

Phil 5330 Spring 2021 First Paper Assignment

Instructions: Write an argumentative paper of around 1,800 to 2,500 words (roughly 4-5 single spaced typed pages – this is not a hard limit). The general guidelines are as follows. First, your paper must critically engage one or more of the topics we have discussed in the first six weeks of class. Second, your paper should not *merely* summarize the position(s) of some of the authors you discuss or describe some factual or technical details; it should in some way locate ideas relative to each other, synthesize those ideas, criticize them, defend them against important objections, or develop them in your own way. Third, the topic of your paper should be of an appropriate scope given the length constraints.

Topics: Anything relevant to our class is fine. For example, any general points about natural kinds or social kinds or scientific classification is okay. Specific cases like discussing the elements or species is fine too. If you are citing one of our readings, it is probably fine. If you are worried about the appropriateness of the paper, just talk to me about it (much better than finding out later it wasn't appropriate!).

Due Date: You should submit your paper to me by email before class on Monday, March 1st. Any easily readable format such as .pdf or .docx is okay. Any extensions or possible alterations for the assignment should be discussed with me ahead of time.

Collaboration: Collaboration on this assignment is encouraged. Students are free to discuss the topics with one another, read each other's papers, and offer suggestions. The only restriction is that each student must write their own paper containing their own ideas and words.

References: All sources used in the writing of your paper must be properly referenced. This applies to material in the course readings, other published material, lecture notes from this class and other classes, material published on the internet, and ideas contributed verbally by other students. Information about proper procedures and for references can be found on the course website. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in a lowered grade or even an automatic F in the course; it may also lead to charges being brought before the university. If you have any questions about these issues, please do not hesitate to contact me. As for formats for references, (such as MLA or APA or ...) I do not care as long as it is as easy as possible for me to track down a source that you use.

Reading Drafts: I am happy to talk about your papers during office hours or if you make an appointment to meet me in my office. I am also happy to read drafts of papers, on a time-permitting, first-come, first-served basis. For example, if you get a draft to me on Thursday the 25th, it is likely that I can get it back to you by Saturday or Sunday.