

Ethics Midterm - Friday, April 27

After school review of Ethics - Tuesday, April 24 3:10-4:00, before school review of ethics - Tuesday, April 24 7:00-7:50

On the day of the exam, two of the following topics will be chosen at random by me. You will choose and write on one of the chosen topics.

1. Critically assess the claim that moral judgments have meaning and value only within the context of a given culture.
2. Critically assess the claim the interests of the many always outweigh the interests of the individual.
3. Evaluate the claim that rationality offers a justifiable foundation for moral judgments
4. Critically assess the following statement: "character is more important to ethics than rules."
5. Critically assess the claim that the basis for ethics is self interest using an example from applied ethics (in class, this would be distributional ethics or environmental ethics)

In general, please follow the format laid out in the first semester for philosophical writing (argument - counter argument - repair). Please include a clear thesis in your introduction that explains precisely what your argument in the paper will be. Exams should be approximately 700 -1000 words in length.

You may have an outline during the exam. The outline is limited to 1 page, you may utilize both sides. Any quotations you wish to use must be on the outline. No other notes will be allowed. The outline must be submitted with your exam. You should make a separate outline for each topic.

Essays will be assessed based on the following standards (from the IB Philosophy Guide):

For my grading purposes, the second standard in the rubric includes appropriate, in-depth use of the sources available in class.

Paper 1: Section B, SL and HL (Optional themes)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response is poorly structured, or where there is a recognizable essay structure there is minimal focus on the task. The response lacks coherence and is often unclear.• The student demonstrates little relevant knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately.• The essay is mostly descriptive. There is no discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Few of the main points are justified.
6-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is some attempt to follow a structured approach, although it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey.• The student demonstrates knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme, but this knowledge lacks accuracy and relevance. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately.• There is limited analysis but the response is more descriptive than analytical. There is little discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Some of the main points are justified.
11-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a clear attempt to structure the response, although there may be some repetition or a lack of clarity in places.• Knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme is mostly accurate and relevant. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately.• The response contains analysis, but this analysis lacks development. There is some discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Many of the main points are justified.
16-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response is structured and generally organized, and can be easily followed.• The response contains accurate and relevant knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. Philosophical vocabulary is mostly used appropriately.• The response contains critical analysis. There is discussion and some assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. Most of the main points are justified.
21-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The response is well structured, focused and effectively organized.• The response contains relevant, accurate and detailed knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. There is appropriate use of philosophical vocabulary throughout the response.• The response contains well-developed critical analysis. There is discussion and assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. All, or nearly all, of the main points are justified. The response argues from a consistently held position about the issue.

Taylor Midterm - Friday, April 20

After school review of Taylor - Tuesday, April 17 3:10-4:00, before school review of ethics - Tuesday, April 20 7:00-7:50

The Taylor midterm will consist of two parts. Part A will present a concept or argument from Taylor and ask you to **analyze and explain** it. Part B will ask you to **evaluate the success of the argument**. While you will not have the exact wording of the topics prior to the exam, the general areas addressed by the questions are listed below. As with the ethics exam, you will be given two topics from the areas listed below and you will choose and write on one of them.

1. Critically discuss what Taylor means by ‘**soft despotism**,’ why he sees it as one of the major problems of contemporary society and what, if anything, we can do to avoid or overcome it.
2. Taylor states, “**The nature of a free society is that it will always be the locus of a struggle between higher and lower forms of freedom**”. Discuss and critically evaluate the significance of this statement with relation to the arguments presented in *The Ethics of Authenticity*.
3. Taylor states, “The agent seeking significance in life, trying to define him - or herself- meaningfully, has to exist in a **horizon of important questions**”. Discuss and critically evaluate.
4. Explain and discuss the **parallels between art, the concept of the self and subjectivism** in Taylor’s argument on authenticity.
5. “The genesis of the human mind is not monological, something each accomplishes on his or her own, but dialogical”. Explain and evaluate the importance of this statement with regard to the role it plays in Taylor’s overall argument in *The Ethics of Authenticity*.

You will be allowed a single sheet of hand written notes on the exam. Given this, I will expect you to use quotations and specific references to the text wherever appropriate. Remember that the exam will follow the A/B format described above and will not be a single continuous essay.

Essays will be assessed based on the following standards (from the IB Philosophy Guide):

For my grading purposes, using accurate, direct and relevant quotations from the text is essential to achieving a good score on both sections. The only difference between this exam and the IB exam, is that the IB exam will be closed notes and you will not know the exact topics ahead of time

Paper 2: Part A, SL and HL (Prescribed text)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little relevant knowledge of the specified idea/argument/concept from the text. • The explanation is minimal. • Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately.
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some knowledge of the specified idea/argument/concept from the text is demonstrated but this lacks accuracy, relevance and detail. • The explanation is basic and in need of development. • Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately.
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the specified idea/argument/concept from the text is mostly accurate and relevant, but lacking in detail. • There is a satisfactory explanation. • Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately.
7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains accurate and relevant knowledge of the specified idea/argument/concept from the text. • The explanation is clear, although may be in need of further development. • Philosophical vocabulary is mostly used appropriately.
9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains relevant, accurate and detailed knowledge of the specified idea/argument/concept from the text. • The explanation is clear and well developed. • There is appropriate use of philosophical vocabulary throughout the response.

Paper 2: Part B, SL and HL (Prescribed text)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little relevant knowledge of the text. • Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately. • The response is mostly descriptive with very little analysis. • There is no discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view.
4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some knowledge of the text is demonstrated but this lacks accuracy and relevance. • Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • There is some limited analysis, but the response is more descriptive than analytical. • There is little discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. • Some of the main points are justified.
7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the text is mostly accurate and relevant. • Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • The response contains analysis, but this analysis lacks development. • There is some discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. • Many of the main points are justified.
10-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains accurate and relevant knowledge of the text. • Philosophical vocabulary is mostly used appropriately. • The response contains clear critical analysis. • There is discussion and some assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. • Most of the main points are justified.
13-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains relevant, accurate and detailed knowledge of the text. • There is appropriate use of philosophical vocabulary throughout the response. • The response contains clear and well-developed critical analysis. • There is discussion and assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. • All, or nearly all, of the main points are justified.