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Student first name: _____

Student number: _____

Student signature: _____

Invigilator's signature: _____

Seat number: _____

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE

INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS
PHL125/E

DEGREE EXAMINATIONS

NOVEMBER 2019

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Time: 3 hours

Subject: INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

Marks: 100

Internal Examiners

Dr Filip Maj

Dr Sampie Terreblanche

External Examiners

This paper consists of 12 pages including the cover page

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Answer ALL the Questions.
2. Please answer the questions directly on the question paper.
3. Write your name on the question paper (where the space is indicated on the second page).

PART 1 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCO) (10 MARKS)

Answer ALL questions. Write the answer (a or b or c or d) in the space provided on page 3.

1. Moral realists as cognitivists claim that:

- a) moral statements can't be true or false, as well as they can't be objective.
- b) moral statements can be true or false, and they are objective.
- c) moral statements can't be true or false, but they can be subjective.
- d) none of the above.

2. Asch disagrees with the empirical claim of cultural relativism and states that:

- a) different cultures have different values.
- b) different cultures have similar values differently interpreted.
- c) different cultures have different values but they do not realise it.
- d) different cultures have only different positive values, not negative ones.

3. Kant's morality requires:

- a) a rational agent, good will, a rational rule.
- b) acts that bring the most good for the most people.
- c) a sentient being, good character and kindness of heart.
- d) a common and popular rule.

4. According to Kant's 1st formulation of the categorical imperative, if the concept of lying is universalised:

- a) we end up with a logical contradiction, because the concept of lying depends on the concept of telling the truth.
- b) some contradiction would appear, but not enough to logically contradict Truth itself.
- c) nothing would change, because lies can be unintentional.
- d) nothing would change, because everybody lies anyway.

5. According to consequentialists:

- a) an action is morally right when its good consequences outweigh its bad ones.
- b) an action is morally right when intentions and consequences agree.
- c) an action is morally right when a virtuous character carries it out.
- d) there is no such thing as a moral action.

6. A good character, according to Gyekye, is

- a) Acquired through developing good habits
- b) Can be informed through community folklore
- c) The responsibility of each individual
- d) All of the above

7. African ideas of personhood imply that the original nature of the human being is:

- Morally neutral
- Inherently good
- Inherently evil
- The same as that of being 'a person'

8. What are the two features necessary for an issue to be considered an applied Ethical issue?

- a) Virtue & the mean of moderation
- b) Controversiality & Moral Relevance
- c) The principle of utility & suffering
- d) Duty & Universal moral rules

9. Which of the following is NOT a description of Ubuntu?

- a) the absence of pain and the presence of pleasure or happiness
- b) My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up in yours.
- c) Humanness.
- d) A person is a person through other persons.

10. On Metz's understanding of Ubuntu, moral value lies:

- a) In the relationship between individuals
- b) In having a good character
- c) In good habits
- d) In the individual

Write your MCO answer here with reference to the correct symbol (*a* or *b* or *c* or *d*):

1.

2.

3.

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9.

10.

3. Gyekye argues that language and fables help us to understand the moral views of African communities. What are two insights he offers about morality in Africa, based on typical African sayings? Include a saying in your answer. (4 marks)

4. Ramose emphasises that Ubuntu ought to be translated as 'Humanness', not 'humanism. Why does he make this distinction? (5 marks)

5. What does Ubuntu as a moral principle say about our relationship to the environment?
(4 marks)

6. What are moral virtues (excellences) according to Aristotle? (3 marks)

7. What is practical wisdom for Aristotle? (3 marks)

8. Describe Aristotle's conception of 'eudaimonia' (5 marks)

9. What is the principle of utility? (2 marks)

10. How does J. S. Mill revise J. Bentham's principle of utility? (5 marks)

11. How does utilitarianism argue for giving moral consideration to animals? (4 marks)

12. What is a categorical imperative according to Kant. Name one of its formulations and give an example of its application. (6 marks)

13. If you saw your neighbour's house was on fire, and you rushed over to help out of sympathy, what would Kant say about the moral worth of your act? (3 marks)

14. Compare Kant's deontology and utilitarianism concerning right action. (5 marks)

PART 3 - ESSAY TYPE QUESTIONS (30 MARKS)

Answer ALL questions.

1) Do you think it is morally wrong to have children, considering the problem of global overpopulation (7.7 billion people)? Structure your answer under both the following headings: a) How would different ethical theories respond to this question? b) What insights and/or solutions would they provide if they did not consider it morally wrong? (*Your answer should be at least **half a handwritten page***). (10 marks)

2) Which moral theory (African communitarianism, virtue ethics, deontology or utilitarianism) is closest to your own way of moral reasoning? In your answer, (a) summarise and compare the basic principles of any two of the above-mentioned four traditions; (b) provide arguments as to why you think the approach you support is preferable; and (c) provide relevant examples from your own experience. (*Your answer should be at least one handwritten page*). (20 marks)

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08.30

(extra writing space)

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