Rotating Reading List for the Philosophy Comprehensive Exam

*Please contact Étienne Brown (etienne.brown@sjsu.edu) to gain access to the Canvas course which contains all of these readings and know which parts of the reading list apply to you (depending on the semester during which you plan to take the exam).

1. History of Western Philosophy

   A. Accounts of the emotions

      Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Section 1, Chapter 1; Section 2, Chapters 3-5, and Section 3, Chapters 2-3.


      Seneca, *On Anger*. Book I and II.

   B. Accounts of human nature

      J. J. Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, Second Part (pp. 43-67).

      Plato, *Republic*, Book IV.

      Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Chapters 1, 6, 9 and 12.

   C. Accounts of moral worth of actions.

      Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Part I and Part II.


   D. God.

      Spinoza, *The Ethics*, Part II and II.

      Ibn Sina’s proof of the existence of God. In Jon McGinnis and David C. Reisman (ed.), *Classical Arabic Philosophy: An Anthology of Sources* (pp. 209-219).

         - Optional accompanying resource: Peter Adamson, “From the Necessary Existent to God.” In *Interpreting Avicenna* (pp. 170-189).


2. Metaphysics, Philosophy of Language and Epistemology

   A. Groups

      Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*, Introduction and Ch. 1, 2, and 3 (pp. 1-80).


B. Scientific Realism

Ian Hacking, “Do We See Through a Microscope?,” *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 62(4).


C. Metaethics


Gilbert Harman, *The nature of Morality*, Chapter 1, Section 1 (“Ethics and Observation,” pp. 3-11).


D. Causation/Freedom/Determinism


Peter Van Inwagen, “The Incompatibility of Free Will and Determinism,” *Philosophical Studies* 27(3).


E. Philosophy of Language


### 3. Value Theory

**A. Normative Ethics**


J. S. Mill, Utilitarianism, Chapter 1 and 2, (“General Remarks” and “What Utilitarianism Is.”) (pp. 115-140).


**B. Applied Ethics**


Amia Srinivasan, Stop the Robot Apocalypse, *London Review of Books* (pp. 3-6).


**C. Justice, Equality and Freedom**


Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*. Chapter 7, Section I (pp. 149-183).


**D. Democracy and Liberalism**


E. Aesthetics

Plato, *Republic*, Book X.


Hume, *Selected Essays*, “Of the standard of taste” (pp. 133-153).

Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, “The Analytic of the Beautiful” and “The Analytic of the Sublime” (pp. 89-160).

4. Philosophy of Race and Gender

A. Phenomenology and Metaphysics of Race and Sex/Gender


B. Racism and Sexism


Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, Introduction (pp. 3-20) and Chapter 1 of Part Three (“Myths”).

C. Race, Sex/Gender and Education

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Chapters 2, 3, 6 and 12.


Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Preface (pp. 35-42) and Chapters 1-2 (pp. 43-86).
Patricia Hill Collins, *Another Kind of Public Education: Race, Schools, the Media, and Democratic Possibilities*. Chapter 1 (“What does the Flag Mean to You?,” pp. 1-39).

D. Race, Sex/Gender and Dis-ability


5. Comparative Philosophy

A. Methodology of Comparative Philosophy


B. Chinese Philosophy


C. Indian Philosophy

Thomas Forsthoefel, “Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara.” In Purushottama Bilimoria (ed.), Routledge History of Indian Philosophy (pp. 233-241).

Jay Garfield, “Nāgārjuna,” In Purushottama Bilimoria (ed.), Routledge History of Indian Philosophy (pp. 311-320).


Alex Watson, “A Spectrum of Metaphysical Positions Concerning the Existence or Non-Existence of a Self.” In Purushottama Bilimoria (ed.), Routledge History of Indian Philosophy (pp. 331-342).

D. Mexican and Latin American Philosophy


Leopoldo Zea, “Philosophy as Commitment.” In Carlos Albert Sanchez and Robert Eli Sanchez, Jr. (ed.s), Mexican Philosophy in the 20th Century: Essential Readings (pp. 125-140).

Jorge Portilla, “The Phenomenology of Relajo.” In Carlos Albert Sanchez, The Suspension of Seriousness (pp. 123-200).


E. Africana philosophy

Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, Chapter 1 (“On Violence”).

Abeba Birhane, “Descartes was wrong: ‘a person is a person through other persons,’” Aeon, (1300 words).


Édouard Glissant, Introduction to a Poetics of Diversity, Chapters 1 and 3 (“Creolizations in the Carribean and the Americas” and “Culture and Identity”).