

Pol Sci 235 Exam 1, Fall 2009

Procedure: You will have 50 minutes for the exam. You should bring a blue book to the exam for the essay section. The exam consists of a multiple choice section (50 points) and one essay (200 points). Just before the exam, I will roll a die to select two possible questions for you to answer on the exam. You may answer **ONLY** the question in the essay section that corresponds to either of the two numbers that comes up. Although the exam is closed book and closed notes, if you have already thought through your answers you should be able to finish in time. If you try to think things through on the fly, your answers will not be as good and you may not finish.

Guidelines:

- 1) Each paragraph should have a clear thesis statement and several sentences that develop an argument in favor of the thesis.** In most cases the structure of the question will dictate the basic organization of the essay. Learning to develop your thoughts in paragraphs is part of what you are being tested on.
- 2) Read the question carefully.** Make sure you answer only the question and all of the question. If the question asks you to refer to certain readings, do so accurately and in a way that helps your argument.
- 3) Define key terms.** A common problem is failing to define, or defining incorrectly, key terms in the question.
- 4) Be sure to consider and explain the opposing position and then explain why you take the position that you do.**
- 5) Style can help.** Try to write the essay so that it flows naturally, has appropriate transitions, and so on. Although I do not count off for spelling, points will be deducted for frequent grammatical mistakes

Possible Essays (I will select two on the day of the exam, you will answer one of those two).

1) Compare how Machiavelli and Aristotle might answer the question “Are politicians who ‘exaggerate’ in their campaign communications, but do not outright lie, deserving of moral blame?” Apply your arguments to the Bush and Kerry campaign commercials from the “Crafty Communications” case.

2) Compare how Hobbes and Aquinas would evaluate the decision of the United States to drop atomic bombs on Japan at the end of World War II and evaluate which position is stronger.

3) Compare how Kant and Machiavelli would evaluate the statement “Some of the interrogation techniques used by the United States against detainees in the war against terrorism leave those responsible for the interrogations with ‘dirty hands’” and then evaluate which position is stronger.

4) What facts would the leaders of the United States have needed to reasonably believe at the time of the invasion of Iraq in 2003 for the invasion to be justified according to Hobbes and Aquinas respectively? Which thinker’s perspective is more helpful for deciding whether the invasion was justified?

5) What principle of action should guide a citizen’s actions in a democracy when the citizen believes that the laws of the of the state are unjust: A) Obey the law while working through democratic procedures to change it; B) Use whatever means, including breaking the law, will be most effective for changing the law one believes is unjust; or C) Break the law openly and willingly accept the punishment. You may refer to these principles by their letter to save time. In discussing these positions, refer to the readings by Martin Luther King, Jr, Plato, and the Alabama Nullification Resolution. You may include other arguments as well.

6) How would Aristotle and Machiavelli evaluate Richard Clarke’s portrayal of the Bush administration’s handling of terrorism when Clarke was serving that administration? Which thinker’s perspective is more morally defensible?