

PHI 100: Concepts of the Person Examination 3

Read these instructions with great care and attention to detail. Failure to abide by any of them will affect your grade negatively.

I. General Description, Point Value, and Due Date

Although this examination is focused primarily on Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality: Volume I; An Introduction*, in principle it also covers Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Friedrich Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals*, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *The World of Perception*. All assigned readings and all lectures in the course thus far are applicable to this examination.

This is a take-home examination. You are to write a complete and properly constructed essay response to one of the questions provided. Follow all of the guidelines in the following sections in order to achieve the highest score.

Per the syllabus, this examination is worth **25 points**. In Section II below, you will find three questions. **You must answer one question.**

See the "Assessment and Grading" section of the syllabus for descriptions of performance expectations vis-à-vis the grades I will assign.

A hard copy of this examination is due Wednesday, 20 November at the start of the class period. No late examinations will be accepted. No electronic examinations will be accepted; you must turn in a hard copy. Please plan ahead; if you are unable to print the document in time, it will not be accepted.

II. Content

Write an essay answer, **1,200–1,500 words** in length (approx. 4–5 double-spaced pages), to **one** of the following questions:

- (1.) Describe the difference that Foucault elaborates between *ars erotica* and *scientia sexualis*. Then, explain the importance of confession in *scientia sexualis* and its increased spread and importance in modern society more broadly. Finally, argue whether you agree or disagree with Foucault's assessment of how confession operates in contemporary society. Does it play as big of a role as he thinks it does? First, you must demonstrate that you understand Foucault's positions and arguments accurately and fully. Then, you must construct carefully your own argument based upon textual and empirical evidence as well as sound logical reasoning. You may use other philosophers we have studied thus far in the course if you find them helpful for and relevant to the argument you are making.
- (2.) Describe the difference between the traditional conception of power and Foucault's own conception of power as described in the chapters entitled "Objective" and "Method" (pp. 81–91 and 92–102). Then, explain why Foucault thinks his new

conception of power is better suited to describing contemporary society and the power that operates within it. Finally, argue whether you agree or disagree with Foucault's claim that this new understanding of power better allows us to analyze contemporary society. First, you must demonstrate that you understand Foucault's positions and arguments accurately and fully. Then, you must construct carefully your own argument based upon textual and empirical evidence as well as sound logical reasoning. You may use other philosophers we have studied thus far in the course if you find them helpful for and relevant to the argument you are making.

- (3.) Describe the difference between sovereign power and bio-power as elaborated in Foucault's final chapter. Then, explain why Foucault thinks our age is characterized more by bio-power than sovereign power, citing specific reasons and evidence he gives in the course of his argument. Finally, argue whether you agree or disagree with Foucault's claim that ours is a society characterized more by bio-power than by sovereign power. First, you must demonstrate that you understand Foucault's positions and arguments accurately and fully. Then, you must construct carefully your own argument based upon textual and empirical evidence as well as sound logical reasoning. You may use other philosophers we have studied thus far in the course if you find them helpful for and relevant to the argument you are making.

Your essays must make arguments that are supported directly by textual (and empirical) evidence and that use sound logical reasoning. Additionally, answers should be thorough and detailed, employing and demonstrating understanding of the technical terms and concepts covered in class. Note, however, that technical terms and concepts must be suitably introduced and/or defined when you first use them. Do not assume that your reader will be familiar with them. Write to an imagined audience who is intelligent and well-educated but who has no previous experience with the thinkers you are discussing.

Remember, I **am not** asking for your **opinions**. "Opinion" is a dirty word in philosophy. I am asking you to provide clear, learned explanations and sound, reasonable arguments utilizing the philosophical resources we have studied thus far. Your essays should demonstrate advanced critical reasoning skills and should showcase your ability (1) to provide the best possible descriptions and explanations of Foucault's arguments and claims (which includes supporting your descriptions and explanations with textual evidence, reconstructing Foucault's arguments, and providing your own arguments for why your explanations are correct) and (2) to argue reasonably and compellingly in favor of or against Foucault, given what we have read and covered in class. It is expected that you will not overlook any relevant arguments that you have read or that we have talked about together in class.

III. Sources and Citations

You are only permitted to use the books assigned for the course. If you want to employ a scholarly source outside of what we are using in the course, you must get it approved by me **ahead of time**. Absolutely **no internet sources** are permitted in preparing your responses to the question you have chosen.

All quotations, paraphrases, etc. of the text must be cited. You are free to use any recognized system of citation, but you must be consistent throughout your response and abide by the rules of

that system. I am happy to provide guidance in using the rules of *The Chicago Manual of Style* if you would like assistance. If you are taking something directly from your lecture notes, please cite the date of the lecture from which you are taking that information. Failure to properly cite quotations, paraphrases, or information gleaned from other sources **constitutes plagiarism**. Please see the section entitled “Examination Policies” on the syllabus for the course policy on plagiarism.

IV. Formatting

Your essay should meet the following formatting criteria:

- (1.) Typed in 12 point Times New Roman font
- (2.) 1 inch margins
- (3.) Double spaced
- (4.) Please include a cover sheet that includes your full name; your name should not appear anywhere else on the essay
- (5.) On the cover sheet, please also include (a) the question number you are answering and (b) the total word count for the essay
- (6.) Black ink only
- (7.) Please staple your essay together neatly
- (8.) Pages should be numbered on the bottom of each page (centered)

Failure to abide by any of these criteria will result in a lower grade than you would otherwise have achieved.

V. General Guidelines

Follow standard stylistic guidelines for essays. In other words, your essays must:

- (1.) Begin with an introductory paragraph
- (2.) Contain a clear thesis statement in the introductory paragraph
 - a. This must **indicate what you will accomplish** in the paper. It should read something like, “In this paper, I will...” In addition to being helpful for your reader(s), beginning with this statement of purpose will lend focus to the rest of the paper and help keep you from going off-track.
- (3.) Proceed via a series of self-contained, thematically focused, and size-proportionate paragraphs
- (4.) Follow a coherent order to construct your explanation/argument
 - a. Please do not include extraneous or tangential information. Focus only on the parts of Foucault’s arguments that are relevant to the task at hand, and make sure your own argument follows a clear direction
- (5.) Explain all concepts clearly, accurately, and as completely as possible
- (6.) End with a concluding paragraph
- (7.) Demonstrate the fact that you have taken the time to proof-read and edit; in other words, you must check your essays for mistakes in grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.

Again, I am grading on both form and content. Failure to abide by these stylistic guidelines will result in point deductions.

Here are a few tips for writing outstanding essays:

- (1.) Detail matters. Be both precise and thorough. Do not skip over important details.
- (2.) Logic matters. Make sure your arguments are logically sound and do not have any gaps (composing an outline first is helpful to avoid such gaps in one's argument). Be concise: do not beat around the proverbial bush when making an argument.
- (3.) Spelling and grammar matter. Proofread and edit your essay before printing it. Rereading what you have written is simply a must. Correct any errors you find before printing. Please double-check all citations.
- (4.) Style matters. Please write as best you can. The style and content must be appropriate for a college-educated audience. In other words, avoid oversimplifications, clichés, reductive treatment of complex issues, etc. Use college-level vocabulary, avoid contractions, and be sure to employ correctly the technical philosophical terminology we have studied thus far.
- (5.) Creativity matters. Demonstrate your intellectual ability. Use this examination as an opportunity to show off as a thinker and writer. Be creative, demonstrating a clear mastery of the subject matter and the fact that you have put a lot of thought and intellectual effort into your essay. In other words, try to make *your* essay *stand out*.

Final Note

You have a full week to write this examination. Use it! Do not wait until the final days and hours to write your essays. No excuses will be accepted should you be unable to complete it in time. This includes computer malfunctions of whatever variety. It will be apparent to me whether you have written your essays carefully and patiently or in haste. Do your very best work.