Ahmedabad University

School of Arts and Sciences

PHI 200 History of Modern Philosophy

All Programmes
End Term Examination 2022 (Winer Semester)

Total Marks = 100 **Time – 3 hours**

Enrolment Number:.....
Date: 09-19-2022
No. of printed pages: 2

Answer the following short answer questions (no more than two sentences):

1. What is philosophy?
2. Label the following questions as belonging to theoretical philosophy, practical philosophy, metaphysics, and/or epistemology:
    a. "Can scientists really know whether there are particles too small to be seen with a microscope?"
    b. "Is it always wrong to lie?"
    c. "Does the soul live on after death?"
    d. "Is the right two work a basic human right?"
3. What is an argument? What are arguments for?
4. What does Descartes mean by "demolishing" his opinions?
5. Descartes's first argument against trusting the senses is given below. Which premise does he later reject and why?

    (i) The senses are sometimes deceptive.
    (ii) Complete trust is not to be placed in anything which is sometimes deceptive.
    (iii) Unless complete trust is to be placed in something, there is reason to doubt any opinion based on it.
    (iv) Therefore, there is reason to doubt any opinion based on the senses.

6. Why does Descartes not think that the dream hypothesis is sufficient reason to doubt all of his opinions?
7. Descartes suggests in the First *Meditation* that an omnipotent God might make all of his opinions false. What does he say in response to the objection that perhaps there is no God after all?
8. Why does Descartes think that the intellect and the imagination are different?

9. What is the first thing that Descartes identifies as being positively immune from doubt? Why?
10. What is an essence? How does it differ from existence?
11. What is the essence of mind? Of body?
12. Why, according to Descartes, is an error of judgment an imperfection, and not just a negation?
13. How can we tell the difference between mere fabrications of the mind and true and immutable natures/essences?
14. We can trust the light of nature but not urges of nature: True or false, and why?

Answer six (6) of the following long answer questions (no more than 100 words):

1. What is modern philosophy? Why does it arise? In reaction to what philosophy? In reaction to what things outside of philosophy?
2. What is Descartes's aim in the *Meditations*? Why does he have this aim? Broadly speaking, how does he attempt to achieve his aim?
3. Give the argument Descartes was making with his wax example.
4. Summarize, as best you can, Descartes's first argument for the existence of God.
5. How is our making errors of judgment compatible with the thesis that we are created by a perfect (and therefore omnipotent and benevolent God)?
6. Give Descartes's ontological argument for the existence of God.
7. Give Descartes's main argument for the existence of material things, the one which he thinks is successful (gives him knowledge that they in fact exist).
8. Give Descartes's argument that the mind and body are distinct substances.
9. Do the *Meditations* succeed in their aim? If not, why not? If so, respond to an objection a student has given in class on Descartes's behalf. Make your response as compelling as you can within the word limit.
10. Suppose that someone objected that Descartes's idea of God (with its essence of perfection) is given to him by his culture? What might Descartes say in response?
11. Respond on Descartes's behalf to the following objection to his first argument for the existence of God: "By the same argument, then Harry Potter must exist, since I have an idea of Harry Potter."