MA EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY

Introduction to Philosophy

SSPL074S7

Credits: 30

Date: TUESDAY 05 May 2015

Time: 10:00AM - 1:00PM

Candidates should answer THREE of the following TWENTY questions. Questions should be chosen from AT LEAST TWO sections. Avoid overlap in your answers.

PLEASE ANSWER EACH QUESTION IN A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOK.

PLEASE TURN OVER

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SECTION A: ETHICS

1. Is some form of hedonism a good account of what makes a life worth living?
2. Can an egoist be perfectly rational?
3. Is it ethically significant whether one does something bad intentionally, or as a predictable side effect?
4. Can philosophical theses about the nature of personal identity properly reduce the force of advance directives?
5. Do debates about moral realism have any bearing upon debates about how it is moral to act?

SECTION B: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

6. ‘Where there is no common power there is no law. Where no law no justice.’ (Hobbes). Does this provide an adequate account of the basis of political justice?
7. Does the Hobbesian sovereign’s reliance on fear undercut its ability to deliver security?
8. How, according to Rousseau, is it possible to live freely within the state? Is his account coherent?
9. Explain and assess Rawls’s claim that a property owning democracy would qualify as just.
10. How successfully does Marx defend his claim that ‘law, morality and religion are so many bourgeois prejudices that hide just as many bourgeois interests’?

SECTION C: EPISTEMOLOGY

11. Explain how Gettier cases seek to challenge the idea that justified true belief is sufficient for knowledge. How should one respond to this challenge?
12. In order to know that p, must one be certain that p?
13. If A and B are epistemic peers and disagree about some question, must A always concede some ground to B’s position?
14. Are any of Paul Boghossian’s arguments against the epistemic relativist persuasive?
15. ‘An intelligible answer about why a proposition is worth knowing will have to say something about [the value of knowing its] particular subject matter. It cannot simply point back to the fact that the item in question would be a specimen of true belief’ (Jane Heal). Discuss.
SECTION D: METAPHYSICS

16. Can any form of nominalism (anti-realism about universals) satisfactorily explain the sense in which different particulars ‘share the same property’?

17. ‘Night always follows day. Therefore day causes night.’ What is wrong with this argument?

18. Would the truth of indeterminism mean that we are more likely to have free will? If so, how? If not, why not?

19. Is bodily continuity sufficient for personal identity over time?

20. Why does consciousness seem to pose a uniquely difficult problem for physicalism? Can any version of physicalism explain it?

END OF PAPER