

Phil 210 Test #2 Study Questions

Question 1:

What is the main problem with the sample argument below? Explain.

Conservatives believe that the common worker should be happy to earn little more than subsistence wage, while paying the majority of the taxes. The worker should also be happy that rich people and corporations avoid taxes by various loopholes and even get government handouts. That's why no reasonable person can be a conservative.

Question 2:

"A year ago I had only a few grey hairs and I pulled them out. Now I have lots, so it must be true what they say 'if you pull one out, ten more will grow back.'" What fallacy is involved here? Explain.

Question 3:

What kind of reasoning is apparent in the following passage?

Guns are designed to kill—so anyone who wants to own a gun must be psychotic. I admit that I know someone who legally owns a gun, and she is a sane and level-headed person—but, you know, as they say, the exception proves the rule.

Question 4:

If 10% of Professor Smith's fall term students get an A, and 20% of Professor Smith's winter term students get an A, does this mean that 15% of her students over both terms got an A? Explain your answer.

Question 5:

Identify the two main problems seen below:

A recent investigation into universities in Northville reveals that the percentage of philosophy professors who are female was 11.2486102% in 2012, 10.9399783% in 2013 and 10.6400161% in 2014. This is very alarming because it tells us that in only 37 years, 6 months, and 15 days, female philosophy professors will constitute less than 0.3333333% of the Northville teaching force.

Question 6:

"The government is pouring heaps of money into safe-injection sites for heroin addicts. These sites do nothing other than contribute to the safety and comfort of criminals. This is clearly misuse of tax dollars." This is an example of:

Question 7:

What goes wrong in the following passage? Explain.

"Every baby must have a mother. But every mother must herself have been born to a mother further back in time. And so no matter how far back you go in time, there must always have been mothers. So life must have existed forever in the Universe."

Question 8:

Why might reporting the median income for a country give you a better idea of the economic status of the typical resident than reporting the mean income?

Question 9:

"Last week the level of mercury in the Barometer was high and the weather outside was sunny. Today the level of mercury in the Barometer is low and the weather is cold and wet. So if I pour

some extra mercury into the Barometer to raise the level back up, then the weather outside will turn sunny again."

What fallacy is involved here? Explain your answer.

Question 10:

If a poll has a 3% margin of error 19 times out of 20, and the poll puts politician A ahead of politician B by seven percentage points, can say with 95% confidence that A is more popular than B in the target population? What if the difference is only 2%? Explain.