

PH145: PLATO AND DESCARTES

Essay Questions

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Assessment: 2 x max 2,000 word essays - one focusing on Plato, the other focusing on Descartes (each worth 50% of the module marks).

Plato Essay Questions

- Q1. What is Socrates' best argument against Thrasymachus in Republic Book I? Is it convincing?
- Q2. How does Glaucon argue for his proposed classification of the good of justice? Is his argument successful?
- Q3. Was Plato a feminist?
- Q4. What is Plato's attitude towards poetry? Is it defensible?
- Q5. Is there a fallacy in Plato's argument that being just is good for one?
- Q6. Why does Plato think that philosophers should rule? Is he right?

Descartes Essay Questions

- Q7. Does Descartes provide reasons which give us possible grounds for doubt about all things?
- Q8. How does Descartes seek to establish that I can know that I exist? Does he succeed?
- Q9. What is the purported problem of the Cartesian Circle? How, if at all, can it be avoided while staying close to Descartes' arguments?
- Q10. How does Descartes explain the possibility of error? Is his explanation correct?
- Q11. What, according to Descartes, is the relation between a sensory perception and the thing perceived?
- Q12. How does Descartes explain the possibility of knowledge of the essential nature of things? Is his explanation correct?