MIDTERM EXAM (250 points)

Since this is a take-home exam, you are free to use whatever resources you may need (except me) to help you with your answers. This includes the readings, online notes, other online resources, conversations with other students, etc. While it is permissible to utilize these resources in preparing your answers, *the phrasing and writing of your answers must, ultimately, be done on your own* (e.g., in “your own words”).

The first question is worth 50 points and is mandatory. Then answer 5, and only 5, of the next 7 questions. (Yes, I am being very generous in offering you so many options.) These questions are worth 40 points each. I prefer that you type your answers according to normal formatting standards (double-spaced, sane margins, etc.). Do not write too much, and do not write too little. Your exam is due *by the beginning of class* on Friday, March 10th.

Mandatory Question:

1. One of Kripke’s main objectives in *Naming and Necessity* is to clearly separate some epistemic, metaphysical, and linguistic distinctions that are sometimes lumped together. In particular, he reacts against the “dark doctrine” of contingent identity. Prior to Kripke, many thought that sentences like ‘Hesperus is identical to Phosphorus’ are contingent because they can be known only *a posteriori*. First, briefly explain how Russell would interpret the sentence ‘Hesperus is identical to Phosphorus.’ Then, present Kripke’s criticisms of Russell. Finally, present Kripke’s argument that the identity statement is necessary.

Answer 5, and only 5, of the next 7 questions:

2. In presenting their theories for general terms, both Locke (510) and Putnam (291) discuss the example of ‘gold’. Present the theory that each offers for the meaning of ‘gold’ and other general terms (in particular, natural kind terms). Then explain the differences between the two theories.
3. Explain Frege’s distinction between sense and nominatum. We typically think of *words* as having sense and nominata, but explain how this distinction also is supposed to apply to *sentences*. What interesting consequence does this application have for the principle of bivalence?

4. Explain one of the puzzles, other than the example mentioned in question 1, that motivated Russell’s theory of descriptions. On Russell’s theory, what is the logical form of a sentence with a definite description as the grammatical subject? Explain how Russell applies this theory in an attempt to solve your chosen puzzle.

5. Against Russell, Strawson claimed “there are no logically proper names”. (230) What does this claim amount to, and why did Strawson think it was true (i.e., what reasons/arguments did he offer for it)?

6. Provide Kripke’s most basic and general objection(s) to any theory which holds that ordinary names are shorthand for, and synonymous with, descriptions (or a cluster thereof). Explain the metaphysical consequences of abandoning the description theory for Kripke’s alternative theory of names as *rigid designators*.

7. Explain, with the help of an example, the difference between *fixing the reference* and *providing the meaning* of a term. Apply this distinction to the theoretical reduction of heat to molecular movement, as discussed in Lecture 3.

8. Evans aims to present a theory of names that allows for changes in denotation. Present one of his cases in which an ordinary name appears (at least to Evans) to change denotation. Explain how Kripke’s theory denies that such a change occurs. In place of an initial baptism, what determines the denotation of ordinary names for Evans?