

## Ethical Theory 1

Answer the following questions briefly (~250 words each) using a typed, double-spaced format.

- 1) In your opinion, which one of the five (5) ethical origins discussed in class (logic, religion, conscience, biology, or emotions) is most influential? Why? In concept, briefly explain the difference between your selected most important ethical origin and a professional code of ethics.
- 2) List three (3) of the most important personal values in your life along with a ranking of their relative level of importance. Did/do you have a choice of your three values and their source? Why or why not?
- 3) Past experience in this class shows that all five (5) ethical origins are essentially identified equally and so have a lot of people with each view. Past experience also suggests that important personal values vary considerably from person to person. How might these facts complicate development of a coherent, beneficial ethical approach to the challenges facing humankind? Propose one approach to solve this dilemma so humankind can advance morally, peacefully, and happily.
- 4) Define any two of the four minor ethical theories discussed in class (cultural relativism, ethical subjectivism, psychological egoism, and ethical egoism). For each, provide an example which demonstrates that the theory is valid (or helpful or applicable or strong enough) to benefit humankind and an example which demonstrates that the theory is not valid (or not helpful or not applicable or not strong enough) to benefit humankind.
- 5) Utilitarianism defines the morally right thing to do as the action which maximizes society's (or most people's) overall happiness. While seemingly simple in concept, the process to quantify happiness can be complicated, error prone, and biased (used to prove that two opposite actions are both the morally right thing to do).

Suppose the United States is considering a law requiring all cars to be electric and self-driving. Identify:

- a) Three (3) society factors which must be quantified to properly apply utilitarianism in determining the morally correct action with respect to this issue.
- b) Define the score limits of each of the three (3) quantified factors from a) above (i.e., what is defined as the least happy/least beneficial and what is defined as the most happy/most beneficial?).
- c) Explain how each of the three (3) factors from a) above will be experimentally determined.
- d) Identify at least one way each of the three (3) quantified values from a) above are susceptible to bias if the pollster has a preference for or against self-driving cars.

Here are some websites which may be helpful:

- 1) <http://justiceharvard.org/justicecourse/>
- 2) <https://www.iep.utm.edu/ethics/>
- 3) [http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/introduction/intro\\_1.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/introduction/intro_1.shtml)
- 4) [https://www.philosophybasics.com/branch\\_ethics.html](https://www.philosophybasics.com/branch_ethics.html)
- 5) <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/morality-definition/>
- 6) <https://ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/glossary/moral-philosophy>