

PHILOSOPHY I

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. 'If there is a god, they will look benevolently upon atheists.' Discuss.
2. Is disability primarily a social phenomenon?
3. Is the principle of bivalence incompatible with free action? Explain.
4. 'Anything that exists is (exactly) one thing. Therefore, to be many is not to exist.' Discuss.
5. Can there be vague objects?
6. Can there be time without change? Change without time?
7. Is it possible to define truth?
8. Compare the merits of Aristotelian and Newtonian mechanics.
9. Should we expect that mathematics is in principle dispensable in natural science?
10. Can testimony convey the quality of experiences?
11. Is Plato's tripartition of the soul still of any philosophical relevance?
12. Explain and evaluate Epicurus' theory of perception.
13. How many things-in-themselves did Kant think there are? Does it matter?
14. Is envy necessarily bad?
15. Should there be laws that require the gradual replacement of natural animal meat with lab-grown meat?
16. Can there be rights without duties? Justify your answer.
17. How did Leibniz explain the meanings of subject-predicate propositions? Assess the merits of his explanation relative to the Fregean one.
18. If there are moral facts, are they necessary truths?
19. Suppose that two knife blades and two knife handles are laid out on a table. In such circumstances, ought we also to accept that there are at least four possible knives?

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20. To what extent does ontology reflect grammar?
21. To what extent should citizens of democracies be held responsible for the acts of their governments?
22. Can the freedom of the many outweigh the fear of the few?
23. Is virtual reality genuine reality?
24. How does Kant's categorical imperative differ from the golden rule?
25. Should we avoid transformative experiences?
26. When Locke wrote that 'there is nothing in the apple that resembles its sweetness', what did he mean? Was he right?
27. 'I have to say that I would find it easier to concede matter and extension to the soul than to concede that an immaterial thing could move and be moved by a body ...' (ELISABETH OF BOHEMIA). Is this a valid criticism of Descartes?
28. In order for an agent to be rational, to what extent must their beliefs cohere through time?
29. Suppose that by philosophical reflection Alexis comes to believe that global scepticism is a *coherent* position. How, if at all, might this conclusion affect her life?
30. Am I the same person now that I was when I was a toddler?
31. Explain the role of imitation in gender.
32. Compare the operation of negation as applied to declarative sentences and imperatives.
33. What can be said in favour of a 'no self' theory of mind?
34. What are colours?

PHILOSOPHY II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Can there be objective moral norms without religion?
2. What do philosophers mean when they say that race is socially constructed?
3. Is there such a thing as a free will?
4. Is nothing something?
5. 'There is no higher-order vagueness, strictly so-called' (STEWART SHAPIRO). Discuss.
6. Do we move through time from the past towards the future or does the present move with us from the past to the future?
7. Can a proposition be true by convention?
8. Does quantum entanglement undermine our common-sense assumptions about causality?
9. Are there absolutely undecidable mathematical propositions?
10. What is the relation between physical time and phenomenological duration?
11. Is it acceptable for a state to ban certain kinds of instrumental music because it arouses undesirable emotions?
12. Are emotions (*pathê*) simply false beliefs?
13. What does Kant mean by pure reason and what is its role in cognition?
14. Can friendship be bought?
15. Do we have a responsibility to leave an inhabitable world for the next generation?
16. Do adults have a right to be loved?
17. What was Descartes' 'method of doubt'? Could he have equally plausibly advanced a 'method of credulousness'?
18. Does belief in moral progress rationally require belief in moral realism?
19. Can modal logic tell us anything about reality?

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20. 'When I think about Joe Biden, I think about Biden, not the idea of Biden. Similarly, when I think about Santa Claus, I think about Santa, and not the idea of Santa. So, Santa exists as an object of thought in the same sense Joe Biden does.' Where, if at all, does this line of reasoning go wrong?
21. Compare the merits of ideal forms of democracy and meritocracy as means of electing leaders.
22. Should we make state membership, along with protection by and subjugation to its laws, an optional matter?
23. Does artificial superintelligence pose a serious threat to the existence of humanity? How significant a concern should this prospect be for public policy?
24. Can one consent to be coerced to do something at a later time?
25. Why did Berkeley think that it was impossible to even conceive of an object existing unperceived? Where, if at all, does his reasoning go wrong?
26. 'Against that positivism which stops before phenomena, saying 'there are only facts,' I should say: no, it is precisely facts that do not exist, only interpretations [do]' (FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE). Discuss.
27. Do the origins of our beliefs or of our concepts matter?
28. Has Zeno's paradox of Achilles and the Tortoise been resolved?
29. Does the originality in a work of art affect its aesthetic value?
30. Can a cause and its effect occur or exist at the same time?
31. Can slurs offend even if the speaker neither intends to offend nor believes that their words are slurs? How?
32. Can there be a specifically feminist metaphysics?
33. Does Stoic syllogistic make Aristotelian syllogistic obsolete?
34. What are the limits of the experimental method?

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1. 'Just as the end goal of socialist revolution was not only the elimination of the economic class *privilege* but of the economic class *distinction* itself, so the end goal of feminist revolution must be . . . not just the elimination of male *privilege* but of the sex *distinction* itself: genital differences between human beings would no longer matter culturally' (SHULAMITH FIRESTONE). Discuss.
2. When a new, non-empty social kind concept is articulated, does a new social kind come into existence?
3. What can political philosophers learn from the practitioners of politics?
4. When we discover that a work of art was created by a bad person, should our aesthetic relation to it change?
5. 'A person is a person through a person.' Discuss.
6. 'One who is happy to replace her beloved with someone qualitatively similar or better doesn't really love.' Does this tell us anything about the nature of love?
7. Does consent mark the boundary of ethically permissible sex?
8. If there is no God, is there a problem of evil?
9. Plato, Aristotle—or neither?
10. What can medieval Islamic debates about *taqlīd* contribute to contemporary philosophical thinking?
11. 'Hume's claim that reason is the slave of the passions is the greatest misstep in early modern philosophy.' Discuss.
12. Is there a place for hylo-morphism after the scientific revolution?
13. Is there a livable nihilism?
14. Explain the Russellian and Strawsonian approaches to definite descriptions. Which is better?
15. Could there be a private language?
16. Should the moral value of a belief have any determining role in its epistemic value?
17. Are the norms of good inquiry reducible to the norms of good belief formation?
18. Can we talk, or think, about everything that exists?

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19. Is there a coherent notion of metaphysical modality?
20. Is there such a subject as inductive logic?
21. Can pronouns of natural language be well-modeled as variables?
22. Suppose that Sheila thinks all cats are cute, but does not know about the existence of my cat Miau. Can I truly say 'Sheila thinks that Miau is cute'?
23. Explore the ramifications of computational complexity theory for the philosophy of mind.
24. Could rocks be conscious?
25. To what extent does work in psychology **AND/OR** economics show that humans are irrational?
26. Suppose that some outcome of a given physical system is deterministic. Can we nonetheless make sense of a notion of objective chance concerning this outcome?
27. How do we explain the apparent similarities and divergences between the natural language conditional and the material conditional?
28. Can mathematical facts explain physical phenomena?
29. 'Models are not lost noumenal waifs looking for someone to name them; they are constructions within our theory itself, and they have names from birth' (HILARY PUTNAM). Discuss.

PHILOSOPHY II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. 'Colonialism is not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties. It is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence' (FRANTZ FANON). Discuss.
2. In virtue of what, if anything, are both music and painting forms of art?
3. What is the wrong in cultural appropriation?
4. What role, if any, does the imagination have in an ethical life?
5. Why do we have obligations to the dead?
6. Can any metaethical theory be neutral on all first-order ethical questions?
7. 'Marx did not have, and did not need, a moral philosophy.' Discuss.
8. '[Human] nature is good (性善)' (MENCIUS). Is it?
9. Does a Buddhist no-self theory imply that emotions which presuppose the self/other distinction, e.g. shame or compassion, are unjustified?
10. What did the ancients know that we have forgotten?
11. Is there a valid version of the ontological argument?
12. Of what philosophical significance is the history of philosophy?
13. Does existence precede essence?
14. What can only be fully understood with reference to the unconscious?
15. What role, if any, should notions of blameworthiness and praiseworthiness have in epistemology?
16. How many numbers are there?
17. Is there a consistent version of verificationism? If so, is it plausible?
18. How should we evaluate the sentence 'What this sentence says is true'?
19. What does reverse mathematics teach us about the foundations of mathematics?
20. What is wrong with asserting 'It's raining but I don't know that it is'? What is wrong with thinking this?

21. What does the recent success of machine-learning based NLP tell us about human language?
22. Can well-being be quantified?
23. What were sense data?
24. Is time bias irrational?
25. What is the truth-maker for a quantified sentence like 'Someone owns a donkey'?
What about for 'No one owns a donkey'?
26. What is the best response to Arrow's impossibility result? (Focus on one or two domains.)
27. Which philosophical debate should be dissolved?
28. Do the paradoxes of quantum mechanics pose a threat to classical logic?

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1. What is phenomenology?
2. What limits can the state impose on the right to procreate?
3. If you know p , then are you entitled to dismiss evidence suggesting p is false?
4. Is belief attempted knowledge?
5. Is logical entailment a transitive relation?
6. Is pain purely representational, and, if so, of what?
7. Is teleosemantics plausible?
8. What are physical laws?
9. Does Moore's refutation of scepticism succeed?
10. 'Willing, if it is not to be a sort of wishing, must be the action itself' (WITTGENSTEIN). Discuss.
11. Ought there to be a feminist metaphysics?
12. Can we give a counterfactual analysis of causation?
13. Should we try to define art?
14. How do metaphors work?
15. What does following a rule consist in?
16. What is Kant's transcendental deduction trying to show?
17. Does Nietzsche aim to put forward a consistent philosophical position?
18. Is Wittgenstein's idea of a 'language game' helpful?
19. Are there different ways for a declarative sentence to fail to be true or false?
20. Should scientists search for neural correlates of consciousness?
21. When we have a hallucination, what do we see?
22. Do we have infallible access to (some of) our mental states?

23. 'Arithmetic has a very great and elevating effect, compelling the mind to reason about abstract number, and rebelling against the introduction of visible or tangible objects into the argument' (PLATO). Discuss.
24. When is blame appropriate?
25. Can we learn anything from trolley problems?
26. Do Gödel's Incompleteness Theorems tell us anything about human intelligence?
27. As democracies crumble, is there any place left for 'ideal theory' in political philosophy?
28. 'There are then facts, moral truths, about what we ought to do, but that is not because the actions are intrinsically normative. They inherit their normativity from principles that spring from the nature of the will—the principles of practical reasoning' (KORSGAARD). Discuss.
29. Should there be one logic to rule them all?
30. Do conditionals have truth conditions?
31. 'To the extent that the technical issues that fill Anglophone journals result in any comprehensible way from questions of large significance, they do not seem to have reached the stage at which firm answers might be found. Any defence of the idea that philosophy, like particle physics and molecular biology, proceeds by the accumulation of reliable answers to technical questions would have to provide examples of consensus on which larger agreements are built. Yet, as the philosophical questions diminish in size, disagreement and controversy persist, new distinctions are drawn, and yet tinier issues are generated. Decomposition continues downwards, until the interested community becomes too exhausted, too small, or too tired to play the game any further' (PHILIP KITCHER). Discuss.

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1. 'Not being wise is no more a real property than Nonsocrates is a real particular.' Discuss.
2. Are causal relationships identifiable as those which are potentially exploitable for the purposes of manipulation and control?
3. If something is the case, is it necessarily possible that it is the case?
4. Was Spinoza really a monist?
5. 'An object is red if it produces a characteristic sensation in a suitably placed observer. An event is funny if it produces a characteristic reaction in a suitably placed observer. Therefore being funny is no less objective a property than is being red.' Discuss.
6. What reason is there, if any, to believe that the Sun will rise tomorrow?
7. Is there a coherent and explanatory distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge? If there is, draw it. Otherwise, explain why such a distinction cannot be drawn.
8. In what sense, if any, is the future open while the past is closed?
9. If person *A* survives as person *B*, must *B* be identical with *A*?
10. What am I doing when I imagine myself as Napoleon at the Battle of Austerlitz?
11. 'It is a philosophical myth that actions are well explained by the agent's beliefs and desires. For most of the time people just muddle along with no clear idea of what they think or what they want.' Discuss.
12. When a thermostat triggers the firing of a boiler, does it believe that the room in which it is situated is too cold?
13. 'One who makes a statement or assertion makes a true statement if and only if things are as, in making that statement, he states them to be' (P. F. STRAWSON). Need anything further be said about the concept of truth?
14. What do you take to be the strongest challenge to a law of classical logic? Can the challenge be resisted?
15. Does Aristotle's theoretical philosophy play an important role in his practical philosophy?

16. Do the sentences 'John silently robbed the bank' and 'John allegedly robbed the bank' share a logical form?
17. Are two-system accounts of cognition illuminating?
18. Given that the names 'Zeus' and 'Wotan' each lack a reference, how would you account for their differing in meaning?
19. Is it possible to derive an *ought* from an *is*?
20. Is there a coherent notion of a moral reason?
21. If it is wrong to do something, is it always wrong to threaten to do it?
22. 'It is not profitable for us at present to do moral philosophy; that should be laid aside until we have an adequate philosophy of psychology, in which we are conspicuously lacking' (ANSCOMBE). Discuss.
23. Is there any non-prudential reason to obey an unjust law?
24. 'Frege argued for logicism by trying to reduce arithmetical notions to those already recognized as being logical. A better strategy would have been to argue that the concept of number, because it is universally applicable and governed by topic-neutral rules, is inherently logical even if it is irreducible.' Discuss.
25. Is chemistry reducible to physics?
26. Does teleological explanation have a role in modern biology?
27. Would an orchestra have performed the *Eroica* Symphony if they transposed it down a major third?
28. Is there a cogent argument for the existence of God from the premisses 'God exists of necessity if He exists at all' and 'It is possible that God exists'?
29. What is race?
30. If I am free to do something, must it be possible for me not to do it?
31. 'There is but one truly serious philosophical problem and that is suicide' (CAMUS). Discuss.