

# Phil 307 : Metaphysics and Epistemology

## 12–15-Page Essay Questions

### Preliminaries

- I intend to grade these final papers ‘blind’, so please do not put your name on your paper. Each page of your paper should be labelled with i) a page number and ii) your student number. Please bind the pages of your paper with a single paper clip, rather than a staple. (This makes photocopying the papers much easier.)
- If you choose to answer one of the questions below, make sure you answer all parts of the question.
- If you would like to write on a different topic you may, but you should clear it with me *before you start writing the paper*.
- Whichever you choose to do, you should both organise your paper around arguing for an original thesis of your own (just as you did on the 1-page papers), and demonstrate knowledge of the literature that we have studied.
- Don’t forget that there should be no significant overlap between the topic of this paper, and the topics of any of your other papers from this course.

### Questions

1. The principle of strong rationality says that one should only form beliefs on the basis of theoretical reasons, e.g. evidence and argument. Is it ever rational to violate this principle? Your response should include discussion of at least one, and at most two, of the papers on the syllabus.
2. What is Hume’s skeptical solution to the problem of induction? Is his solution correct?
3. Compare and evaluate Strawson and Popper’s responses to the problem of induction.
4. Explain, quite generally, (i.e. without reference to ‘grue’ and ‘bleen’,) what Goodman’s new riddle of induction is. Illustrate the problem using predicates of your own invention. How does the problem differ from the more traditional problem of induction? Is there a solution to the new riddle?

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