

**UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS**

**Description:** The two comprehensive examinations in philosophy are not merely history examinations, although they are grounded in historical texts from Plato to Nietzsche. They are value theory and metaphysics and epistemology examinations. 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 six questions, including two questions drawn from the question-list for each of three historical periods: (A) ancient-medieval; (B) 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries; (C) the entire historical period from Plato to Nietzsche. Examinees are required to answer one question from each period and a fourth which can be from any of these periods, for a total of four questions. 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.”

**Expectation:** 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 will 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 will 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.

Arnold Farr  
Director of Graduate Studies  
Department of Philosophy  
May 6, 2010

## VALUE THEORY READING LIST

Plato, Republic

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

Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus; 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 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

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, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Broadview, 2006

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

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