

Final Exam Study Guide
PHIL101, Term 2 2015-2016
Professor Margolis

date:	April 26
time:	12pm
duration:	two hours
location:	LSK 200 (6356 Agricultural Road)

Instructions

You will be given five essays to choose from and must answer three. The essays will be based on the following topics:

- The Problem of Evil
- The Argument from Design
- The Scientific Status of the Soul Hypothesis
- Near Death Experiences, Out-of-Body Experiences, and Dualism
- Compatibilism
- Psychological Egoism

General tips:

- Your essays should be thoughtful and detailed. A detailed explanation reads more like a thorough encyclopedia entry than a dictionary entry. It gives examples to illustrate an abstract point, it talks about the motivation behind a position, it explains the reasoning involved in an argument, it considers standard objections and replies, etc.
- Your essays should be written as if they will be read by someone who doesn't know this material. Explain all technical terms and don't assume that your reader is in a position to fill in any gaps in your exposition.
- If a question makes use of philosophical notions or arguments (the problem of evil, theism, determinism, etc.), don't take these for granted—explain them in your essay. Again, write as if your essays will be read by someone who doesn't know the course material.
- Treat each essay that you write as if it is completely independent of the other two. For example, if you find that the same term needs to be explained in two of your essays, then

explain it in both of your essays. (Your essays will be graded independently of one another.)

- In critically assessing an argument, avoid offhand remarks about your personal feelings and tastes. Your focus should be on clarifying whether the argument provides a good reason for believing its conclusion. Are the premises plausible? Is the logic of the argument convincing? Can you think of any counterexamples? Can you think of any false assumptions? Etc.
- Don't bullshit. Your goal is to demonstrate that you have mastered the material that the question asks about. Discussion that has no substantive content or discussion of tangential issues may fill up the exam booklet, but it indicates a poor understanding of the relevant material.
- How long should your essays be? Remember that your essays are supposed to be thoughtful and detailed and show that you have mastered the material. Generally speaking, this means writing for the full two hours of the exam period, taking into account a brief break (at your desk) between essays.
- You are not required to agree with the viewpoint expressed in the lectures or any of the texts. However, the exam is directed to the arguments covered in lecture and the texts, so if you find yourself not engaging with this material, you aren't answering the question.
- I encourage you to study with other members of the class. Talking about the course material will help you to understand it better.

On the exam day:

- Arrive 10 minutes early and wait outside the examination room until you are instructed to enter.
- Don't bring any unnecessary personal belongings, as you won't be able to keep most of these with you at your desk. All you need is your student ID and a few pens or pencils.
- If you have a smart phone, computer, or other electronic/internet device with you, you may keep this under your desk so long as you don't interact with the device in any way during the course of the exam.
- Please go to the bathroom *before* the exam so that you can sit comfortably for the duration of the exam. There are bathrooms near the examination room.
- Write neatly. If we can't read your writing, we can't give you credit.
- Write on only one side of a page.
- Should you skip every other line? Some students feel that they can write more neatly if they skip every other line. You may use this strategy if you like, but it isn't encouraged because students who write this way sometimes end up producing very short essays without realizing it.

- You do not need to document your exam essays in the same way as your take-home papers; that is, you do not need to provide a works cited page, page references for paraphrases, etc.

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