* I.1-13

Plotinus, *Enneads* I.6, V.1, and VI.9

Porphyry, *Isagoge*

Augustine, *On the Free Choice of the Will*, Book II; *Confessions* VII, VIII.5, 8-10, XI.14-28; *City of God*, VIII.1-12, XII.1-9; *Against the Academics* II. 11-13, III.1-8

Boethius, *Commentary on Isagoge* I.10-11 (on universals); *Consolation of Philosophy* V.2, 3, 6 (on eternity and foreknowledge)

Anselm, *Proslogion*; debate between Gaunilo and Anselm

Abelard, *Glosses on Porphyry* (on universals)

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I, Questions 2, 12-14, 19

William of Ockham, *Summa Logicae* Part I, Chaps. 14-17

Descartes, *Meditations*

Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*; *Monadology*; "Primary Truths" and "A New System of Nature"

Spinoza, *Ethics*, Parts I-II

Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* I.1, II. 1-12, 21, 23, 27, III.2-4, 6, IV.1-4, 6, 9-11

Berkeley, *Principles of Human Knowledge*

Hume, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*; *Treatise of Human Nature* I.4.6 ("Of Personal Identity") and Appendix (on belief)

Kant, selections from *Critique of Pure Reason*: "Preface to the Second Edition"; "Introduction"; "Transcendental Aesthetic"; "Transcendental Analytic" (incl. "Analytic of Concepts" and "Analytic of Principles"); "Transcendental Dialectic," Introduction and Book II, Chap. 2 (The Antinomy of Pure Reason); "The Paralogisms of Pure Reason"

Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Chapter Four, Pt. A ("Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness"); *Encyclopedia* (Introduction); *The Philosophy of History* (Introduction); *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Volume Three, Section Three, Part E ("The Final Result")

Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*