

# MIDTERM EXAM STUDY GUIDE

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Intro Philosophy

- Friday, March 3, in-class
- Closed-book, closed notes
- Worth 30% of your course grade

This exam will cover the material in the sections on the existence of God and free will and determinism (in addition to the introductory material on philosophy at the very beginning of the semester). Please arrive on-time, since we will start at 10:20 sharp.

The exam will contain some true/false or multiple choice type questions, some short-answer/short essay questions, and an argument extraction (i.e., extracting and evaluating a numbered-premise argument from a short paragraph).

It will stress understanding rather than memorization. For example, you don't need to memorize, word-for-word, the numbered-premise arguments on the handouts. However, it is important that you be familiar with those arguments, as well as the main concepts, theories, objections, and replies that were discussed in the readings and in class. I might, for example, ask you something like this: "What does Chisholm's Libertarianism say? What was one of the main arguments against Chisholm's Libertarianism that we discussed in class (no need to present it in numbered-premise format)?"

Be sure you know how to present, explain, and evaluate arguments (see the assignment sheet for paper #1). When you present arguments, it isn't important to word them exactly the way I do, but the basic meaning and logical structure should be the same.

To prepare for the exam, the handouts will be useful. They contain the main theories and arguments we discussed, as well as the main concepts (for instance, the official statements of hard determinism, libertarianism, and soft determinism). But familiarity with the handouts won't be enough. For example, although the handouts contain many arguments, they usually don't contain the justifications for, or the objections to, the premises—we discussed these

justifications and objections in class. So if you don't have good class notes, you probably should find someone who does.

Here is a summary of the main things to know.

1. Logic. Understand the concepts of an argument, validity, and soundness. Know how to extract valid arguments from texts.
2. Basics of the existence of God: know our definition of the term 'God', as well as related concepts (omnipotence, omniscience, omnibenevolence, theist, atheist, agnostic, etc.)
3. Know the difference between epistemic and pragmatic reasons.
4. Cosmological argument: know the argument, and the criticisms we discussed in class (e.g.: the series of causes might go on forever; maybe the first cause isn't God).
5. Leibniz and Clarke's principle of sufficient reason argument: know the argument, know the concepts involved in it (dependent vs self-existent; the principle of sufficient reason). Know the main objection we discussed in class (denying that there is any reason for the universe as a whole, and thus denying the principle of sufficient reason).
6. Argument from design: know the argument, and the main objections to it (maybe the designer isn't God; evolution).
7. Argument from evil. Know what the argument is, as well as the main objections we discussed to it, such as the idea that evil doesn't really exist, the idea that good can't exist without evil, and (especially) the free will defense. In the case of the free will defense, understand some of the challenges raised against that defense (such as that God could have only put us in situations where God foresaw that we would do the right thing).
8. Pascal's wager. Know the basic idea of the wager. Know the concepts of decision theory: utility, probability, expected utility. Know how to do a decision matrix in general, and how to do it for Pascal's Wager. Know how the wager can be defended against some objections (such as that we may not have control over our beliefs). Know the main objections we

discussed: that heaven may not be infinitely good, and the many gods objection.

9. Understand the three principles: Determinism, The Free Will Thesis, Incompatibilism. Understand what they say, why they seem true individually, and why they conflict.
10. Know the three responses to the problem of free will and determinism: Hard Determinism, Libertarianism, Soft Determinism. Be able to give a sentence or two giving the intuitive idea behind these views, and be prepared to identify which of these views are held by the various authors we read.
11. Hard Determinism: know what it says, and the arguments we considered against it (including possible replies): the argument from hard choices, the argument from indifference, and the argument from moral responsibility.
12. Chisholm's Libertarianism: know what it says, and the arguments we considered against it (including possible replies): the argument from psychology, the argument from physics, and the argument from belief and desire.
13. Soft determinism: know the intuitive idea of soft determinism and compatibilism. Know the definition of 'control', and the conditional analysis (i.e., the "Simple theory") and the problem with it. Know the soft determinist views that Wolf discusses under the heading of the "deep self view": Frankfurt, Watson, Taylor. Know Wolf's objection to the deep self view. Know Wolf's own view.