Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

NICHOLAS POOLE

BA (University of British Columbia, 2013)

“Kant, Heidegger and the Problem of Indifference: From Reason to Releasement”

Department of Political Science

Thursday, March 24, 2016
10:00AM
David Turpin Building
Room A137

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Arthur Kroker, Department of Political Science, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Jim Tully, Department of Political Science, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. David Cook, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Martha McMahon, Department of Sociology, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

This thesis presents a study of Immanuel Kant and Martin Heidegger on the theme of indifference. There are two main argumentative trajectories. First, I establish the coherency of indifference as a unifying theme across both of their works. Specifically, it will be shown that for both thinkers indifference emerges as a “problem” bound up with the history of western metaphysics tending towards nihilism. For Kant, this appears as a problem of reason, and for Heidegger a loss of Being. Their responses to this problem can also be seen as broadly analogous: Both are concerned to demonstrate how a certain “authentic” relation to the inner possibility of metaphysics is possible, and do so without assuming anything in advance about the being for whom metaphysics is an issue. Second, I aim to show that Heidegger’s notion of indifference, as a closure of ecstatic time and loss of Being, more sufficiently accounts for the breadth of indifference as an experiential phenomenon, as well as makes possible a “turning” (Verwindung) of this closed mode into an kind of “open indifference” that makes possible the presencing of things. From the perspective of Heidegger’s response to the problem of indifference, Kant’s response will be shown to regenerate the very problem he seeks to overcome.