

## Philosophy 4300 — Paper Assignment #2

You should email your paper to me – joel.velasco@ttu.edu - by 1:30pm on Monday, May 13th (when our final is scheduled).

The paper should be an argumentative essay of roughly 3-5 pages (1500-2500 words). It should be relevant to our class, but the exact nature of the paper might vary quite broadly. The word count can also vary quite a bit if you do something that involves calculation or more mathematical argument. But it should be a substantial piece of work and not feel like solving a homework problem. Here are some possible topics. Each of these questions could be a paper in itself or a paper could involve a few of these together. Each of these *could* be a topic. But if you look at a question and think, “I have an answer to that one and it takes just a few sentences” then you should not write about that topic.

What are utilities? Are they in our heads? Are they constructed from our preferences?

Is it really true that we should always maximize expected utility?

How should we deal with risk when making a gamble (or just acting)?

Do rational solutions to games always have to be equilibria?

When there are multiple equilibria in a game, how can we rationally decide between them?

Is there actually some reason to cooperate in a prisoner’s dilemma?

How is morality related to the prisoner’s dilemma?

How is morality related to rationality? To game theory?

Is there a best voting system?

Is utilitarianism justified on social welfare grounds?

Does cost benefit analysis solve the social welfare problem?

Are interpersonal comparisons of utility really possible?

It should be obvious from your paper that it is a relevant topic, but if you have questions about whether a certain paper topic would be appropriate, please come and see me.