

*M.A. Comprehensive Exam*

*Information and Reading List*

Dept. of Philosophy  
Marquette University

## M.A. Comprehensive Exam

### Basic Information and Regulations:

The exam comprises two parts of four hours each. It takes place in two days over a three day period. The first part is historical. The second contains problems questions and a choice of two questions on a contemporary work.

- a) The M.A. Reading list should be used in preparing for the written comprehensive exam.
- b) Registration for the M.A. Comprehensive Exam must be made in the Philosophy Department Office a month in advance of the examination date.
- c) The M.A. Comprehensive Exam should be taken before or during the fourth semester of study. The Examination is given in January and August.

### 1. The Structure:

#### *a. Day one: Part I—Ancient, Medieval, Modern*

Instructions: Answer four questions:

- i. Choose one question from each period and the fourth question from any of the periods.
- ii. You have four hours for Part I, approximately one hour for each question.
- iii. State what you take the question to mean, and make explicit reference to the relevant work(s) of the philosopher you are discussing.

Ancient Philosophy: 4 questions

Medieval Philosophy: 4 questions

Modern Philosophy: 4 questions

#### *b. Day two: Part II—Problems and Contemporary Philosophy*

- i. You must choose three questions from section D and one question from section E.
- ii. You have four hours for Part II, approximately one hour for each question.

Problems: (answer any 3 of these questions)

Logic

Philosophy of Science

Political Philosophy

Aesthetics

Ethics

Philosophy of Human Nature

Metaphysics

Epistemology

Philosophy of Law

Philosophy of Religion

Contemporary Philosophy: Two questions on a work chosen by the student from designated reading list) Answer one of these 2 questions.

## 2. Grading System:

a. The grades to be assigned to each answer by the reader are: A, B, C, D (with or without pluses or minuses (+, or -).

b For purposes of computing an average grade, the graduate committee will then turn the assigned letter grades into numbers: A+=12, A=11, A-=10, B+=9, B=8, B-=7, C+=6, C=5, C-=4, D+=3, D=2, D-=1, F=0. The lowest passing average grade for the entire exam is 6.5, i.e. between C+ (6) and B- (7). If three questions receive an F, then the whole exam fails no matter what the average grade is. If the average grade in one area of the exam is D- (1) or F (0), this area must be taken over again and can be passed with the grade of 6.5.

## Reading List for M.A. Comprehensive Exam

### *Historical Section*

Aristotle—*Posterior Analytics* -Books I, II, nos. 1, 2, and 19; *Physics* - Books 1, 2,

3; *Metaphysics*- Books 1 and 12; *De Anima* - Book I, ch. 1, Books II and III

Plato—*Protagoras*, *Sophist*, *Meno*, *Gorgias*, *Republic*- Books I-VII (incl.), *Phaedo*, *Symposium*

Augustine—*De Trinitate*- Book 8-15 (incl.); *De Libero Arbitrio*

St. Thomas Aquinas—*Summa Theologiae* - I,1-26; 75 and 76; *Quaestiones de Anima*, qq. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9; *De Spiritualibus Creaturis*, a.1-11 (incl.)

Descartes—*Discourse on Method*; *Meditations*

- Spinoza—*Ethics* - Book I (W.H. White translation, contained also in J. Wild, *Spinoza Selections*)
- Leibniz—*Discourse on Metaphysics* (trans. P. Weiner); *Monadology* (H.W. Carr edition)
- Locke—*An Essay on Human Understanding* - Book II, sec. 1-VIII and XXI-XXVI Book IV, sec. 1-VI (Yolton edition)
- Berkeley—*Principles*
- Hume—*Treatise* - Book I, part 1, 3, 4
- Kant—*Critique of Pure Reason* (up to distinction of noumenon and phenomenon and last section of about 30 pages); *Fundamentals of Metaphysics of Morals*
- Hegel—*Encyclopedia of Sciences* (Part I, Logic)

For Section E, the student must chose in advance one of the following works from which two questions will be drawn. Only one must be answered.

- Ayer—*Language, Truth and Logic*
- Bergson—*Creative Evolution*
- Heidegger—*Introduction to Metaphysics*
- Husserl—*Cartesian Meditations*
- James—*Pragmatism*
- Marcel—*Mystery of Being* (Vol. I)
- Maritain—*Degrees of Knowledge*, Part I (Phelan translation)
- Ryle—*Concept of Mind*
- Sartre—*Transcendence of the Ego*
- Whitehead—*Adventures in Ideas*

### ***A List of Readings on Problems in Systematic Philosophy***

The following readings are suggestions offered by individual faculty members of the department of philosophy that a student might use in preparing to take the comprehensive Ph.D. examination on problems in systematic philosophy. They are not required readings. The student should consult with his or her advisor and/or chair of the examination committee about which readings, if any, would be helpful in preparation for the comprehensive examination. A student preparing for the MA. comprehensive examination might also find the list of help, if prudentially used with the guidance of his or her advisor.

***Metaphysics***

Richard Taylor, *Metaphysics*  
Bruce Aune, *Metaphysics*  
Michael Loux, ed., *Universals and Particulars*  
Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere*  
Joseph Owens, *An Interpretation of Existence*

***Epistemology***

Roderick Chisholm, *Theory of Knowledge*  
Robert Henle, *Theory of Knowledge*  
John Pollock, *Contemporary Theories of Knowledge*  
Etienne Gilson, *Thomistic Realism and the Critique of Knowledge*  
Nelson Goodman, *The Structure of Appearance*

***Ethics***

William Frankena, *Ethics*  
Alasdair Macintyre, *After Virtue*  
Alasdair Macintyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*  
Ralph McInerney, *Ethica Thomistica*  
Josef Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*

***Philosophy of Law***

Daniel Lyons, *Ethics and the Rule of Law*  
Martin Golding, *Philosophy of Law*  
Thomas A. Davitt, *The Elements of Law*

***Political Philosophy***

Neal Riemer, *A Revival of Political Theory*  
Howard Kainz, *Democracy East and West*  
John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*  
Yves Simon, *The Nature and Functions of Authority*  
Paul Sigmund, *The Political Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*

***Philosophy of Language***

William Alston, *The Philosophy of Language*  
John Searle, *Speech Acts*  
Jay Rosenberg and Charles Travis, eds., *Readings in the Philosophy of Language*  
Michael Devitt, *Language and Reality*  
Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*

***Aesthetics***

Monroe Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*

Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art*

William Kennick, ed., *Art and Philosophy*

Arthur Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*

Brian Wallis, ed., *Rethinking Representation*

***Philosophy of Science***

Carl Hempel, *The Philosophy of Natural Science*

Nelson Goodman, *Fact, Fiction and Forecast*

Baruch Brody, ed., *Readings in the Philosophy of Science*

Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*

Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*