

PHI 171 – PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY – FALL 2015

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FINAL PAPER – DUE DECEMBER 16TH

Please send me your final paper through e-mail. Late papers will not be accepted.

This assignment consists in writing a **5-7 philosophy page paper** on a topic that interests you. You should develop the ideas from your “paper outline/draft” on the basis of my feedback.

What should a philosophy paper do? Typically, a philosophy paper advances a certain thesis and attempts to defend the thesis with well-supported arguments.

What is a good philosophy paper? A good philosophy paper proceeds with rigor, clarity, precision, and originality. Rigorous argumentation, clarity of exposition, precision of language, and originality of ideas are essential ingredients for a good philosophy paper. You will be graded on the basis of those four criteria.

How should a philosophy paper be written and structured? A philosophy paper should be your own literary creation, so you can give to it the literary form and shape you prefer. Be an inspired and creative writer! Typically, a good philosophy paper consists of five parts:

1. an introduction which sets up the question of the paper and formulates the thesis;
2. a body of the paper which develops the main argument;
3. some objections to your main argument,
4. replies in defense of your main argument;
5. a conclusion which formulates the open questions and identifies the remaining weak points in your argument.

Be intellectually honest! In a philosophy paper, it is completely fine to recognize that your argument has weaknesses. It is better to openly acknowledge weaknesses in your argument rather than be silent about them.

For more guidance on how to write a philosophy paper, check out the link below
<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>