

Phil 5330 Fall 2026  
Assignment 1

Short essay:

Write a short essay defending a philosophically interesting claim that relates to at least one topic we have discussed in class so far. The essay should be between 500 and 1000 words. Grades will be satisfactory or not, but I will write comments on your essay.

You should show that you are familiar with the required readings. Discussing material beyond that is acceptable but not required. Discussing **ONLY** material outside the required readings (example, an essay about the theory-laden nature of observation) is not acceptable.

The essay should be uploaded into Canvas by midnight Friday, Sept 11th (deadline flexible with early request for extension).

**Collaboration:** Collaboration with other humans 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 do their own work and write their own paper containing their own ideas and words.

**AI policy:** The use of generative AI on this assignment is not allowed. This is warm up, low stakes practice to see where you are at and to exercise your philosophical muscles. It defeats the purpose if you use an AI tool to do any part of this exercise for you.