The final exam will be in the main lecture room, May 10, at 7:30am. Bring a blue book and something to write with but no written notes. Questions will be taken from the following list:

1. Rehearse Descartes’ Wax example. What conclusions does Descartes draw from this example, and how are these conclusions representative of his substance theory of objects? How does Berkeley respond to the Wax example? How is this response representative of his bundle theory of objects? Which take on the Wax example, Descartes’ or Berkeley’s, do you find more plausible? Why? Be explicit about what the substance theory and bundle theory are.

2. Blackburn and Berkeley each present versions of the Argument from Perceptual Relativity, and both versions reach the same conclusion; what is that conclusion, and what does it mean? Rehearse and evaluate first Blackburn’s version and then Berkeley’s. Which of the two arguments is more convincing? Why?

3. Lay out and explain Descartes’s probabilistic argument for the claim that he has a body. What distinction does Descartes make between imagination and intellection? What is essentially a part of thought? Evaluate Descartes’ argument, including his distinction between imagination and intellection.


5. What role does God play in Berkeley’s idealist project? Lay out and explain Berkeley’s argument for the existence of God. Evaluate the argument. Based upon his argument, is Berkeley justified in his claim that God exists? What problems, if any, might his argument create?

6. Explain the differences between materialism, dualism and idealism. What kinds of things exist according to each position? As detailed in Tom Senor’s lecture, what is Descartes’s argument for dualism? Is Descartes’s argument sound? Why or why not?

7. What is representative realism, what is skepticism, and why does Berkeley think that the former leads to the latter? What is Berkeley’s alternative to representative realism? Be sure to discuss his understanding of the nature of sensible things. Why does Berkeley think that the view he endorses here is a commonsense view? How plausible is all this?

8. Berkeley has to deny that we have an idea of ourselves, or of God, or of minds in general. Why is this, and why does it seem to pose a problem for his idealism? What is Berkeley’s solution to this problem? What independent plausibility does this solution have? In the end, does the solution work or not? Explain.