

## Definitions for PHI 105

A **syllogism** is an argument with a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion.

A syllogistic argument is **valid** if it is not possible for the two premises to be true and the conclusion false.

A syllogistic argument is **sound** if it is valid and the premises are true.

A **necessary truth** is a proposition that cannot possibly be false; it is true in every possible world.

A **contingent truth** is a proposition that is true but might have been false; it is true in this world but not in every possible world.

The **law of noncontradiction** is that a proposition cannot be both true and false at the same time and in the same respect.

The **principle of sufficient reason** is that for everything that exists, and for every fact or event, there must be a sufficient reason it is so and not otherwise.

The **fallacy of equivocation** is a logically invalid inference that occurs when a word occurs in different premises with different meanings.

Example: All rivers have banks. All banks have money. Therefore, all rivers have money.

**The absurd** (in Camus) the fact that life has no meaning together with the fact that, as rational beings, we cannot help seeking the meaning of life.

**Existentialism** is the view that humans exist before they have an essence.

According to the standard metaphysical understanding, the **essence** of an entity consists of the properties it cannot exist without.

**Moral subjectivism** is the view that an act is morally right (or wrong) for an agent to perform if and only if that agent believes that it is right (or wrong).

**Value subjectivism** is the view that a thing has value only if someone values it.

**Instrumental value** is the value that something has as a means to something else of value.

**Ultimate value** is non-instrumental value, the value that something has for its own sake.

**Hedonism as a general theory of value** is that only pleasure is ultimately good or good for its own sake.

A person's **welfare** consists in what is ultimately good for that person.

**Hedonism as a theory of individual welfare** is that only pleasure is ultimately good for anyone.

**Psychological hedonism** is the view that we are motivated only by thoughts of our own future pleasure and pain.

The **termination thesis** is that we cease to exist at the moment that we die.

**Net happiness** is the total amount of happiness minus the total amount of unhappiness.

**Utilitarianism** is the view that we should always act to maximize total net happiness.

**Egoism** is the view that we should always act to maximize our own net happiness.

**Net pleasure** is the total amount of pleasure minus the total amount of pain.

**Hedonistic utilitarianism** is the view that we should always act so as to maximize total net pleasure.

An **intrinsic desire** is a desire for something for its own sake.

The **intrinsic desire satisfaction theory of individual welfare** is that the only thing that is ultimately good for us is the satisfaction of our intrinsic desires.

**Preference utilitarianism** is the view that we should act to maximize the overall satisfaction of intrinsic desires.

A **higher pleasure** is one that we experience in exercising our higher human capacities.

The **higher human capacities** are those mental capacities that humans have but animals do not have, such as various reasoning and imagination abilities.