

# DSST® ETHICS IN AMERICA

## EXAM INFORMATION

This exam was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that learned by students taking the course. This exam covers topics including ethical traditions and analysis in various relationships, embryonic stem-cell research, euthanasia, affirmative action, and capital punishment.

The exam contains 100 questions to be answered in 2 hours.

**Optional Essay:** Test takers have the option to write an essay that will not be scored by DSST raters, but will be sent to the credit-awarding institution for consideration and scoring. Before taking this exam, students are advised to check with their institution to determine whether the essay is required.

## EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

The following is an outline of the content areas covered in the examination. The approximate percentage of the examination devoted to each content area is also noted.

### I. Ethical Traditions – 44%

- Greek views: Thucydides, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle
- Religious traditions
- Moral law: Epictetus, Aquinas, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Jefferson, Kant, Royce, King, Rawls, Nozick
- Consequential ethics: Epicurus, Smith, Bentham, Mill, Rand
- Feminist ethics: Gilligan, Noddings

### II. Ethical Analysis of Issues and Practical Applications – 56%

- Morality, relationships, and sexuality
- Life and death issues
- Economic inequity, poverty, and equal opportunity
- Racism and affirmative action
- Punishment
- War and peace
- Life-centered and human-centered ethics
- Human rights
- Biomedical ethics

## REFERENCES

Below is a list of reference publications that were either used as a reference to create the exam, or were used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. You may reference either the current edition of these titles

or textbooks currently used at a local college

university for the same class title. It is recommended that you reference **more than one textbook** on the topics outlined in this fact sheet.

You should **begin by checking textbook content against the content outline** provided **before** selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study.

Sources for study material are suggested but not limited to the following:

- Ethics: Theory and Practice*, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2008, Jacques P. Thiroux and Keith W. Krasemann, Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, ISBN: 0205672361, One Lake Street, Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458 ([www.vig.prenhall.com](http://www.vig.prenhall.com)). **As of July, 2011: 11<sup>th</sup> Edition (ISBN: 0205053149)**
- Moral Philosophy: Theories and Issues*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2007, Emmet Barcalow, Wadsworth Publishing/Thomson, ISBN: 0495007153, 10 Davis Drive, Belmont, CA 94002, ([www.wadsworth.com](http://www.wadsworth.com)).
- Current textbook used by a local college or university for a course on the subject.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

All test questions are in a multiple-choice format, with one correct answer and three incorrect options. These are samples of the types of questions that may appear on the exam. Other sample questions can be found in the form of practice exams by visiting our website at [www.getcollegedcredit.com/testprep](http://www.getcollegedcredit.com/testprep).

- Which of the following thinkers evaluates the morality of actions in terms of the amount of pleasure and pain they produce?
  - Aristotle
  - Kant
  - Bentham
  - King
- According to which of the following philosophers is it immoral to commit suicide?
  - The hedonist Epicurus, because suicide decreases one's pleasure
  - The Stoic Epictetus, because suicide is contrary to nature

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- c. Kant, because persons who commit suicide treat themselves as a means only
- d. Mill, because suicide never maximizes utility
- 3. For a utilitarian, the ethical evaluation of a decision to tell a lie will NOT depend on whether the
  - a. person to whom the lie is told will benefit from the lie
  - b. person telling the lie would mind someone else lying to him or her
  - c. person telling the lie will suffer if the truth is told
  - d. lie will cause suffering to third parties

### OPTIONAL ESSAY

The essay will ask the examinee to analyze a morally problematic situation in terms of issues relevant to a decision and arguments for alternative positions; it will require the examinee to reach his / her own reasoned conclusion.

### CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The American Council on Education's College Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated the DSST test development process and content of this exam. It has made the following recommendations:

<b>Area or Course Equivalent</b>	Ethics in America
<b>Level</b>	Upper-level baccalaureate
<b>Amount of Credit</b>	Three (3) semester hours
<b>Minimum Score</b>	400
<b>Source</b>	American Council on Education – College Credit Recommendation Service

**Answers to sample questions:** 1-C; 2-C; 3-B.