Mock exam questions

The exam will assess whether you meet the 2 course goals:

(A)   Your understanding of the main ethical theories (lectures 2, 4, 5), and of theories of well-being (lecture 3) and the nature of morality (lecture 1).

(B)   Your ability to apply these theories to moral dilemmas, and resolve the latter in an intelligent way.

Types of questions you can expect:
1. Understanding ethical theories >course goal (A)
2. Contrasting them >course goal (A)
3. Applying these theories to cases >course goal (B)
4. Recognizing pieces of ethical reasoning >course goal (B)

The exam will consist of 32 MC-questions (with 4 possible answers and 1 correct), and you will pass it (and the course) if you answer **20 questions** (or more) correctly. Hence, a guess correction of 8 points applies.

The questions will cover:

Lectures	Material
1. Ethics: what, why	Lecture 1; Textbook 1−3
2. Contractualism	Lecture 2; Textbook 5−6
3. Well-being	Lecture 3; Reiss, Nozick
4. Utilitarianism	Lecture 4; Textbook 7−8
5. Kantian Ethics	Lecture 5; Textbook 9−10

Note: the emphasis will be on concepts/topics addressed in the 5 lectures.

Unfortunately, we don't have more mock questions, since we're in the process of building a bank with good test questions, and this takes time.

The answers to the following 8 mock questions will be discussed in the class of 15/5, and will be posted on Canvas *after* this class.

Questions? Contact the TA Anastasia: a.khairova@student.vu.nl

Type 1

(Q1)
Which hypothetical world do we imagine when we apply the Formula of Universal Law?

  (A)   A world where people make an exception of themselves.
  (B)   A world where everyone acts like you.
  (C)   A world where everyone has the same desires.
  (D)   A world where moral rules hold universally.

(Q2)
In the course, we discussed the following public goods game:
You all get €10. I'll pass around an envelope and do an offer: "Any money that you'll put in the envelope will be collected. Then I'll double the given amount. Finally, I'll split the total among all of you."

Which lesson should *not* be drawn from this game?

  (A)   I should close a deal with the others to donate.
  (B)   I may donate the money if certain conditions are met.
  (C)   I should keep the money regardless of what others do.
  (D)   I may keep the money if others do so too.

Type 2

(Q3)
What is *not* a distinction between Utilitarianism and Kantian Ethics?

  (A)   Kantian Ethics cares about universality, about not making an exception of oneself, while Utilitarianism denies that this is relevant.
  (B)   Kantian Ethics evaluates the intentions on which one acts, while Utilitarianism evaluates the consequences of one's actions.
  (C)   Kantian Ethics produces permissions and prohibitions, while Utilitarianism produces obligations and prohibitions.
  (D)   Kantian Ethics is interested in people's consent, while Utilitarianism is interested in promoting their well-being, even without their consent.

(Q4)
Consider the following scenario:
Person A and person B have a discussion about privacy. A argues that privacy is good for her because she wants it. B argues that the position of A is unreasonable and that A has to give better arguments. B then argues that privacy is good for everyone.

Which of the following statements describes the discussion best?

  (A)   A takes the position of Desire Satisfactionism, B takes the position of Utilitarianism.
  (B)   A takes the position of Hedonism, B takes the position of Utilitarianism.
  (C)   A takes the position of Desire Satisfactionism, B takes the position of Objective List Theory.
  (D)   A takes the position of Ethical Subjectivism, B takes the position of Objective List Theory.

Type 3

(Q5)
Consider the following decision situation:

	I have covid 40%	I don't have covid 60%
I go to class	I learn something But infect someone	I learn something Don't infect anyone
I stay home	I don't learn Don't infect anyone	I don't learn Don't infect anyone

Suppose going to class yields 1 unit of well-being (for me), but infecting someone with covid costs 2 units of well-being (for that person).

Which of the following statements about this case is correct?

(A) The expected value of going to class is −1, and I should stay home, according to Utilitarianism.
(B) The expected value of going to class is −1, and I should go to class, according to Utilitarianism.
(C) The expected value of going to class is 0.2, and I should stay home, according to Utilitarianism.
(D) The expected value of going to class is 0.2, and I should go to class, according to Utilitarianism.

(Q6)
In the game described in (Q2), I should donate the money, according to the Formula of Universal Law. Why is that?

(A) The intention "to maximize the money I receive, I'll keep the money" passes the Formula.
(B) The intention "to maximize the money I receive, I'll donate the money" passes the Formula.
(C) The intention "to maximize the money I receive, I'll keep the money" doesn't pass the Formula.
(D) The intention "to maximize the money I receive, I'll donate the money" doesn't pass the Formula.

Note:
Applying all the theories from the course to this game (and, indeed, the Tragedy of the Commons, with the same structure) is a *very* good practice for the exam.

Type 4

(Q7)
Consider the following discussion:
Person A tells person B she found an advertisement trick that deceives people and makes them buy some useless but harmless product of hers. A argues that she will use all the money she makes for good, and fund important societal projects. B responds

3

that A should not do this because, even when the consequences will be great, it's still problematic to deceive people.

Which of the following statements describes the discussion best?

(A) A's reasoning is in line with Utilitarianism rather than Objective List Theory.
(B) A's reasoning is in line with Utilitarianism rather than Kantian Ethics.
(C) B's reasoning is in line with Utilitarianism rather than Objective List Theory.
(D) B's reasoning is in line with Utilitarianism rather than Kantian Ethics.

(Q8)
Imagine the discussion in (Q7) proceeds as follows:
A thinks for a moment and responds that she will inform everyone about how she will use the profit.

Which of the following statements describes A's position best?

(A) A applies the Formula of Humanity because she informs everyone.
(B) A applies the Formula of Humanity because she merely deceives and doesn't force people to buy her product.
(C) A applies the Formula of Humanity because she uses the money for good and does care about other people.
(D) A does not apply the Formula of Humanity because she does not care enough about people's consent to be used in this way.