

Philosophy 104  
Exam Study Questions

Descartes

9. Answer each of the following:

- i) Give a clear, accurate sketch of Descartes' epistemological project. What was he trying to do? Why?
- ii) Give a clear, accurate explanation of (a) chains of justification and (b) the inverted pyramid of knowledge, as these were explained in lecture.
- iii) Give a clear, accurate explanation of the role that certainty plays in Descartes' project.
- iv) Give a clear, accurate explanation of Cartesian doubt and of the role that Cartesian doubt plays in Descartes' project.
- v) Descartes offers three arguments aimed at showing that we cannot be certain about the vast majority of our beliefs. Give a clear, accurate sketch of each of these three arguments.

10. Answer each of the following:

- i) Give a clear, accurate sketch of Descartes' Cogito argument.
- ii) Explain the difference between the veridical & phenomenological senses of words like 'perceive'.
- iii) What was Descartes' Archimedean Point? Explain the role that this "Archimedean Point" played in Descartes' epistemological project.
- iv) Give a clear, accurate explanation of Descartes' view on the essential property of a person.

11. Answer each of the following:

- i) Give a clear, accurate and detailed explanation of the ego-centric predicament?
- ii) Give a clear, accurate sketch of Descartes' argument aimed at escaping from the ego-centric predicament.

iii) In lecture, it was suggested that the argument is circular. Explain what a circular argument is and why it is a bad thing for an argument to be circular.

iv) Give a clear, accurate explanation of the alleged circularity in Descartes' argument.