On the final exam date and time, Monday, May 10, from 4 to 5:50 pm, you will be asked to write roughly 250 word answers to your choice of 2 out of the following 12 essay questions. You will be asked to write them from memory without notes or materials. There will also be 10 short objective questions.

1. Compare and contrast Plotinus (our excerpt from the *Enneads*) and Augustine (Confessions, Book VII) on the analysis of the opposed natures of good and evil.

2. How does Boethius’ distinction between Providence and Fate help him to solve the problem of the apparent injustice of Fortune?

3. How does Boethius’ theory of the four modes of knowing (sensation, imagination, knowledge, and mind) enter into his solution of the problem of divine foreknowledge and human freedom?

4. Evaluate as a whole the solution given in Consolation of Philosophy to the problem of the apparent triumph of evil in the world.

5. Explain how Aristotle’s theory of nature leads to the notion of a First Cause. Refer to some of the specific arguments in Avicenna, Maimonides, and Aquinas which were Aristotelian in inspiration.

6. The occasionalists and the philosophers had a long controversy, culminating in Al-Ghazali’s Incoherence of the Philosophers and Averroes’ response, Incoherence of the Incoherence. Since Al-Ghazali accuses the philosophers of unbelief and Averroes accuses the theologians of either willful contrariness (in which case he says they are “beyond the pale of humanity,” or stupidity, in which case they are ineducable, the two sides were evidently at an impasse. Imagining subsects of the occasionalists and philosophers who genuinely might wish to find common ground on the question of the eternity of the world, can you imagine an approach they might take in a mutual inquiry to resolve their differences?

7. Outline the principles of interpretation by which Maimonides is able to make the tradition of Aristotelian Neoplatonism largely consistent with the Torah and give some examples of his use of these principles in biblical interpretation.

8. Compare and contrast Aristotle’s theory of nature (physics) as interpreted by the medieval Aristotelians with that of the Islamic occasionalists. What are Maimonides’ principal reasons for rejecting the occasionalist theory?

9. Do you think the human agent has any power over his/her own actions or external events which is independent of the general causes acting on that person and his/her world? Do you think we are responsible for the moral quality of our actions in such a way as to merit rewards or punishments?

10. Do you think religious texts should be evaluated within a philosophical context? If so, what should that context be? If such texts have any valid meaning, how is that meaning to be determined?

11. Considering that Aristotelian cosmology has been completely overturned, which viewpoint do you think has better stood the test of time -- that of Maimonides or that of the occasionalists?

12. Does science imply any viewpoint concerning the existence and nature of God?