

An Introduction to Critical Thinking and  
Symbolic Logic: Volume 2 Informal Reasoning  
Assignments

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## Preface

This textbook is not a textbook in the traditional sense. Here, what we have attempted is compile a set of assignments and exercise that may be used in critical thinking courses. To that end, we have tried to make these assignments as diverse as possible while leaving flexibility in their application within the classroom. Of course these assignments and exercises could certainly be used in other classes as well.

Our view is that critical thinking courses work best when they are presented as skills based learning opportunities. We hope that these assignments speak to that desire and can foster the kinds of critical thinking skills that are both engaging and fun

Please feel free to contact us with comments and suggestions. We will strive to correct errors when pointed out, add necessary material, and make other additional and needed changes as they arise. Please check back for the most up to date version.

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>In-class Activities</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	Moral Arguments By Analogy . . . . .	5
1.1.1	Speciesism :: Sexism/Racism . . . . .	5
1.1.1.1	Materials . . . . .	5
1.1.1.2	Background . . . . .	5
1.1.1.3	Recommended Reading List <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	6
1.1.1.4	Recommended Media . . . . .	6
1.1.1.5	Instructions . . . . .	7
1.2	A Turing Test . . . . .	8
1.2.1	Can Computers Think? . . . . .	8
1.2.1.1	Materials . . . . .	8
1.2.1.2	Background <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	8
1.2.1.3	Recommended Reading List <sup>4</sup> . . . . .	9
1.2.1.4	Recommended Media . . . . .	9
1.2.1.5	Instructions . . . . .	9
1.2.1.6	PowerPoint . . . . .	11
<b>2</b>	<b>Helping Students Study</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1	Crossword Puzzle Assignment . . . . .	12
2.1.1	Works for any terms/concepts . . . . .	12
2.1.1.1	Materials . . . . .	12
2.1.1.2	Background . . . . .	12
2.1.1.3	Recommended Reading List . . . . .	12
2.1.1.4	Instructions . . . . .	13
2.2	Small Group Trivia Activity . . . . .	14
2.2.1	Fallacy Feud . . . . .	14
2.2.1.1	Materials . . . . .	14
2.2.1.2	Background <sup>5</sup> . . . . .	14

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<sup>2</sup>Selections without hyperlinks can be found in Pojman, Louis P. and Lewis Vaughn. *Philosophy: The Quest For Truth*. 8th ed. (Oxford 2010).

<sup>3</sup>Cahn, Steven M. *Exploring Philosophy: An Introductory Anthology*. 5th ed. (Oxford 2017).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Chapter 8. Munson, Ronald and Andrew Black. *The Elements of Reasoning*. 7th ed. (Cengage 2017)

2.2.1.3	Recommended Media . . . . .	14
2.2.1.4	Instructions . . . . .	15
2.2.1.5	PowerPoint . . . . .	15
<b>3</b>	<b>Short Writing Assignment</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1	Assessing Competing Theories . . . . .	16
3.1.1	Conspiracy Theories . . . . .	16
3.1.1.1	Recommended Reading List <sup>6</sup> . . . . .	16
3.1.1.2	Recommended Media . . . . .	16
3.1.1.3	Format . . . . .	16
3.1.1.4	Instructions . . . . .	17
<b>4</b>	<b>Long Writing Assignments</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1	Assessing Normative Ethical Theories . . . . .	18
4.1.1	Create Your Own Thought Experiment . . . . .	18
4.1.1.1	Background . . . . .	18
4.1.1.2	Recommended Reading List . . . . .	19
4.1.1.3	Format . . . . .	19
4.1.1.4	Instructions . . . . .	19
4.2	Present, Explain, and Evaluate [PEE] an Argument . . . . .	22
4.2.1	PEE Assignment (with Peer Reviews) works for any topic	22
4.2.1.1	Background . . . . .	22
4.2.1.2	Topic . . . . .	23
4.2.1.3	Present [P] . . . . .	25
4.2.1.4	Peer Review #1: P . . . . .	27
4.2.1.5	Present/Explain [P/E] . . . . .	29
4.2.1.6	Peer Review #2: P/E . . . . .	31
4.2.1.7	Objections . . . . .	33
4.2.1.8	Peer Review #3: Obj. . . . .	37
4.2.1.9	Interview . . . . .	40
4.2.1.10	Present/Explain/Evaluate [PEE]: Rough Draft . . . . .	42
4.2.1.11	Peer Review #4: PEE Rough Draft . . . . .	44
4.2.1.12	PEE Final Draft and Reflection . . . . .	47
4.2.1.13	Note on Plagiarism . . . . .	49
<b>5</b>	<b>Interactive Assignments</b>	<b>51</b>
5.1	Normative Ethics and Taking Action . . . . .	51
5.1.1	Environmentalism Activism Project . . . . .	51
5.1.1.1	Materials . . . . .	51
5.1.1.2	Background . . . . .	51
5.1.1.3	Recommended Reading List <sup>7</sup> . . . . .	52
5.1.1.4	Recommended Media: . . . . .	52

<sup>6</sup>Chapters 9-10. Vaughn, Lewis. *The Power of Critical Thinking: Effective Reasoning about Ordinary and Extraordinary Claims*. 5th ed. (Oxford 2015).

<sup>7</sup>Chapter 16. Schmidt, David and Elizabeth Willott. *Environmental Ethics: What Really Matters, What Really Works*. 3rd ed. (Oxford, 2018).

*CONTENTS*

4

5.1.1.5	Topic . . . . .	53
5.1.1.6	Annotated Bibliography . . . . .	56
5.1.1.7	Issue Presentation . . . . .	58
5.1.1.8	Informational Pamphlet . . . . .	62
5.1.1.9	Objections . . . . .	65
5.1.1.10	Peer Review: Obj. . . . .	69
5.1.1.11	Interview . . . . .	73
5.1.1.12	Activism Report . . . . .	75
5.1.1.13	Note on Plagiarism . . . . .	77

# Chapter 1

## In-class Activities

### 1.1 Moral Arguments By Analogy

#### 1.1.1 Speciesism :: Sexism/Racism

##### 1.1.1.1 Materials

Note cards

Writing utensils

##### 1.1.1.2 Background

*Moral Arguments by Analogy*: Similar cases ought to be treated in similar ways.<sup>1</sup>

*Racism*: That the human species can be divided into discrete “races” aligned with essential attributes and that these attributes make some races more intrinsically valuable than others.<sup>2</sup>

*Sexism*: An ideology (often consisting in assumptions, beliefs, theories, stereotypes, and broader cultural narratives) that function to represent men and women as importantly different in ways that rationalize and justify patriarchal social arrangements and relations.<sup>3</sup>

*Speciesism*: A prejudice or bias in favor of the interests of members of one’s own species and against those of members of other species. This could refer to a bias in favor of humans over animals as well

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<sup>1</sup>Chapter 7. Munson, Ronald and Andrew Black. *The Elements of Reasoning*. 7th ed. (Cengage 2017).

<sup>2</sup>Moody-Adams, Michele. “Racism”. *Ethics in Practice: An Anthology* edited by Hugh LaFollette. 4th ed. (Wiley-Blackwell 2014) pp. 392–400.

<sup>3</sup>Manne, Kate. *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*. 1st ed. (Oxford 2017) pp. 78–79.

as between different animals species (e.g., preferring dogs to cows, etc.)<sup>4</sup>



### 1.1.1.3 Recommended Reading List<sup>6</sup>

Alastair Norcross, “Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases”

Carl Cohen, “The Case Against Animal Rights”

Peter Singer, “The Case for Animal Liberation”

Marti Kheel, “Vegetarianism and Ecofeminism: Toppling Patriarchy with a Fork”

### 1.1.1.4 Recommended Media

Video: Bacon Lovers Meet Baby Pigs

Video: What Is the Meatrix?

Podcast: Norcross on Puppies, Pigs, and People

<sup>4</sup>Singer, Peter. “The Case for Animal Liberation”. *Philosophy: The Quest For Truth* edited by Louis P. Pojman and Lewis Vaughn. 8th ed. (Oxford 2010).

<sup>5</sup>“Free stock photo of animals, cows, dog” is licensed under the Pexels License.

<sup>6</sup>Selections without hyperlinks can be found in Pojman, Louis P. and Lewis Vaughn. *Philosophy: The Quest For Truth*. 8th ed. (Oxford 2010).

Video: Who Has Moral Status [Intrinsic Value]?  
Video & Article: Can We Justify Killing Animals for Food?  
Article: Why Don't We Feel More Guilty About Eating Animals?  
Video: Peter Singer on Animal Rights  
Video: Animal Experimentation  
Video: Animals for Entertainment  
Video: If Slaughterhouses had Glass Walls  
Video: Vegetarianism Explained by a Child  
Video: Killing Animals for Food  
Video: Through Their Eyes  
Video: Undercover at a Pork Factory  
Videos: Reasons to Stop Eating Dairy

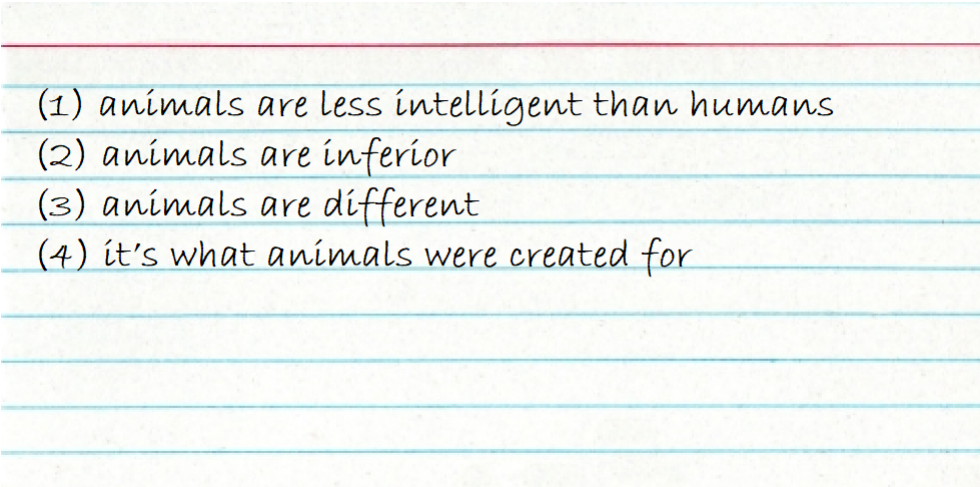
#### 1.1.1.5 Instructions

1. Assemble small groups of 2-3 students, each group receives one note card.
2. On your note card (as a group) write down your groups answers to the following question:

*What is the best defense of speciesism (whether with respect to meat-eating, animal experimentation, habitat destruction, etc.)?*

Each groups' answer should be composed of at least three reasons to defend speciesism.

Example:

- 
- (1) animals are less intelligent than humans
  - (2) animals are inferior
  - (3) animals are different
  - (4) it's what animals were created for



3. Pass note cards to another group.
4. Using another group's reasons, discuss how each of these reasons might be used to defend some form of racism.
 

Constructing such a defense does not mean you agree with it.  
Write this defense on the back of the note card.
5. Using another group's reasons, discuss how each of these reasons might be used to defend some form of sexism.
 

Constructing such a defense does not mean you agree with it.  
Write this defense on the back of the note card.
6. Discuss (with everyone) how applicable such reasoning is to animals, racial, and sexual/gender discrimination.
7. Now return to your original defense of speciesism and see if there is anything you (as a group) would change.
 

Make the necessary changes (if any) and exchange your paper/note card again with the other group.

## 1.2 A Turing Test

### 1.2.1 Can Computers Think?

#### 1.2.1.1 Materials

At least two online open-access AI chat bot systems (recommendations below)

Three Sheets of Paper (per group)

Writing utensils

#### 1.2.1.2 Background<sup>7</sup>

*Materialism:* (1) The view that reality consists only of matter and their material properties. (2) The view that the mind is identical to the body. Also called 'physicalism'.

*Physicalism:* A related view to materialism. It states that everything that exists is physical in nature or can be described in purely physical terms. A more modern term (20th century).

*Qualia:* The subjective quality of what it is like to have a certain experience (for example, what it is like to taste chocolate or smell flowers).

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<sup>7</sup>Cahn, Steven M. *Exploring Philosophy: An Introductory Anthology*. 5th ed. (Oxford 2017).

*Dualism:* The view that the mind is distinct from the body. The theory that consciousness requires something nonphysical (the opposite of physicalism or materialism).

*Property Dualism:* The theory that the mind is not a nonphysical substance, but it has nonphysical properties.

*Substance Dualism:* The theory that consciousness resides in a non-physical substance. Also called Cartesian dualism.

### 1.2.1.3 Recommended Reading List<sup>8</sup>

Thomas Nagel, “What Is It Like to be a Bat?”

Frank Jackson, “The Qualia Problem”

David Lewis, “Knowing What It’s Like”

Alan Turing, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence”

John Searle “Can Computers Think?”

### 1.2.1.4 Recommended Media

Video: Mary’s Room Thought Experiment

Video: Can Science Teach Us Everything

Article: SEP Entry on Turing Tests

Video: What is Consciousness?

Article: SEP Entry on Artificial Intelligence

Video: Can Robots Feel?

Article: AI is Finally Here

Article: What is the Watson Supercomputer?

Video: How Watson (IBM’s Supercomputer) Learns

Article: It’s Westworld. What’s Wrong With Cruelty to Robots?

### 1.2.1.5 Instructions

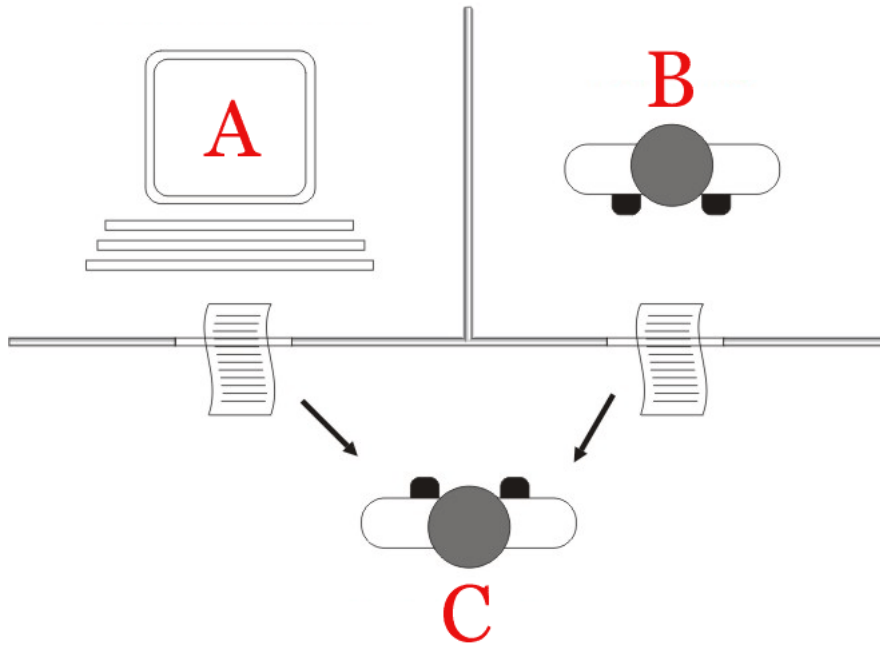
1. Assemble small groups of two.
2. Think of 5 questions you would ask a computer to find out if there was a human answering or whether the answers were coming from a robot/the computer [write these down on a piece of paper].

*The only rule is that you are not allowed to ask whether the ‘person’ is a robot/computer.*

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

3. Work alone and speculate what the answer would be [write them down on a separate sheet of paper].
4. Swap your 5 questions with those from another group (who will answer the questions as both a human and a computer).



9

5. In your group of 2, inconspicuously decide who will be the "human" and who will check with the "computer" [this person will run the questions through one of these or some other AI system on their device].

<https://www.pandorabots.com/mitsuku/>

<http://ec2-54-215-197-164.us-west-1.compute.amazonaws.com/speech.php>

<http://poncho.is/>

<http://insomnobot3000.com/>

<https://www.cleverbot.com/>

<http://alice.pandorabots.com/>

[https://www.algebra.com/cgi-bin/chat.mpl?zub\\_uux=63972.9253482074](https://www.algebra.com/cgi-bin/chat.mpl?zub_uux=63972.9253482074)

6. Answer the questions and then return both sets of answers (unlabeled) to the group who came up with the questions.
7. Once you have received both sets of answers to your questions, try to determine which set of answers can from the "human" and which came from the "computer".

8. After you determine if your guesses were correct, engage in a class or small group discussion about the possibility of whether or not computers can (or will ever be able to) think.

Some questions to consider:

*How convincing was the robot (or 'bot')?*

*Were there any questions it coped well with?*

*Anything it could not cope with at all?*

*What strategies did the robot use to deal with questions it maybe didn't understand?*

*What happened if the humans didn't get the English correct in their questions or responses?*

*Do you agree with Turing that whether a machine can produce the same results as a human is more important than whether it is intelligent?*

#### **1.2.1.6 PowerPoint**

For use in-class

## Chapter 2

# Helping Students Study

### 2.1 Crossword Puzzle Assignment

#### 2.1.1 Works for any terms/concepts

##### 2.1.1.1 Materials

List of terms and concepts to be studied

Crossword Puzzle maker (recommendation below)

Writing utensils

##### 2.1.1.2 Background

One aspect of helping students prepare for exams in introductory philosophy courses is producing a study guide. Study guides, with key terms, figures, and concepts, help students review course material in a comprehensive way. We have found, though, that many students find an exhaustive list of philosophical terms they must review to be extremely daunting. To help address this, we have developed a unique way for students to produce their own study guide by constructing a crossword puzzle that other students complete.

This not only helps the students creating the crossword study for the exam, but all students benefit by completing a few crosswords created by other students as well. Students' understanding will be more comprehensive and thorough since they will have encountered numerous approaches to and descriptions of the concepts. This assignment is a fun way to help students prepare for exams while fostering student engagement with course content. It also has the added benefit of making studying for exams slightly less daunting.

##### 2.1.1.3 Recommended Reading List

Readings that accompany the terms and concepts being studied.

## 2.1.1.4 Instructions

1. Provide students with list of terms and concepts to be studied.
2. Have students construct their own individual crossword puzzle using original and creative clues (not plagiarised from readings/authors/instructor).

**Recommended:** Students should use a crossword puzzle generator (recommended below) to construct their assignment. Otherwise, graph paper or handwritten puzzles can be used.

<https://crosswordhobbyist.com/>

Example:

Created on [TheTeachersCorner.net Crossword Maker](#)

Patristic Era	medieval people	Hippo Regius	doctrine	philosophy and theology
Church Father	Thagaste	Divine Truth	protestant	doctor of the church

**Across**

4. Something that Saint Augustine wasn't able to see due to his sins of impurity  
 7. Where Saint Augustine was born  
 8. Saint Augustine's approach was about these two things  
 10. His writings in the Patristic Era made him one of these

**Down**

1. He was one of these in the Catholic Church  
 2. His thoughts influenced this group of people  
 3. He helped to form this  
 5. He is one of the most important church fathers for his writing in this era  
 6. He was the bishop of this  
 9. These people think of Saint Augustine as a theological father of protestant reformation

1

3. Have students print out and swap their crossword puzzle with others in the class and complete before they are tested on the material. Make sure to provide time for students to meet back with the creator of the puzzle to go over any questions about correct answers and/or clues that were used to ample understanding.

**Recommended:** Have students complete at least two different crossword puzzles.

<sup>1</sup>“Crossword Puzzle: Saint Augustine of Hippo”. <https://celeid.weebly.com/crossword-puzzle.html>.

## 2.2 Small Group Trivia Activity

### 2.2.1 Fallacy Feud

#### 2.2.1.1 Materials

Some colored dry erase markers, one for each team and each a different color

PowerPoint with one fallacy example on each slide (provided below)

Answer key

Score sheet (and perhaps a score keeper if instructor feels that they cannot do both read the slides and keep an eye on who raises their hand first)

#### 2.2.1.2 Background<sup>2</sup>

List of fallacies to be studied

#### 2.2.1.3 Recommended Media

Video: Formal and Informal Fallacies

Video: Appeal to Ignorance

Video: Appeal to Inappropriate Authority

Video: Appeal to the People

Video: The Gambler's Fallacy

Video: Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc

Video: False Cause

Video: Hasty Generalization

Video: False Dilemma

Video: Loaded Question

Video: Begging the Question

Video: Slippery Slope

Video: Introduction to Ad Hominem

Video: Ad Hominem

Video: Ad Hominem Pt. 2

Video: Tu Quoque

Video: Pooh-Pooh Fallacy Example

Video: Straw Person

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<sup>2</sup>Chapter 8. Munson, Ronald and Andrew Black. *The Elements of Reasoning*. 7th ed. (Cengage 2017)

Video: Straw Person Pt. 2

Video: Fallacy of Composition

Video: Fallacy of Division

Video: Affirming the Consequent

Video: Denying the Antecedent

Video: Equivocation

Additional Video Resources

#### 2.2.1.4 Instructions

1. Create a PowerPoint (or use the one provided below) with one fallacious passage on each slide. Have the name of the fallacy fade in after the passage.

Construct an answer key to have on hand for reference.

2. Assemble into medium-large teams of 5-6, each sitting at their own table and each with one dry erase marker (their color will be their team).
3. One student from each group will hold the marker and it will be their turn to guess which fallacy is being committed by the example on the slide.
4. The first student to raise their hand has the first chance to guess.

Should they get it correct, that round will be over.

Should they get it wrong, the other teams will have a chance to guess correctly, repeating this pattern until someone guesses correctly and the round is over.

5. Once a fallacy has been guessed correctly, that round is over and all students will pass their markers to the next member of their team.

**Recommended:** Instructors may decide whether or not to allow teams to converse with the student whose turn it is to answer in order to foster greater team interaction and buy-in. If allowed, it is recommended that only the student with the marker answers in order to ensure that everyone participates, contributes, and speaks up.

6. The team that guesses correctly is given a point.
7. Points are tallied up at the end of the game and a winner is announced.

**Recommended:** In order to encourage preparation for the game and enthusiasm throughout, extra credit or some other incentive may be offered to the winning team.

#### 2.2.1.5 PowerPoint

For use in-class



## Chapter 3

# Short Writing Assignment

### 3.1 Assessing Competing Theories

#### 3.1.1 Conspiracy Theories

##### 3.1.1.1 Recommended Reading List<sup>1</sup>

Inference to the Best Explain

Judging Scientific Theories

##### 3.1.1.2 Recommended Media

Video: Abductive Arguments

Video: Abduction (Inference to the Best Explanation)

Article: "Conspiracy Theories Have Consequences"

Article: "How Facts Backfire"

Video: "Science: What's It Up To?"

Article: Evaluating Scientific Claims

Article: Steps of the Scientific Method

Article: Science, Evolution, and Creationism

##### 3.1.1.3 Format

2 pages or less (less than 500 words).

Assignment should be size 12 Times New Roman Font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins.

The assignment should flow smoothly and be well-written. Provide citations when you quote (either as footnotes or endnotes).

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<sup>1</sup>Chapters 9-10. Vaughn, Lewis. *The Power of Critical Thinking: Effective Reasoning about Ordinary and Extraordinary Claims*. 5th ed. (Oxford 2015).

You may use APA, MLA, or Chicago (though, APA is recommended).

#### 3.1.1.4 Instructions

1. Pick ONE conspiracy theory which you find particularly interesting to use for this quarter's writing assignments. Try to pick something relevant (i.e., which many people are talking about and/or believe today).

*WHAT MAKES SOMETHING A CONSPIRACY THEORY?* The dictionary defines a conspiracy theory in this way: "A theory seeking to explain a disputed case or matter as a plot by a secret group or alliance rather than an individual or isolated act. [ref] A conspiracy theorist, therefore, is a person who formulates such a theory.

There is a certain negative undertone to the term "conspiracy theory" in today's society. Detractors will point out that many conspiracy theories contain certain features that undermine their credibility. For the purposes of this assignment, however, we will use the term "conspiracy theory" in its neutral sense. We will use it to mean an alternative explanation for an event, as it is defined in the dictionary.

Examples:

Chemtrails  
 Govt. U.F.O. Program?  
 Moon Landing Conspiracy  
 Parkland Shooting Conspiracies  
 Anti-Vaccination

2. Do some background research on the conspiracy theory (using appropriate sources).
3. Evaluate the theory using the TEST formula. Be sure to do the following in your evaluation:

State the theory to be evaluated and check it for consistency.

Assess the evidence for the conspiracy theory briefly and concisely.

Specify at least one alternative theory.

Use the criteria of adequacy to assess the two theories and determine which one is more plausible.

Testability - Whether there is some way to determine if a theory is true.

Fruitfulness - The number of novel predictions made.

Scope - The amount of diverse phenomena explained.

Simplicity - The number of assumptions made.

Conservatism - How well a theory fits with existing knowledge.

## Chapter 4

# Long Writing Assignments

### 4.1 Assessing Normative Ethical Theories

#### 4.1.1 Create Your Own Thought Experiment

##### 4.1.1.1 Background

Students often struggle to write term papers in introductory philosophy courses. What is more, it can often be difficult for students to see the value in writing a term paper for a course where they do not feel connected to the subject matter. These issues become perhaps especially acute when teaching community college students, most of whom have had little or no prior contact with philosophy. In our introductory philosophy courses, we have developed a short writing assignment that addresses these pedagogical concerns in a fun and relevant way that seeks to connect student with normative ethics.

The students are asked to produce one example of a situation that requires a difficult ethical decision. We encourage the students to pick a scene from their favorite television show, movie, or some other media. We also spend time talking about which genres work especially well with which ethical theories. Inevitably many students pick science fiction, superhero movies, their favorite piece of fiction, and some even create their own little bit of fiction. While many students pick tv or movies, some students take a personal, and often difficult life event, to illustrate how they made their moral decision in the end.

Students then take their example, with a little help from the instructor and others in the classroom, and then in the paper they apply to it the ethical theories we have discussed in the class. By doing this, many students realize just how applicable philosophical concepts are to difficult decisions both real and fictional. This has made the paper writing process in introductory classes better for both the instructor and the students, since the students are producing work with a greater level of interest while the instructor appreciates the student engagement and quality of the work, which makes for easier grading.

The purpose of this essay is to produce your own thought experiment and

to test different normative ethical frameworks in order to highlight competing moral intuitions and say which you find more compelling and why. This process lies at the heart of what moral philosophy does.

#### 4.1.1.2 Recommended Reading List

Normative Ethical Theories

Deontology

Kantianism

Divine Command Theory

Consequentialism

Egoism

Utilitarianism (Act& Rule)

Virtue Ethics

Aristotelian

Confucian

Care and Feminist Ethics

#### 4.1.1.3 Format

1300 words or less, roughly 4-5 pages.

Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font (or some font similar), 1 inch margins all around. Put page numbers at the bottom and label the sections in the paper.

#### 4.1.1.4 Instructions

**Topic** Use a single example, thought experiment, or difficult moral situation, to compare two of the ethical frameworks we have considered in the course: utilitarianism (act or rule), Kantian deontology, virtue ethics, and care ethics, and discuss their respective strengths and weaknesses. Your example can come from your favorite movie, show, book, etc.

**Sections** In your essay, do the following, in this order:

§1 *Introduction:* In the introductory paragraph, using the first person, clearly lay out what your essay is about and what you plan to do in the rest of the essay. Use sentences like: "In this essay I will lay out argument x. Then, I will present an objection to x. I will then respond to that objection...etc."

Only one short paragraph for this section.

§2 *Present and Carefully Describe Two Ethical Frameworks:* Briefly describe the two ethical frameworks you will consider, characterizing each in terms of core concepts and how these concepts are related to one another. (For example, if you discuss Kant's deontology, you need to describe what a will, intentions, and the categorical imperative are, and how on this account these concepts are linked together.) This is a short summary, not an extended characterization.

Short quotations, and references to your textbook are essential for conveying to the reader that you, the writer, have wrestled with the primary texts yourself. Therefore, you should not be citing other websites or resources (wikipedia, iloveutilitarianism.com, videos, etc.) in this section. But you should be citing material from your textbook.

Should be at least two full paragraphs for this section.

§3 *Thought Experiment:* Introduce an example of either a hypothetical or real scenario involving a moral choice about what someone should do. (It can concern whether a given action is morally permissible, morally required, morally prohibited, or morally preferable among a set of alternatives.) The example cannot be identical to an example provided by one of the authors we have read, but it can be modeled after, or an altered form of, one of these examples or something we have discussed in class. Every student must have their own example.

Should be at least one full paragraph for this section.

§4 *Test the Thought Experiment:* Apply each ethical framework to your example. Describe what you believe each framework would suggest and the reasoning that leads to these conclusions. (References to the text or short quotations may be helpful here as well.) Compare the responses provided by the two frameworks, highlighting whatever similarities or differences you take to be important or noteworthy.

Should be two paragraphs for this section.

§5 *Analysis:* Does this example reveal that one of the frameworks does a much better job of capturing our intuitive sense of what is the right thing to do in this case? Perhaps you might claim that the example reveals a serious weakness in one or both of the frameworks. You might conclude that the example reveals an unexpected similarity in the two frameworks, etc. In other words, what do we learn from the comparison? What does the example reveal? Make your reasoning explicit (in other words, get it on the page).

Should be two paragraphs for this section.

§6 *Conclusion*: Conclude with a brief summary of what you have done and an explicit assessment of what you consider the takeaway message to be. (rough template: “In this essay I have used the example of \_\_\_\_\_ to consider \_\_\_\_\_ . What we have learned is \_\_\_\_\_.”)

Should be one short paragraph for this section.

### Advice

You want to choose your example with care. Ideally, the example should serve to reveal and highlight some aspect of these philosophical frameworks that you believe is important and/or interesting

**Note** Readings and discussions should provide lots of examples of using such scenarios).

Describe your example scenario with the right level of detail to ground your comparison. If the example is underspecified, it’s unlikely to reveal much and will just be dull. But if you weigh the example down with unnecessary detail, you can obscure the aspects of the example relevant to the point you want to make, and it will soak up words you could use more effectively elsewhere.

Section (4) should function to demonstrate that you understand how to apply these frameworks to particular cases. You do this in part by showing that you know the basic concepts of each account and what they mean. Thus, you should be making reference to the concepts you introduced earlier in (2).

Your analysis occurs in section (5). Make your reasoning as clear as possible. Focus on one, or perhaps two, points that you want to make. Don’t produce a laundry list of similarities and differences. The aim of your example is to help you reveal something you take to be significant. Part of the analysis is your assessment of what point or issue is most important for your reader to consider. Smaller or less significant points of comparison you should leave aside.

**Referring to the work of others** Whenever you make reference to an existing work, whether it is something we have read in class or something you find on your own, you must cite it and include the work in your bibliography. You should also cite any specific information you take from lectures.

Internal citations, rather than footnotes, are fine. The format here should be: (Author, page number).

Examples:

(Mill, p. 395)

(Ferrucci Lecture Notes, Oct. 14)

Sample internal citation:

According to Mill “Genius can only breathe freely in an atmosphere of freedom” (Mill, p. 297).

The format for the bibliography should be: Author last name, Author first name or initial. Title of work. Title of volume that contains work (if applicable). Location of Publication: Publisher, year of publication.

Examples:

Shaw, William. “Consequentialism.” *Ethics in Practice: An Anthology*. New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014.

Ferrucci, Anthony. PHIL 101 Lecture, GRC, September, 2017.

## 4.2 Present, Explain, and Evaluate [PEE] an Argument

### 4.2.1 PEE Assignment (with Peer Reviews) works for any topic

#### 4.2.1.1 Background

Teaching philosophical writing in an undergraduate introductory survey course faces numerous challenges. Of import is the difficulty with which to meaningfully engage students to produce a well-researched and polished argumentative paper. This appears to be due to the unrealistic expectation that students would be in a position to assess some philosophical position which they are just beginning to wrap their minds around. In order to increase student investment in their writing, as well as dedicate more time to cultivating students’ critical reasoning skills; we have adopted, significantly modified, and scaffolded the widely used PEE Method where students Present, Explain, and Evaluate an argument.

Rather than having students present a deductively valid argument of someone else’s making (typically something canonical), we require students to construct their own original argument about a philosophical topic of their choosing. As with the traditional PEE assignment, students then explain their argument by (a) defining technical terms, (b) telling a story of significance, and (c) providing rationales. One change we have made to the significance section is to have students construct an original example to connect their argument to something personal or otherwise relevant to a larger audience.

Students then conceive of three potential objections to their own argument as candidates for the evaluation section and as preparation for engaging in a productive and respectful dialogue with someone who opposes them. This one hour minimum conversation aims to identify and move from some specific point of disagreement to one of agreement about their argument.

After receiving several rounds of feedback from structured peer reviews, students then evaluate their argument by charitably defending it against the strongest objection, either from those imagined or from their dialogue. The assignment concludes with a reflection summarizing their experience thinking deeply about: the position they took and why, changes that occurred in their view over the course of the assignment, intellectual roadblocks encountered in entertaining views contrary to their own, the value rigorous thinking has on other beliefs they hold, and how they think they may use these skills in the future.

This paper gives students a unique chance to construct and revise their commitments while experiencing philosophy as a diverse communal practice. Additionally, we have found that students develop the following intellectual virtues throughout the process: (1) confidence: positive and motivating feeling of entering into a conversation (which they know ahead of time will include disagreement) having done their research on the topic and feeling capable of addressing potential objections; (2) humility: willingness to listen to differing viewpoints and take them seriously enough to warrant consideration and response; and (3) tact: being able to effectively and clearly communicate their own position. Additionally, students understand that any attempt to persuade others is a combination of both what we say, as well as how we choose to say it. With the accusations in public discourse that philosophy is becoming increasingly irrelevant, it is these skills which we think may be the most valuable takeaway from an introductory philosophy course.

Guidelines for the each portion of the writing assignment, along with formatting and sample grading rubrics can be found below.

#### 4.2.1.2 Topic

Pick ONE philosophical issue related to the content of this course which you find particularly interesting and relevant to use for each of this quarter's writing assignments.

*Topic #1* This issue should be **factual** (i.e., about the truth/falsity of a claim or consistency of a theory/set of doctrine) and should be evaluated using either empirical evidence or other relevant theoretical claims/doctrine.

*Topic #2* This issue should be **moral** (i.e., about the permissibility/obligation to perform a certain act) and should be evaluated from the assumption of a specific normative ethical framework.

*HAVING TROUBLE THINKING OF A TOPIC?* Consider one of the topics being covered in this course as a general place to start, which you can then narrow down to something more specific. Take a look through later modules for resources and ideas or considering searching your ideas in one of the following online encyclopedias to locate their philosophical equivalents:

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/>



The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

Find TWO reliable sources of information online about the topic; one on EACH side of the issue. ONE saying a specific action is "morally permissible" or that a particular view is "true/consistent", and ONE saying a specific action is "morally impermissible" or that a particular view is "false/inconsistent".

*WHAT MAKES A SOURCE RELIABLE?* Please see the GRC Library Resources page for step-by-step evaluation criteria and citation guides.

**Note** The phrasing you use will depend on the type of issue you pick (factual or moral).

**Checklist** In your submission, be sure to include the following:

1. Identify (a) the issue you have chosen in a neutral way (i.e., not indicating your position for/against).

Should be stated along the following lines:

Factual example: "Whether or not it is the case that God exists".

Moral example: "Whether or not it is morally permissible to eat animals".

The purpose of this phrasing is to ensure that you are framing the issue objectively, and not from any biased presuppositions.

2. Cite your source which is (b) FOR the issue (i.e., asserts the truth/consistency/moral permissibility).

Briefly summarize (i) why you selected the source and (ii) what reasons are given in support of their position for the issue.

3. Cite your source which is (c) AGAINST the issue (i.e., asserts the falsity/inconsistency/moral impermissibility).

Briefly summarize (i) why you selected the source and (ii) what reasons are given in support of their position against the issue.

### Logistics

LENGTH: Approximately one-two paragraphs.

FORMAT: Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins.

SUBMISSION: Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox. *Please note that those who do not select a topic by the deadline will have one assigned to them.*

GRADE: Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

Topic (a)		2 points
SOURCE “FOR” (b) (1.5 points)	SELECTION (i)	0.5 points
	REASONS (ii)	1 point
SOURCE “AGAINST” (c) (1.5 points)	SELECTION (i)	0.5 points
	REASONS (ii)	1 point

#### 4.2.1.3 Present [P]

After selecting your topic for this course’s writing assignment and doing some preliminary research, you will now select which side of the issue your position rests (i.e., for or against).

Example:

Factual topic: “Whether or not it is the case that God exists.”

Position

FOR: “God exists.”

AGAINST: “God does not exist.”

Moral topic: “Whether or not it is morally permissible to eat animals.”

Position

FOR: “It is morally permissible to eat animals.”

AGAINST: “It is morally impermissible to eat animals.”

Once you have determined your position, you will (a) construct a deductively valid argument for your position in (b) standard form.

**Note** Your position will be the conclusion of your argument.

**Argument Forms** Select one (or combine two) of the following argument forms to use to argue for your position:

- Modus Ponens (MP): 
$$\frac{\text{If } P, \text{ then } Q. \\ P.}{\text{Therefore, } Q.}$$
- Modus Tollens (MT): 
$$\frac{\text{If } P, \text{ then } Q. \\ \text{Not } Q.}{\text{Therefore, not } P.}$$
- Disjunctive Syllogism (DS): 
$$\frac{\text{Either } P, \text{ or } Q. \\ \text{Not } P.}{\text{Therefore, } Q.} \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{\text{Either } P, \text{ or } Q. \\ \text{Not } Q.}{\text{Therefore, } P.}$$

4. Hypothetical Syllogism (HS)\*:  $\frac{\text{If } P, \text{ then } Q. \quad \text{If } Q, \text{ then } R.}{\text{Therefore, if } P, \text{ then } R.}$
5. Constructive Dilemma (CD)\*:  $\frac{\text{If } P, \text{ then } R, \text{ and if } Q, \text{ then } S. \quad \text{Either } P, \text{ or } Q.}{\text{Therefore, either } R, \text{ or } S.}$

**\*Note** *HS and CD do not conclude with assertive statements, so these are best combined with one of the first three argument forms.*

### Some Terminology

Conditional statement: “if . . . , then . . .”

Antecedent: “if”

Consequent: “then”

Disjunctive statement: “either . . . , or”

Negation: “it is not the case”

### Logistics

LENGTH: Varies depending on the number of premises in chosen argument form.

FORMAT: Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins. Type up argument in standard form: Numbered premises, each on a separate line. Line separating premises from conclusion. Identified conclusion.

Example:  $\frac{\begin{array}{l} \text{P1. If I follow the instructions, then I will receive} \\ \quad \text{full credit on this assignment.} \\ \text{P2. I followed the instructions.} \\ \text{C. Therefore, I will receive full credit on this} \\ \quad \text{assignment.} \end{array}}{\quad}$

SUBMISSION: Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox.

GRADE: Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

DEDUCTIVELY VALID ARGUMENT (a)	2.5 points
STANDARD FORM (b)	2.5 points

**4.2.1.4 Peer Review #1: P**

After submitting your deductively valid argument (i.e., 'PRESENT'), you will need to complete a review of TWO of your peer's arguments in order to assess their clarity and validity. You will assess each of your peer's arguments according to the rubric below.

**Checklist** In your review, be sure to do the following:

1. Read the questions in each rubric category and answer 'YES' or 'NO'.
2. After indicating 'YES' or 'NO', provide the corresponding feedback for your peer as prescribed by the rubric.

**Peer Review Rubric**

**PRESENT (ia): Is there an argument presented in standard form (i.e., are there numbered premises listed line-by-line followed by an identified conclusion; is there a line separating the premises from the conclusion)?**

**YES** If so, identify any ways in which the author could improve the formatting of the argument.

**NO** If not, explain how the author should improve the organization and/or formatting in order to standardize the argument.

**PRESENT (ib): Is the argument presented deductive (i.e., does it try to prove its conclusion)?**

**YES** If so, identify any ways in which the author could improve the organization/flow of the argument.

**NO** If not, explain how the author could rephrase/reorganize the argument in order to make it deductive.

**PRESENT (ic): Is the argument presented valid (i.e., if the premises are true, must the conclusion also be true)?**

**YES** If so, which argument form(s) does it follow? Identify the form(s) specifically.

**NO** If not, explain how the author could restructure/reorganize the argument in order to make it valid.

**PRESENT (id):** In premise 1, the author should have either a conditional (if..., then...) or disjunctive (either..., or...) statement. Is this statement clear and logical (i.e., does the consequent follow from the antecedent; do the two options provided account for all available options)?

**YES** If so, identify whether it is a conditional or disjunctive statement and explain how you understand it to be logical.

**NO** If not, explain if the statement is missing or in the wrong location; and/or explain how the author could rephrase the statement in order to make it more clear/logical.

**PRESENT (ie):** Are all of the other remaining premises clear and logical (as specified above)? Are all of the premises necessary? Are all of the premises in an order that makes sense?

**YES** If so, identify any ways in which the author could improve the phrasing and/or flow of the argument.

**NO** If not, explain how the author could rephrase/reorganize the premises in order to improve their clarity; and/or identify which premise(s) are unnecessary and why.

**PRESENT (if):** Do you think the author will be able to establish the soundness of this argument (i.e., are the premises reasonably proven true)?

**YES** If so, suggest some potential evidential support for each premise (either from the course content or other reliable sources).

**NO** If not, explain how the author could rephrase the argument in order to make it's premises less questionable/more likely to be proven true.

Be sure to be thorough and constructive in your feedback. We would recommend what is called the compliment sandwich: begin with something strong that the author did well in that section, so that they know what not to change. Then mention the areas that require improvement, by being as specific and thorough as possible. Then ending with something else you liked about that section to end positively.

### Logistics

**LENGTH:** Varies depending on amount of feedback needed. Approximately half of a page.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins. Organized according to rubric sections.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

PEER REVIEW #1	2.5 points
PEER REVIEW #2	2.5 points

**Note** Please note the following with respect to your peer reviews:

If you turn in the original assignment late you will not receive any peer reviews.

How you are peer reviewed will have no bearing on your actual grade for that assignment.

Completing all of your assigned peer reviews will be part of your final assignment grade.

#### 4.2.1.5 Present/Explain [P/E]

After receiving feedback on your deductively valid argument (i.e., ‘PRESENT’), you will now revise your argument accordingly and add the following sections in order to explain that argument.

**Checklist** In your submission, be sure to include the following:

§1 (i) Present your revised deductively valid argument in standard form. (See ‘PRESENT’ assignment above for instructions)

§2 Add three paragraphs (ii) explaining the argument by...

**Paragraph 1: (a) Defining technical terms** A technical term is any term that appears in your argument which a peer not familiar with the topic would need defined. Use definitions from our course content when applicable.

Be sure to write each definition in your own words with an in-text citation as well as a full citation in the works cited at the end of the assignment. Each term should be cited with a reliable source.

**Paragraph 2: (b) Telling the story of its significance** Here, you need to show the reader why they should care about the topic you have chosen.

This is best done by including a specific example which illustrates the consequence(s) of not taking the issue seriously. Be sure to be specific about what those consequence(s) are. Then connect the example back to why everyone should care about this and the consequence(s).

**Paragraph 3: (c) Providing rationales** This section needs to explain why each premise of your argument is constructed as it is, not just structurally, but with specific reference to the content of the argument.

Be sure to clearly tie each rationale to each premise of argument.

Be sure to very clearly and thoroughly explain any conditional or disjunctive statements:

Conditional: Why does the antecedent entail the consequent? Or why does the consequent depend upon the antecedent?

Disjunct: Why are these the only two options to choose from?

For any premise(s) which make assertions, be very specific and thorough with the evidence you have to back it up. Use and cite specific examples or materials from the course content if applicable, or from your research.

After all premises have been explained, be sure to explain why the conclusion follows from the premises (i.e., validity-if the premises are true than it is impossible for the conclusion to be false).

## Works Cited

### Advice

Be cognizant of the formatting. Should include: heading, title, section headers, and each new paragraph should be indented.

Refrain from personal pronouns as the points you are making should stand no matter who is making them.

Include an introductory sentence leading into each paragraph to let the readers know what purpose each serves.

Make sure to keep your definitions, story of significance, and rationales to one paragraph each, saying only what needs to be said as clearly and concisely as possible.

Have a minimum of two primary sources in works cited (probably more when you factor in terms defined and rationales). Be sure that your formatting is consistent with MLA.

See “Note on Plagiarism” at the end of this document.

### Logistics

**LENGTH:** Approximately one and a half-two pages (not including works cited). Please put the word count at the end of the assignment before the works cited.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

	PRESENT (i)	1 point
EXPLAIN (ii) (3 points)	DEFINITIONS (a)	1 point
	SIGNIFICANCE (b)	1 point
	RATIONALES (c)	1 point
	WORKS CITED	1 point

#### 4.2.1.6 Peer Review #2: P/E

After submitting your argument and explanation (i.e., ‘PRESENT/EXPLAIN’), you will need to complete a review of TWO of your peer’s arguments in order to assess their validity, clarity, and organization. You will assess each of your peer’s assignments according to the rubric below.

**Checklist** In your review, be sure to do the following:

1. Read the questions in each rubric category and answer ‘YES’ or ‘NO’.
2. After indicating ‘YES’ or ‘NO’, provide the corresponding feedback for your peer as prescribed by the rubric.

#### Peer Review Rubric

**PRESENT (i): Is there an argument presented in deductively valid form?**

**YES** If so, which argument form(s) does it follow? Identify the form(s) specifically as well as any other ways in which the author could improve the argument’s clarity/phrasing.

**NO** If not, please state what can be done to make it a valid argument. Please be as specific and thorough as possible. If there is no argument presented, please mark ‘missing’ and identify what you think the author may attempting to argue for along with a suggestion as to which argument form they should use.



**EXPLAIN (iia): Are all of the technical terms from the argument defined clearly and correctly? Is each definition cited correctly?**

**YES** If so, please mark ‘complete’ and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the clarity and/or organization of this section. Be sure to identify any and all definitions that require citations/corrections.

**NO** If not, please state which terms require defining, are defined incorrectly, and/or should be redefined more clearly. If there are no terms defined, please mark ‘missing’ and list the terms which should be defined. Be sure to identify any and all definitions that require citations/corrections.

**EXPLAIN (iib): Is there a story told which sufficiently and clearly explains the significance of the topic being discussed? Does the author include an example that strengthens the point they are attempting to make?**

**YES** If so, please mark ‘complete’ and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the clarity, organization, and/or appeal of this section.

**NO** If not, please identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail and/or how they could more directly spark the interest of the reader. If there is no story of significance told, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how the author may spark the interest of the reader.

**EXPLAIN (iic): Are rationales provided for each premise as well as for why the conclusion follows from the premises? Is evidential support given for all premises which make assertions?**

**YES** If so, please mark ‘complete’ and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the clarity, organization, and/or support of this section.

**NO** If not, please identify all lines that require rationale(s) and/or evidential support (suggest potential sources if none are listed). If there are no rationales presented, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how the author may explain each premise and conclusion.

**WORKS CITED: Are sources cited throughout the explanation section as well as at the end of the assignment?**

**YES** If so, please mark ‘complete’ and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the MLA formatting of this section.

**NO** If sources are cited only in-text or at the end, please identify where further citations/support should be provided. If there are no sources cited, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest potential sources for the author to reference.

Be sure to be thorough and constructive in your feedback. I would recommend what is called the compliment sandwich: begin with something strong that the author did well in that section, so that they know what not to change. Then mention the areas that require improvement, by being as specific and thorough as possible. Then ending with something else you liked about that section to end positively.

### Logistics

**LENGTH:** Varies depending on amount of feedback needed. Approximately one page.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins. Organized according to rubric sections.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

PEER REVIEW #1	2.5 points
PEER REVIEW #2	2.5 points

**Note** Please note the following with respect to your peer reviews:

If you turn in the original assignment late you will not receive any peer reviews.

How you are peer reviewed will have no bearing on your actual grade for that assignment.

Completing all of your assigned peer reviews will be part of your final assignment grade.

#### 4.2.1.7 Objections

After receiving feedback on your argument and explanation (i.e., ‘PRESENT/EXPLAIN’), you will now conceive of potential objections which someone could make against your argument. These objections will serve to prepare you for your subsequent interview, as well as give you a starting point for the final evaluation portion of the writing assignment.

**Checklist** In your submission, be sure to include the following:

1. Imagine at least three different ways in which someone might object to the argument you have constructed and explained thus far.

These objections are ways in which someone might criticize one or more parts of your argument.

Objections can be from the perspective of someone who disagrees with your position (i.e., conclusion), or

Objections can be from someone who agrees with your position, but disagrees with the way you go about arguing for it (i.e., your premises or beginning assumptions).

2. For each possible objection, explain exactly how the critique threatens your ability to argue for your position with a minimum of one paragraph.

This will involve specifically identifying which part(s) of your argument are being challenged.

**Sections** Follow the guidelines below for each of the three objections:

**Objection #1: Deny that the argument is sound by showing that one or more of the premises are false through counterexample.** For this strategy, someone is not directly critiquing the conclusion of your argument, but saying that even if the argument is valid, it is not sound since the conclusion rests on one or more untrue premises.

In order to illustrate that a factual premise is untrue, empirical support should be utilized and cited which shows that the claim made by the argument being critiqued is false or mistaken.

In order to illustrate that a moral premise is untrue, a thought experiment should be presented which shows that our moral intuitions differ from those assumed/asserted by the argument being critiqued.

**Objection #2: Argue that the conclusion ought to be rejected by showing that it implies something wholly unacceptable [i.e., *reductio ad absurdum* (RAA)].** For this strategy, someone is not directly critiquing the conclusion of your argument, but saying that if it were true/accepted, we would then have to accept some ridiculous/false implication of that conclusion.

This strategy works by assuming the opposite of what someone intends to show. In the case of an objection, someone intends to show the opposite of what you are arguing for, so they would assume that your conclusion is true.

From that assumption, it is then argued that the acceptance of that assumption leads to some other unacceptable claim.

Thus, since the implication of the assumption is false, we should accept the opposite of the assumption. In this case, the opposite of your conclusion (or at least that your conclusion should be rejected).

Example: Imagine that someone is arguing for Aristotle's Second Law of Motion (i.e., that heavier objects fall faster than lighter objects). You would like to object to this position by showing that it implies something absurd, so you would like to argue that Aristotle's Second Law of Motion is false. Using the *reductio* strategy then, you begin by assuming the opposite of what you want to show:

- P1. Assumption: Aristotle's Second Law of Motion is true.
  - P2. If Aristotle's Second Law of Motion is true, then objects of different mass dropped from the Leaning Tower of Pisa will fall at different rates.
  - P3. Therefore, objects of different mass dropped from the Leaning Tower of Pisa will fall at different rates. (1, 2 MP)
  - P4. However, (C1) was proven false in the famous experiment by Galileo (where it was proven that all objects fall at the same rate, regardless of their mass).
- 
- C. Therefore, Aristotle's Second Law of Motion is false. (3, 4 RAA)

**Objection #3: Argue that the rationales given fail to sufficiently justify the premise(s) or conclusion and why one may doubt that they could be justified.** For this strategy, someone is not directly critiquing the claims made in your argument, but saying that the rationale(s) used to explain one or more premises or the conclusion do not give us good enough reason to accept them.

This strategy works by addressing the third paragraph of your 'EXPLAIN' section, rather than the deductively valid argument in your 'PRESENT' section.

This strategy will look different depending on which rationale(s) are being critiqued:

Conditional statement: It could be argued that the antecedent does not entail the consequent, or that the consequent does not depend upon the antecedent.

Disjunctive statement: It could be argued that the disjunct omits some third option or multiple additional options and so commits the fallacy of presenting a false dilemma.

For any premise(s) which make assertions, be very specific and thorough with the evidence you have to back it up. Use and cite specific examples or materials from the course content if applicable, or from your research.

Additionally, the point should be made that the claim(s) made in your argument could not ever be sufficiently justified, even if the above problems were addressed.

### Works Cited

**Note** Should you choose to consider any additional objection(s), specify which approach is used (either from the three strategies listed above, or from an additional strategy of your choosing).

### Advice

Make it clear in your writing that you are not taking the position represented in each objection; rather you are merely entertaining how someone might respond to the argument you are making.

Even though you are entertaining views that differ from your own, be sure to practice charity here and present the strongest version of each objection (rather than committing the straw person fallacy and presenting a weak or irrational version of the critique that makes it easier to respond to).

If you find it challenging to present the objections you are considering in an objective way, it can be helpful to briefly mention what may motivate someone to make each critique (e.g., perhaps they are operating from different base assumptions or ideological commitments).

There is no need to respond to the objection here, that will come later in the final portion of the writing assignment.

For many philosophical arguments, responses and critiques have already been made in the literature. You are more than welcome to research and use an existing objection as long as you (i) summarize and explain it in your own words, and (ii) give appropriate credit to the source of the objection both with in-text citation and inclusion in your works cited.

See “Note on Plagiarism” at the end of this assignment.

### Logistics

**LENGTH:** Approximately one and a half-two pages (not including works cited). Please put the word count at the end of the assignment before the works cited.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins. Along with the three paragraphs of possible objections, be sure to include your deductively valid argument in standard form to provide context for your peer reviewers.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

Present	1 point
OBJECTION #1	1 point
OBJECTION #2	1 point
OBJECTION #3	1 point
Works Cited	1 point

#### 4.2.1.8 Peer Review #3: Obj.

After submitting your imagined OBJECTIONS, you will need to complete a review of TWO of your peer's objections in order to assess their focus, strength, and charity. You will assess each of your peer's assignments according to the rubric below.

**Checklist** In your review, be sure to do the following:

1. Read the questions in each rubric category and answer 'YES' or 'NO'.
2. After indicating 'YES' or 'NO', provide the corresponding feedback for your peer as prescribed by the rubric.

#### Peer Review Rubric

**OBJECTION #1** Is an objection presented which specifically challenges the soundness of the author's argument? Is a counterexample provided to support the objection? Is it explained how the objection threatens the argument and what specific part(s) of the argument are threatened?

**YES** If so, identify the line(s) of the argument being challenged, explain in your own words how you understand the objection to threaten the argument, how the counterexample supports this objection, and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength of the objection, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this section.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly express their objection in a way that corresponds to this strategy, how they could improve their counterexample to better support the objection, and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be an objection to the soundness of the author's argument, there

is no counterexample provided, or there is no objection presented at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how someone might object to the soundness of the author’s argument.

**OBJECTION #2** Is an objection presented which specifically shows that the author’s argument implies something absurd/false? Is it explained how the conclusion leads to this absurdity? Is it explained how the objection threatens the argument by establishing the opposite of the conclusion?

**YES** If so, identify the absurd/false implication of the argument, explain in your own words how you understand the objection to threaten the argument, and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength of the objection, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this section.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly express their objection in a way that corresponds to this strategy, how they could improve their explanation of how the conclusion implies an absurdity, and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be a reductio of the author’s argument, there is no explanation of the implied absurdity given, or there is no objection presented at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how someone might object to the soundness of the author’s argument.

**OBJECTION #3** Is an objection presented which specifically challenges one or more of the rationales used by the author to justify their argument? Is it explained how each rationale being challenged is problematic? Is it explained how each rationale being challenged could never be sufficiently justified?

**YES** If so, identify the rationale(s) being challenged, explain in your own words how you understand the objection to threaten the argument, and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength of the objection, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this section.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly express their objection in a way that corresponds to this strategy, how they could improve their explanation of the criticism, and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be an objection to the justification of the author’s argument, there is no explanation of the criticism given, or there is no objection presented at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how someone might object to the justification of the author’s argument.

**TONE & WORKS CITED** Does the author make it clear that each objection is not their own position, but what someone might say in response to their argument? Does the author present each objection charitably and mention what might motivate someone to make each critique? If the author used any existing objections in the literature, are sources cited correctly both in-text and at the end of the assignment?

**YES** If so, please identify the motivation behind each objection, make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the charity/strength of each objection, and, if applicable, make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the MLA formatting of their citations.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could make it clearer to the reader that these are possible objection, and identify any specific points where they could improve the charity of their explanation of each objection. If the author does not mention that these possible objection (rather than their own views), or does not mention what might motivate someone to make each critique, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how they could make these points more clearly. If sources are cited only in-text or at the end, please identify where further citations/support should be provided. If there are no sources cited when there should be, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest potential sources for the author to reference.

Be sure to be thorough and constructive in your feedback. I would recommend what is called the compliment sandwich: begin with something strong that the author did well in that section, so that they know what not to change. Then mention the areas that require improvement, by being as specific and thorough as possible. Then ending with something else you liked about that section to end positively.

### Logistics

**LENGTH:** Varies depending on amount of feedback needed. Approximately one page.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins. Organized according to rubric sections.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

PEER REVIEW #1	2.5 points
PEER REVIEW #2	2.5 points



**Note** Please note the following with respect to your peer reviews:

If you turn in the original assignment late you will not receive any peer reviews.

How you are peer reviewed will have no bearing on your actual grade for that assignment.

Completing all of your assigned peer reviews will be part of your final assignment grade.

#### 4.2.1.9 Interview

Since you have begun imagining objections to your own argument, it is the time to practice engaging in constructive dialogue with those who may disagree with you. You will now select one person to arrange an interview with following the guidelines below and write up a report documenting the conversation. This report will describe the result of a **one hour** conversation you arrange with a friend or acquaintance.

**Checklist** Be sure to complete the following:

1. Talk to someone with whom you **disagree** about the topic you have chosen for your writing assignment.

This will help you practice dialoguing with those who hold views different from your own in a respectful and productive manner.

2. Your first aim in that conversation is to identify some specific sentence(s) about which you *disagree*.

This could be a premise or conclusion from your argument, an assumption you have made underlying your argument, or some implication of your position.

This could be one of the objections you anticipated in your previous assignment, or some new objection you have not yet identified.

3. Your second aim is to then try to find your deepest point(s) of *agreement* about that topic.

This can help you to potentially bring someone around to your side, and

It can also help you find a launching point for how to respond to an objection and defend your original position.

In your report, be sure to include the following:

**Details**

The date, time, and location of your conversation, the specific sentence(s) about which you (a) disagreed, and the resulting point(s) of (b) agreement.

**Summary**

To your best ability, (c) summarize how you led the conversation from (a) to (b) through intentional questioning. In order to best recall the conversation, you should ask your conversational partner if they are comfortable with you recording the conversation, either with audio or notes. In this summary, be sure to include:

- (i) some of the specific questions that you used, as well as
- (ii) how your conversational partner responded.

**Documentation**

Also, be sure to confirm the participation of your conversational partner by including the following (d) documentation:

- (i) their signature on your interview notes or final report, and
- (ii) a photo of the two of you together (to be included in the final report).

**Advice**

Disambiguation (“Tell me more about how you understand this word. . .”).

Discussing other views in the area that you might agree or disagree about (“Who else do you think gets this topic right/wrong?”).

Test out the implications of the views (“How would your view apply to an unusual case, such as. . .”).

*A trick to keep things running smoothly:* Repeat your conversational partner’s view back to them, making them feel heard (e.g., “Let me make sure I’m understanding you right. Is your view that. . .?”)

**Logistics**

**LENGTH:** Approximately one and a half-two pages (not including visual/audio documentation).

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox. *Please note that without documentation, no credit will be given.*

**GRADE:** Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

DISAGREEMENT (a)		1 point
AGREEMENT (b)		1 point
SUMMARY (c) (2 points)	QUESTIONS (i)	1 point
	RESPONSES (ii)	1 point
DOCUMENTATION (d) (1 point)	SIGNATURE (i)	0.5 points
	PHOTO (ii)	0.5 points

#### 4.2.1.10 Present/Explain/Evaluate [PEE]: Rough Draft

After receiving feedback on your argument, explanation (i.e., ‘PRESENT/EXPLAIN’), and imagined objections, and having conducted your interview, you will now revise your assignment accordingly and add the following sections in order to evaluate that argument.

**Checklist** In your submission, be sure to include the following:

§1 (i) Present your revised deductively valid argument in standard form. (See ‘PRESENT’ assignment above for instructions)

§2 (ii) Explain your revised...

- Paragraph 1: (a) Definitions of terms,
- Paragraph 2: (b) Story of significance, and
- Paragraph 3: (c) Rationales

(See ‘PRESENT/EXPLAIN’ assignment above for instructions)

§3 Add two paragraphs (iii) evaluating the argument:

**Paragraph 4: (a) Possible Objection** After receiving feedback on your imagined objections and having had the opportunity to discuss your topic with someone who disagreed with you, select ONE possible objection.

This objection may be a revised version of one you imagined in the OBJECTIONS assignment,

It may be a version of a critique brought up in your INTERVIEW assignment, or

It could be a combination of both.

When explaining the objection, be sure to:

Clearly identify which line(s) of the argument are being challenged, and

Explain exactly how the critique threatens your ability to argue for your position.

As in the OBJECTIONS assignment, be sure to practice charity here and avoid committing the straw person fallacy.

Though this should be the strongest version of the objection, be sure that it is one you feel confident in responding to so as not to undermine your project.

If you find it challenging to present the objection you have chosen in an objective way, it can be helpful to briefly mention what may motivate someone to make such a response (e.g., perhaps they are operating from different base assumptions or ideological commitments).

**Paragraph 5: (b) Response to Objection** Having now selected a single objection to entertain, you will now respond to that objection in a way that defends your argument.

Note that this response is not simply a repetition of your original argument or explanation.

This is a *new* defense that specifically addresses any and all concerns raised in the objection.

Since this section concludes the writing assignment, do not introduce any new questions or problems which might undermine the strength of your argument.

## Works Cited

### Advice

Be cognizant of the formatting. Should include: heading, title, section headers, and each new paragraph should be indented.

Refrain from personal pronouns as the points you are making should stand no matter who is making them.

Include an introductory sentence leading into each paragraph to let the readers know what purpose each serves.

Make sure to keep your objection and response to one paragraph each, saying only what needs to be said as clearly and concisely as possible.

Have a minimum of two primary sources in works cited (probably more when you factor in terms defined and rationales). Be sure that your formatting is consistent with MLA.

See “Note on Plagiarism” at the end of this document.

**Logistics**

**LENGTH:** Approximately three and a half-four pages (not including works cited). Please put the word count at the end of the assignment before the works cited.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropdown.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

PRESENT (i)		0.5 points
EXPLAIN (ii) (2 points)	DEFINITIONS (a)	0.5 points
	SIGNIFICANCE (b)	0.75 points
	RATIONALES (c)	0.75 points
EVALUATE (iii) (2 points)	OBJECTION (a)	1 point
	RESPONSE (b)	1 point
WORKS CITED		0.5 points

**4.2.1.11 Peer Review #4: PEE Rough Draft**

After submitting your argument, explanation, and evaluation rough draft (i.e., 'PRESENT/ EXPLAIN/EVALUATE'), you will need to complete a review of TWO of your peer's arguments in order to assess their validity, clarity, and organization. You will assess each of your peer's assignments according to the rubric below.

**Checklist** In your review, be sure to do the following:

1. Read the questions in each rubric category and answer 'YES' or 'NO'.
2. After indicating 'YES' or 'NO', provide the corresponding feedback for your peer as prescribed by the rubric.

**Peer Review Rubric**

**PRESENT (i): Is there an argument presented in deductively valid form?**

**YES** If so, which argument form(s) does it follow? Identify the form(s) specifically as well as any other ways in which the author could improve the argument's clarity/phrasing.

**NO** If not, please state what can be done to make it a valid argument. Please be as specific and thorough as possible. If there is

no argument presented, please mark ‘missing’ and identify what you think the author may attempt to argue for along with a suggestion as to which argument form they should use.

**EXPLAIN (iia): Are all of the technical terms from the argument defined clearly and correctly? Is each definition cited correctly?**

**YES** If so, please mark ‘complete’ and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the clarity and/or organization of this section. Be sure to identify any and all definitions that require citations/corrections.

**NO** If not, please state which terms require defining, are defined incorrectly, and/or should be redefined more clearly. If there are no terms defined, please mark ‘missing’ and list the terms which should be defined. Be sure to identify any and all definitions that require citations/corrections.

**EXPLAIN (iib): Is there a story told which sufficiently and clearly explains the significance of the topic being discussed? Does the author include an example that strengthens the point they are attempting to make?**

**YES** If so, please mark ‘complete’ and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the clarity, organization, and/or appeal of this section.

**NO** If not, please identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail and/or how they could more directly spark the interest of the reader. If there is no story of significance told, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how the author may spark the interest of the reader.

**EXPLAIN (iic): Are rationales provided for each premise as well as for why the conclusion follows from the premises? Is evidential support given for all premises which make assertions?**

**YES** If so, please mark ‘complete’ and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the clarity, organization, and/or support of this section.

**NO** If not, please identify all lines that require rationale(s) and/or evidential support (suggest potential sources if none are listed). If there are no rationales presented, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how the author may explain each premise and conclusion.

**EVALUATE (iiia):** Is an objection presented which corresponds to one of the strategies provided in the ‘OBJECTIONS’ assignment? Is the objection sufficiently and clearly explained? Is it explained how the objection threatens the argument and what specific part(s) of the argument are threatened?

**YES** If so, which strategy was chosen and which part(s) of the argument are being threatened? Identify the strategy and lines/rationales specifically, and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength of the objection, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this section.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly express their objection in a way that corresponds to one of the strategies provided and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be an objection, or there is no objection presented at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how someone might object to the author’s argument.

**EVALUATE (iiib):** Is a clear and sufficient response to the previous objection provided? Is this response new (rather than a repetition of the original argument)? Does the response end the paper on a strong note in the author’s favor (rather than introducing things that may undermine the paper’s strength)?

**YES** If so, explain in your own words how you understand the response to be addressing each concern raised by the objection and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength of the response, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this section.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could respond more clearly, better address each concern raised by the objection, rephrase their response in a newer way, and/or end on a stronger note. If this section does not clearly appear to be a response to the objection, merely repeats the original argument, or there is no response provided at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how the author could respond to the objection in an original way, and end on a strong note.

**WORKS CITED:** Are sources cited throughout the explanation section as well as at the end of the assignment?

**YES** If so, please mark ‘complete’ and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the MLA formatting of this section.

**NO** If sources are cited only in-text or at the end, please identify where further citations/support should be provided. If there are no

sources cited, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest potential sources for the author to reference.

Be sure to be thorough and constructive in your feedback. I would recommend what is called the compliment sandwich: begin with something strong that the author did well in that section, so that they know what not to change. Then mention the areas that require improvement, by being as specific and thorough as possible. Then ending with something else you liked about that section to end positively.

### Logistics

**LENGTH:** Varies depending on amount of feedback needed. Approximately one-one and a half pages.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins. Organized according to rubric sections.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

PEER REVIEW #1	2.5 points
PEER REVIEW #2	2.5 points

**Note** Please note the following with respect to your peer reviews:

If you turn in the original assignment late you will not receive any peer reviews.

How you are peer reviewed will have no bearing on your actual grade for that assignment.

Completing all of your assigned peer reviews will be part of your final assignment grade.

#### 4.2.1.12 PEE Final Draft and Reflection

After receiving feedback on your argument, explanation, and evaluation rough draft (i.e., ‘PRESENT/EXPLAIN/EVALUATE’), you will now revise your entire assignment accordingly and add the following sections in order to reflect on the work you have done throughout the term.

**Checklist** In your submission, be sure to include the following:

§1 (i) Present your revised deductively valid argument in standard form. (See ‘PRESENT’ assignment above for instructions)



§2 (ii) Explain your revised...

- Paragraph 1: (a) Definitions of terms,
- Paragraph 2: (b) Story of significance, and
- Paragraph 3: (c) Rationales

(See 'PRESENT/EXPLAIN' assignment above for instructions)

§3 (iii) Evaluate your revised...

- Paragraph 4: (a) Possible Objection
- Paragraph 5: (b) Response to Objection

(See 'PRESENT/EXPLAIN/EVALUATE' assignment above for instructions)

### Works Cited

**(iv) Reflection** Add a minimum of ONE page reflecting on your project by summarizing your experience thinking deeply about the position you hold including significant details about:

The (a) content of the position you took, why you chose it, and what it means to you.

How, if at all, any part(s) of your position have (b) changed throughout the project.

*If some part(s) of your position did change, why do you think that is?*

*If nothing about your position changed, why do you think that is and is there anything that could have changed your view?*

How you (c) feel about the development of your argument throughout the project. Be sure to include. . .

*How you felt about having to construct rationales to justify your position.*

*Any intellectual roadblocks you encountered in presenting and/or explaining your argument.*

*How you felt about entertaining possible objections to your position.*

*How you felt before, during, and after your conversation with someone who disagreed with you.*

*Any points of intellectual discomfort you faced in evaluating your argument.*

The (d) value you think this process of rigorous thinking has on other beliefs you may hold and how you think you may use it (or something similar) in the future.

**Advice**

Be cognizant of the formatting. Should include: heading, title, section headers, and each new paragraph should be indented.

Include an introductory sentence leading into each paragraph to let the readers know what purpose each serves.

See “Note on Plagiarism” at the end of this document.

**Logistics**

**LENGTH:** Approximately three and a half-four pages of PEE (not including works cited) and one-two pages for Reflection. Please put the word count at the end of the assignment before the works cited.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 75 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

PRESENT (i)		10 points
EXPLAIN (ii) (25 points)	DEFINITIONS (a)	7.5 points
	SIGNIFICANCE (b)	7.5 points
	RATIONALES (c)	10 points
EVALUATE (iii) (25 points)	OBJECTION (a)	12.5 points
	RESPONSE (b)	12.5 points
WORKS CITED		5 points
REFLECTION (iv) (10 points)	CONTENT (a)	2.5 points
	CHANGE (b)	2.5 points
	DEVELOPMENT (c)	2.5 points
	VALUE (d)	2.5 points

**4.2.1.13 Note on Plagiarism**

Plagiarism detection software will be used for this assignment. It should be clear without explicit statement that plagiarism of any form is unacceptable and will result in a zero on the assignment. A second infraction will result in a 0.0 for the course.

Referring to the work of others: Whenever you make reference to an existing work, whether it is something we have read in class or something you find on your own, you must cite it with in-text citation and include the work in your works cited.

Internal citations, rather than footnotes, should be used throughout. The format here should be: (Author, page number).

Examples:

... (Russell, p. 395)

... (Ferreira Lecture Notes, Oct. 14)

The format for works cited should be: Author last name, Author first name or initial. "Title of work". *Title of volume that contains work (if applicable)*. Edition (if applicable). Location of Publication: Publisher, year of publication. Page range of work.

Examples:

Ryle, Gilbert. "The Ghost in the Machine." *Exploring Philosophy: An Introductory Anthology*. 6th edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. pp. 147-151.

Ferreira, Rebeka. PHIL 111 Lecture, GRC, June, 2016.

Please refrain from directly quoting others in your work. While it is a useful skill, these assignments are so brief; I need to be able to make sure that YOU understand the material. This can only be done by writing the responses in your own words.

EXCEPTION: Defining terms – if you define any terminology and find it difficult to rephrase, be sure to quote and cite source using the appropriate format (explained above). Anytime a quote is necessary, it should not be longer than a single sentence.

## Chapter 5

# Interactive Assignments

### 5.1 Normative Ethics and Taking Action

#### 5.1.1 Environmentalism Activism Project

##### 5.1.1.1 Materials

Library Instruction session for how to research and cite reliable sources (corresponds to parts of Topic Selection Assignment)

Funds to print information pamphlets (preferably in color)

**Recommended:** Instructor is encouraged to put this financial burden on the department rather than the students.

**Alternative:** If printing pamphlets is not feasible, provide/require materials to make display boards or posters with the relevant information and color to attract passersby during activism.

##### 5.1.1.2 Background

After teaching environmental ethics for several years, it has become obvious how common it is to leave class, as both a student and an instructor, in a state of existential crisis given how intractable environmental problems seem to be. We decided to combat this problem by creating an assignment which would not only get students more actively engaged with the course material, but also empower them to affect change.

For this assignment, groups of two students choose one contemporary moral issue related to the environment and then build a project over the course of the term which culminates in some sort of active social or political participation. More specifically, students (1) choose a moral issue related to the environment and research it thoroughly, developing (2) an annotated bibliography of at least six sources (three on either side of the issue) with the assistance of a library instruction session. Students then (3) present on their issue to the class in order

to better their understanding of the role of communication and persuasion in social movements. During each presentation, all other students take notes and think of at least one question to ask the presenters, to help them prepare for their social activism.

After considering the questions of others, students reorganize their ideas and design (4) an informational pamphlet/brochure that summarizes their thoughts and information about the issue. Additionally, students research, select, and summarize a possible solution (in the form of some action passersby can partake in) which they believe may help to effectively end/lessen the severity of the moral issue they are advocating for. This pamphlet is later distributed to a public audience who may be entirely unfamiliar with the issue.

Finally, students (5) perform their activism in a public setting using appropriate terminology and compelling argumentation in order to communicate their position effectively to an audience that may include individuals who disagree with them. In order to sufficiently experience this activism, students must advocate for their position in a public space utilizing and distributing their informational pamphlets for a minimum of three hours, visually documenting their experience with photographs or video. The assignment concludes with a written summary of their project and reflection on their ability to use what they learned from this experience in the future.

This assignment has evolved over numerous iterations to provide students with more prescriptive support throughout the research and writing process. Various media and class activities have also been incorporated to illustrate effective argumentative and rhetorical strategies for engaging in constructive persuasive dialogue. Throughout the terms since this assignment has been implemented, the passion and engagement for finding and implementing creative solutions exhibited by students has deeply improved their retention and success in the course. Additionally, it has revitalized our optimism and enthusiasm for supporting and imparting the skill sets needed by the next generation to deal responsibly with our most pressing moral concerns.

#### 5.1.1.3 Recommended Reading List<sup>1</sup>

Paul Watson, *Tora! Tora! Tora!*

Kate Rawles, *The Missing Shade of Green*

J. Baird Callicott, *Environmental Philosophy Is Environmental Activism: The Most Radical and Effective Kind*

Andrew Light, *Taking Environmental Ethics Public*

#### 5.1.1.4 Recommended Media:

*Speciesism: The Movie* (2013)

Video: Normative vs. Descriptive Claims

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<sup>1</sup>Chapter 16. Schmidtz, David and Elizabeth Willott. *Environmental Ethics: What Really Matters, What Really Works*. 3rd ed. (Oxford, 2018).

Video: Deontology  
Video: Deontology Pt. 2  
Video: Divine Command Theory  
Video: Divine Command Theory Pt. 2  
Video: Consequentialism  
Video: Utilitarianism  
Video: Utilitarianism Pt. 2  
Video: Utilitarianism Pt. 3  
Video: Virtue Ethics

#### 5.1.1.5 Topic

Each student (in a group of no more than 2) will pick ONE philosophical issue related to the content of this course which you find particularly interesting and relevant to use for this quarter's writing assignments. This issue should be moral, i.e., about the permissibility/obligation to perform a certain act related to the environment.

*HAVING TROUBLE THINKING OF A TOPIC?* Consider one of the topics being covered in this course as a general place to start, which you can then narrow down to something more specific. Take a look through later modules for resources and ideas or considering searching your ideas in one of the following online encyclopedias to locate their philosophical equivalents:

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/>

The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

You may also consider one of the topics below:

- *Contamination of Drinking Water:* Contamination of fresh water used for household needs, including pollution of oceans, rivers, lakes, and reservoirs, ranks top on the list of environmental concerns for many Americans. More than half of respondents stated they worry about the safety of their drinking water a great deal.
- *Water Pollution:* General worry over water pollution and associated environmental issues greatly concerns half of all Americans who participated in the 2008 poll. Related issues include acid rain, ocean dumping, urban runoff, oil spills, ocean acidification, and wastewater.
- *Soil Contamination:* Soil erosion, soil conservation, soil salination, and soil contamination by waste, pesticides, and lead worries 50 percent of Americans.
- *Wildlife Conservation:* More than 40 percent of Americans expressed concern about wildlife conservation and associated environmental issues, such

as endangered species, animal and plant extinction, coral bleaching, introduction of invasive species, poaching, and loss of natural animal habitats resulting in relocation and a break in the food chain.

- *Air Pollution*: Concerns over air pollution have remained steady over the last decade, with more than 40 percent of Americans worried about indoor and outdoor air quality, carbon emissions, tropospheric ozone, particulate matter, sulfur oxides, volatile organic compounds, radon, refrigerants, and methane emissions.
- *Animals*: Could involve concerns over eating animals, how they are raised/farmed (factory farming), use in entertainment, animal labor, etc.
- *Biological pollutants*, including bacteria, viruses, molds, mildew, dander, dust, mites, pollen, ventilation and infection.
- *Carbon footprint* and the responsibility of individuals to reduce their effect on the environment, including the use of renewable energy sources (solar power, geothermal heat pumps), recycling, and sustainable living.
- *Climate change* and issues related to global warming, such as the greenhouse effect, global dimming, and the gradual rise in sea level.
- *Consumerism* and overconsumption and their effect on the planet.
- *Dams* and the impact of dams on the environment.
- *Deforestation*, logging, clear-cutting, destruction of wildlife habitats, and greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.
- *Ecosystem destruction* and associated environmental concerns, such as aquaculture, estuaries, shellfish protection, landscaping, wetlands, and ecological restoration.
- *Energy conservation* issues, including renewable energy for home and business, energy efficiency, and fossil fuel depletion.
- *Fishing* and its effect on marine ecosystems, blast fishing, cyanide fishing, bottom trawling, whaling, and overfishing.
- *Food safety* concerns and the effects of hormones, antibiotics, preservatives, toxic contamination, and lack of quality control on health.
- *Genetic engineering*, including concerns about genetically modified foods and genetic pollution.
- *Intensive farming*, irrigation, overgrazing, monoculture, methane emissions, and the damaging environmental effects of deforestation for farming and cattle.

- *Land degradation* and related problems, such as desertification and soil and land pollution.
- *Land use*, urban sprawl, lack of free space, and habitat destruction and fragmentation.
- *Mining* and its role in global warming, acid mine drainage, and soil and air pollution resulting from toxic emissions and heavy metals.
- *Nanotechnology* and the future effects of nanopollution and nanotoxicology.
- *Nuclear issues*, including the effects of nuclear fallout, nuclear meltdown, radioactive waste, and the population's reliance on nuclear power.
- *Other pollution* issues, such as light pollution and noise pollution, and their effects on human health and behavior.
- *Overpopulation* concerns, such as continued building and burial.
- *Ozone depletion* and damage to the Earth's ozone layer caused by CFC.
- *Resource depletion*, the need for newer, cleaner energy sources, and exploitation of natural resources.
- *Sustainable communities* and issues such as reducing reliance on fossil fuels, supporting local farmers and merchants, encouraging green practices and building, consideration of native wildlife, and adoption of mass transportation and cleaner methods of commuting.
- *Toxins*, including chlorofluorocarbons, heavy metals, pesticides, herbicides, toxic waste, PCB, DDT, bioaccumulation, endocrine disruptors, asbestos, and poorly implemented hazardous waste management.
- *Waste* and associated environmental issues, such as litter, landfills, recycling, incineration, marine debris, E-waste, and contamination of water and soil caused by improper disposal and leaching toxins.

After a topic has been selected, student groups will identify the main ethical issue they wish to focus on for their project.

**Checklist** In your submission, be sure to (a) identify the issue you have chosen in a neutral way (i.e., not indicating your position for/against).

Should be stated along the following lines: "Whether or not it is morally permissible to \_\_\_\_\_."

Moral example: "Whether or not it is morally permissible to eat animals."



The purpose of this phrasing is to ensure that you are framing the issue objectively, and not from any biased presuppositions.

Write down your topic and bring it with you to class on the day of our library instruction session.

Complete the accompanying (b) handouts based on the instructions given during our library instruction session:

LINKS: [To be provided by instructor](#)

### Logistics

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your completed handouts to the relevant assignment dropbox. Although this is a group project, each student should individually submit this assignment. Submissions can be identical. *Please note that those who do not select a topic by the deadline will have one assigned to them.*

**GRADE:** Worth up to 10 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

TOPIC SELECTION (a)	2 points
LIBRARY INSTRUCTION HANDOUTS (b)	8 points

#### 5.1.1.6 Annotated Bibliography

Having begun to think about and research your topic, you will now continue that research on your own and construct an annotated bibliography.

**Checklist** Find at least 6 reliable sources which are relevant to/discuss the various positions taken in relation to the issue you have chosen. In your assignment, be sure to:

State your (a) issue in the phrasing specified above.

Find and list at least (b) three sources that argue FOR the issue and at least (c) three sources that argue AGAINST the issue.

In a minimum of one full paragraph [7 complete sentences] under each source (b-c), state the following in your (i) annotation:

*Which side of the issue is taken (in your own words),*

*What reasons are given for why that position is taken (a brief summation in your own words), and*

*Why you find it a reliable source.*

**Note** Sources may contain information on multiple positions (both for and against the issue). No matter how many positions there may be on this issue present in each source, this assignment requires six SEPARATE sources.

**Hint** Those who argue the action(s) is right are FOR it, and those who argue it is wrong are AGAINST it.

**Advice** In order to ensure that your sources are reliable, a suggested starting point is: <http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/ovic/home?u=aubu98092&p=OVIC>

Criteria for a reliable source – should satisfy the CRAAP Test:

**Currency:** The information is from the last 5 years

**Relevance:** The information is important to your needs

**Authority:** The source of the information is qualified to state/provide such info

**Accuracy:** The content is reliable, truthful, and accurate – unbiased, supported by evidence, and peer reviewed

**Purpose:** The point of view does not interfere with the accuracy of the content

Sources should be listed in MLA format:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

### Logistics

**LENGTH:** Approximately two-three pages.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins.

**EXAMPLE:** <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/03/>

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox. Although this is a group project, each student should individually submit this assignment. Submissions *cannot* be identical.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 40 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

ISSUE (a)		1 point
SOURCES FOR (b)	SOURCE #1 (1.5 points) (i) ANNOTATION (5 points)	6.5 points
	SOURCE #2 (1.5 points) (i) ANNOTATION (5 points)	6.5 points
	SOURCE #3 (1.5 points) (i) ANNOTATION (5 points)	6.5 points
SOURCES AGAINST (c)	SOURCE #4 (1.5 points) (i) ANNOTATION (5 points)	6.5 points
	SOURCE #5 (1.5 points) (i) ANNOTATION (5 points)	6.5 points
	SOURCE #6 (1.5 points) (i) ANNOTATION (5 points)	6.5 points

#### 5.1.1.7 Issue Presentation

After selecting your topic for this course’s writing assignment and doing some preliminary research, you will now select which side of the issue your position rests (i.e., for or against).

Example:

Moral topic: “Whether or not it is morally permissible to eat animals.”

Position

FOR: “It is morally permissible to eat animals.”

AGAINST: “It is morally impermissible to eat animals.”

Once you have determined your position, you will design a presentation (splitting up the work evenly between group members) to be given to the class according to the signup sheet.

**Note** Have students sign up for presentation time slots (~30-35 mins each, including time for Q&A) as early in the term as possible, providing them with ample time to prepare their presentations.

**Checklist** Presentations should do all of the following in order to receive full credit:

(a) Summarize and explain the moral issue you have chosen by...

#### (i) Defining technical terms

A technical term is any term that appears in your argument which a peer not familiar with the topic would need defined. Use definitions from our course content when applicable.

Be sure to write each definition in your own words with an in-text citation as well as a full citation in the works cited at the end of the assignment. Each term should be cited with a reliable source.

**(ii) Telling the story of its significance**

Here, you need to show the reader why they should care about the topic you have chosen.

This is best done by including a specific example which illustrates the consequence(s) of not taking the issue seriously. Be sure to be specific about what those consequence(s) are. Then connect the example back to why everyone should care about this and the consequence(s).

**(iii) Identifying all relevant positions**

All of the groups/individuals cited who take various positions on the issue (both for and against).

Example: **Zoologists (group) and patrons (individuals) may claim that zoos are necessary for educating the public about certain species of animals (FOR).**

**Note** Although these are different groups, they are taking the same position. Animal rights advocates (group) may claim that little to no research actually occur in most zoos and/or members the public do not actually go to zoos for educational purposes (AGAINST).

These groups/individuals will be stakeholders in the issue in different ways, so be sure to identify their primary motivations (e.g., economic, political, social, etc.)

**(b)** Provide an overview of the arguments on both sides of the issue by...

**(i)-(ii) Identifying at least FIVE REASONS that *each* position gives in defense of their view and paraphrasing their arguments in your own words.**

Be sure to include any statistical support that each side gives as well as any references to ethical principles.

**Hint** Those who think x is right claim that it is right because of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Those who think that x is wrong claim that it is wrong because of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

**Note** Even if you use multiple sources for one position, organize and combine the points into one cohesive view.

- (c) After a thorough summary of the issue, the presenter(s) should state and argue for the position they AGREE WITH by...

(i) **Constructing a DEDUCTIVELY VALID argument for their position.**

**Hint** Your position will be the conclusion of your argument.

**Argument Forms** Select one (or combine two) of the following argument forms to use to argue for your position:

1. Modus Ponens (MP): 
$$\frac{\text{If P, then Q.} \\ \text{P.}}{\text{Therefore, Q.}}$$
2. Modus Tollens (MT): 
$$\frac{\text{If P, then Q.} \\ \text{Not Q.}}{\text{Therefore, not P.}}$$
3. Disjunctive Syllogism (DS): 
$$\frac{\text{Either P, or Q.} \\ \text{Not P.}}{\text{Therefore, Q.}} \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{\text{Either P, or Q.} \\ \text{Not Q.}}{\text{Therefore, P.}}$$
4. Hypothetical Syllogism (HS)\*: 
$$\frac{\text{If P, then Q.} \\ \text{If Q, then R.}}{\text{Therefore, if P, then R.}}$$
5. Constructive Dilemma (CD)\*: 
$$\frac{\text{If P, then R, and if Q, then S.} \\ \text{Either P, or Q.}}{\text{Therefore, either R, or S.}}$$

**\*Note** *HS and CD do not conclude with assertive statements, so these are best combined with one of the first three argument forms.*

### Some Terminology

Conditional statement: “if... , then...”

Antecedent: “if”

Consequent: “then”

Disjunctive statement: “either... , or”

Negation: “it is not the case”

**(ii) Providing rationales for each line of the argument.**

This section needs to explain why each premise of your argument is constructed as it is, not just structurally, but with specific reference to the content of the argument.

Be sure to clearly tie each rationale to each premise of argument.

Be sure to very clearly and thoroughly explain any conditional or disjunctive statements:

Conditional: Why does the antecedent entail the consequent? Or why does the consequent depend upon the antecedent?

Disjunct: Why are these the only two options to choose from?

For any premise(s) which make assertions, be very specific and thorough with the evidence you have to back it up. Use and cite specific examples or materials from the course content if applicable, or from your research.

After all premises have been explained, be sure to explain why the conclusion follows from the premises (i.e., validity-if the premises are true than it is impossible for the conclusion to be false).

- (d)** Works Cited which gives appropriate credit to both (i) all sources used and (ii) which parts of the presentation were created by which student group member.

Sources should be in MLA format:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

**Note** Sources need not be identical to those listed in the annotated bibliography if you have found others that are preferable.

**Advice**

Make clear distinctions between each section of presentation with intuitive headers and breaks between slides.

Keep writing on each slide to a manageable level noting that others will be trying to take notes while presenters speak.

Make sure to include both in-text citations and a works cited section.

Be creative and original, try to grasp and maintain the audience's attention (e.g., using images and/or short videos) as these tactics will later be useful for your activism.

See "Note on Plagiarism" at the end of this assignment.

**Logistics**

**LENGTH:** Varies depending on the number of slides used. A minimum of one slide should be created for each item above that is lettered and numbered.

**FORMAT:** Presentations can be made using any software which has slideshow capabilities. Google Slides, Prezi, or Microsoft PowerPoint are recommended. Students may also opt to provide handouts (which need to be provided to the instructor ahead of time if assistance is needed making copies) for any information which may not fit within the presentation.

*For part (c), be sure to type up your argument in standard form:*

Numbered premises, each on a separate line. Line separating premises from conclusion. Identified conclusion.

P1. If I follow the instructions, then I will receive full credit on this assignment.

Example: P2. I followed the instructions.

C. Therefore, I will receive full credit on this assignment.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox prior to scheduled presentation. Although this is a group project, each student should individually submit this assignment. Submissions can be identical.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 100 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

ISSUE SUMMARY (a)	DEFINITIONS (i)	10 points
	SIGNIFICANCE (ii)	10 points
	POSITIONS (iii)	10 points (5 points each)
POSITIONS SUMMARY (b)	5 REASONS FOR (i)	15 points (3 points each)
	5 REASONS AGAINST (ii)	15 points (3 points each)
PRESENTERS ARGUMENT (c)	DEDUCTIVELY VALID (i)	15 points
	RATIONALES (ii)	15 points
WORKS CITED (d)	SOURCES (i)	3 points
	CREATORS (ii)	1 point
ORGANIZATION & PREPARATION: Clarity, Relevance, Focus, Appeal, Originality, Q&A		6 points

**5.1.1.8 Informational Pamphlet**

After having completed your in-class issue presentation and having considered the questions from your peers, you will now transform your presentation into an informational pamphlet/brochure which can later be distributed to a public audience who may be entirely unfamiliar with the issue.

**Checklist** Informational pamphlets should include the following in order to receive full credit:

(a) Summation of all positions:

- (i) For
- (ii) Against
- (iii) Your own - can be aligned with one of the above, but any and all differences between your argument and others should be clear.

**Note** Not all of your presentation info will fit, so be brief and selective in your summations.

**Hint** Keep in mind what might draw the attention of passersby to an informational pamphlet (use bright colors, simplistic writing, bullet points, pictures, etc.)

(b) In addition to your summation; research, select, and summarize a POSSIBLE SOLUTION which you believe may help to effectively end/lessen the negative effects of the moral issue you are advocating for.

**Hint** This solution should be some sort of ACTION that the passersby you will encounter can partake in, and something that they might be willing to partake in.

Be sure to specifically state (i) what they should do, (ii) how they should do it (i.e., contact or online information), and (iii) what impact the encouraged action will have.

**Note** Students need only prepare one copy to be given the instructor, who will make copies for the final part of the project.

### Logistics





**LENGTH:** No more or less than one sheet of paper (front and back). Use the space efficiently.

**FORMAT:** Be creative and original, try to grasp and maintain the audience's attention as these tactics will later be useful for your activism. There are many templates in Microsoft Publisher and other writing softwares that can be helpful, but make it your own and add pictures.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant canvas dropbox as a .pdf (this file type is very important to preserve formatting. Although this is a group project, each student should individually submit this assignment. Submissions can be identical.



EXAMPLE<sup>2</sup>:

<h2 style="text-align: center;">JUNK FOOD</h2>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Low in nutrition</li> <li>➤ Heavily processed</li> <li>➤ Extremely high in salt, bad carbs, trans fat and sugar.</li> <li>➤ Estrogen (female hormones)</li> </ul> <p>Junk food is engineered to be addictive as <b>cocaine</b>, with High-fructose corn syrup.</p> <p><b>Health issues</b> (at least <i>1.59 times</i> more likely to contract)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Cardiovascular diseases</li> <li>➤ Type II diabetes</li> <li>➤ Insulin Resistance</li> <li>➤ Gradually kills brain cells</li> <li>➤ Depression</li> </ul>  <p><b>Did you know?</b> To produce 1 lbs of beef: 16 lbs of grain + Energy in 128 oz gasoline + 667392 oz of water</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">POSITIONS</h2> <p><b>Against</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antibiotic resistance (80% of antibiotics is used in poultry and meat)</li> <li>• Factory farming: animal cruelty and land abuse</li> <li>• Pollution Packaging material from junk food is about one-fifth of all litter in the U.S.</li> <li>• Deforestation</li> </ul> <p><b>Possible objections &amp; Rebuttals</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Boost economy</li> <li>2. Cheap and convenient</li> <li>3. Culture</li> <li>4. Satisfaction</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage social and economic stratification - the bad side of capitalism.</li> <li>2. The medical coverage for the diseases is higher.</li> <li>3. Culture is the manifestation of the arts and intellectuality. Fast food is omnipresent, but so is racism. Not a culture.</li> <li>4. Cocaine give satisfaction, too.</li> </ol> 
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<h2 style="text-align: center;">CONCLUSION</h2> <p>Junk food is <b>not inherently bad</b>, just eat with moderation. But the <b>current methods and over-everything</b> of giant corporations behind are alarming.</p> <p>Eating healthy is rewarding, perhaps not immediately but for a lifetime.</p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">SOLUTION</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Get to know <b>macrobiotics</b> Nutritional philosophy focused on health status, climate, seasonality of crops, age, gender, and geography among other considerations.</li> <li>➤ Think twice before you buy</li> <li>➤ Host fun screenings/events to inform Film: <i>Supersize Me, Speciesism, Cowspiracy</i></li> </ul> 	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Q &amp; A</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>How will my individual choice to eliminate/restrict junk food consumption help others?</i> <b>A:</b> You have contributed to save a lot of resources. You can help raise awareness and encourage friends and families to consume less.</li> <li>❖ <i>Are you advocating for legal restrictions or just appealing to people's conscience?</i> <b>A:</b> Legal restrictions will help. But we as consumers can speed up the process. <b>Less demand, less supply.</b></li> </ul> <p>Feel free to ask and debate with us through <a href="mailto:Tmai7@mail.greenriver.edu">Tmai7@mail.greenriver.edu</a> &amp; <a href="mailto:Emendoza-villa@mail.greenriver.edu">Emendoza-villa@mail.greenriver.edu</a> That will help developing our project.</p> <p>More resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <a href="http://nojunkfood.org/">http://nojunkfood.org/</a></li> <li>❖ <a href="http://nutritionfacts.org/">http://nutritionfacts.org/</a></li> </ul>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Something YOU Forgot</h2>  <p>By ESPERANZA MENDOZA-VILLA &amp; CAT MAI Green River Community College</p>
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GRADE: Worth up to 35 points depending on completeness.

<sup>2</sup>Provided with student permission.

Sample Rubric:

POSITION SUMMARY (a)	FOR (i)	5 points
	AGAINST (ii)	5 points
	STUDENTS' (iii)	5 points
ACTION (b)	WHAT TO DO (i)	5 points
	HOW/WHERE TO DO IT (ii)	5 points
	IMPACT (iii)	5 points
ORGANIZATION & DESIGN: Clarity, Relevance, Focus, Appeal, Originality, Creativity		5 points

### 5.1.1.9 Objections

After a thorough exploration of the issue and the preparation of your informational pamphlet, you will now conceive of potential objections which someone could make against your argument. These objections will serve to prepare you for your subsequent interview as well as the final activism portion of the writing assignment.

**Checklist** In your submission, be sure to include the following:

1. Restate your (a) deductively valid argument for your position.

Along with the three objections and responses, be sure to include your deductively valid argument in standard form to provide context for your peer reviewers.

2. Imagine at least three different ways in which someone might object to the argument you have constructed and explained thus far.

These objections are ways in which someone might criticize one or more parts of your argument.

Objections can be from the perspective of someone who disagrees with your position (i.e., conclusion), or

Objections can be from someone who agrees with your position, but disagrees with the way you go about arguing for it (i.e., your premises or beginning assumptions).

Follow the guidelines below for each of the three objections.

3. For each possible objection, explain exactly how the critique threatens your ability to argue for your position with a minimum of one paragraph.

This will involve specifically identifying which part(s) of your argument are being challenged.

4. Respond to each of the three objections entertained in a way that defends your argument.

Note that this response is not simply a repetition of your original argument or explanation. This is a *new* defense that specifically addresses any and all concerns raised in the objection.

Since this section concludes the analytical portion of the writing assignment, do not introduce any new questions or problems which might undermine the strength of your argument.

## 5. Works Cited

**Guidelines** Follow these guidelines below for constructing objections in part two (see checklist above):

**Objection #1: Deny that the argument is sound by showing that one or more of the premises are false through counterexample.** For this strategy, someone is not directly critiquing the conclusion of your argument, but saying that even if the argument is valid, it is not sound since the conclusion rests on one or more untrue premises.

In order to illustrate that a factual premise is untrue, empirical support should be utilized and cited which shows that the claim made by the argument being critiqued is false or mistaken.

In order to illustrate that a moral premise is untrue, a thought experiment should be presented which shows that our moral intuitions differ from those assumed/asserted by the argument being critiqued.

**Objection #2: Argue that the conclusion ought to be rejected by showing that it implies something wholly unacceptable [i.e., *reductio ad absurdum* (RAA)].** For this strategy, someone is not directly critiquing the conclusion of your argument, but saying that if it were true/accepted, we would then have to accept some ridiculous/false implication of that conclusion.

This strategy works by assuming the opposite of what someone intends to show. In the case of an objection, someone intends to show the opposite of what you are arguing for, so they would assume that your conclusion is true.

From that assumption, it is then argued that the acceptance of that assumption leads to some other unacceptable claim.

Thus, since the implication of the assumption is false, we should accept the opposite of the assumption. In this case, the opposite of your conclusion (or at least that your conclusion should be rejected).

Example: Imagine that someone is arguing for Aristotle's Second Law of Motion (i.e., that heavier objects fall faster than lighter objects). You would like to object to this position by showing that it implies something absurd, so you would like to argue that

Aristotle's Second Law of Motion is false. Using the *reductio* strategy then, you begin by assuming the opposite of what you want to show:

- P1. Assumption: Aristotle's Second Law of Motion is true.
  - P2. If Aristotle's Second Law of Motion is true, then objects of different mass dropped from the Leaning Tower of Pisa will fall at different rates.
  - P3. Therefore, objects of different mass dropped from the Leaning Tower of Pisa will fall at different rates. (1, 2 MP)
  - P4. However, (C1) was proven false in the famous experiment by Galileo (where it was proven that all objects fall at the same rate, regardless of their mass).
- 
- C. Therefore, Aristotle's Second Law of Motion is false. (3, 4 RAA)

**Objection #3: Argue that the rationales given fail to sufficiently justify the premise(s) or conclusion and why one may doubt that they could be justified.** For this strategy, someone is not directly critiquing the claims made in your argument, but saying that the rationale(s) used to explain one or more premises or the conclusion do not give us good enough reason to accept them.

This strategy works by addressing the rationales for your argument, rather than the deductively valid argument itself.

This strategy will look different depending on which rationale(s) are being critiqued:

Conditional statement: It could be argued that the antecedent does not entail the consequent, or that the consequent does not depend upon the antecedent.

Disjunctive statement: It could be argued that the disjunct omits some third option or multiple additional options and so commits the fallacy of presenting a false dilemma.

For any premise(s) which make assertions, be very specific and thorough with the evidence you have to back it up. Use and cite specific examples or materials from the course content if applicable, or from your research.

Additionally, the point should be made that the claim(s) made in your argument could not ever be sufficiently justified, even if the above problems were addressed.

**Note** Should you choose to consider any additional objection(s), specify which approach is used (either from the three strategies listed above, or from an additional strategy of your choosing).

**Advice**

Make it clear in your writing that you are not taking the position represented in each objection; rather you are merely entertaining how someone might respond to the argument you are making.

Even though you are entertaining views that differ from your own, be sure to practice charity here and present the strongest version of each objection (rather than committing the straw person fallacy and presenting a weak or irrational version of the critique that makes it easier to respond to).

If you find it challenging to present the objections you are considering in an objective way, it can be helpful to briefly mention what may motivate someone to make each critique (e.g., perhaps they are operating from different base assumptions or ideological commitments).

There is no need to respond to the objection here, that will come later in the final portion of the writing assignment.

For many philosophical arguments, responses and critiques have already been made in the literature. You are more than welcome to research and use an existing objection as long as you (i) summarize and explain it in your own words, and (ii) give appropriate credit to the source of the objection both with in-text citation and inclusion in your works cited.

See “Note on Plagiarism” at the end of this assignment.

**Logistics**

**LENGTH:** Six paragraphs. Approximately two-three pages (not including works cited). Please put the word count at the end of the assignment before the works cited.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins. Along with the three paragraphs of possible objections, be sure to include your deductively valid argument in standard form to provide context for your peer reviewers (see part one in checklist above).

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox and *print 2 hard copies to bring to class for peer review* (peer review is optional for assignment). Although this is a group project, each student should individually submit this assignment. Submissions *cannot* be identical.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 35 points depending on completeness (+5 points for peer review, see next section).

Sample Rubric:

DEDUCTIVELY VALID (a)		1 point
OBJECTION #1	EXPLANATION (b)	5 points
	RESPONSE (c)	5 points
OBJECTION #2	EXPLANATION (b)	5 points
	RESPONSE (c)	5 points
OBJECTION #3	EXPLANATION (b)	5 points
	RESPONSE (c)	5 points
Works Cited (d)		4 points

#### 5.1.1.10 Peer Review: Obj.

After submitting your imagined OBJECTIONS, you will need to complete a review of TWO of your peer's objections in order to assess their focus, strength, and charity. You will assess each of your peer's assignments according to the rubric below.

**Checklist** In your review, be sure to do the following:

1. Read the questions in each rubric category and answer 'YES' or 'NO'.
2. After indicating 'YES' or 'NO', provide the corresponding feedback for your peer as prescribed by the rubric.

#### Peer Review Rubric

**OBJECTION #1 Is an objection presented which specifically challenges the soundness of the author's argument? Is a counterexample provided to support the objection? Is it explained how the objection threatens the argument and what specific part(s) of the argument are threatened?**

**YES** If so, identify the line(s) of the argument being challenged, explain in your own words how you understand the objection to threaten the argument, how the counterexample supports this objection, and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength of the objection, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this section.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly express their objection in a way that corresponds to this strategy, how they could improve their counterexample to better support the objection, and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be an objection to the soundness of the author's argument, there is no counterexample provided, or there is no objection presented at all; please mark 'missing' and suggest how someone might object to the soundness of the author's argument.

**RESPONSE #1 Is a response to objection #1 provided which addresses any and all issue(s) raised?**

**YES** If so, explain how sufficiently the response addresses each issue raised and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this response.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly address each issue raised by the objection, and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be a response to the objection raised, or there is no response presented at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how someone might respond to the objection raised.

**OBJECTION #2 Is an objection presented which specifically shows that the author’s argument implies something absurd/false? Is it explained how the conclusion leads to this absurdity? Is it explained how the objection threatens the argument by establishing the opposite of the conclusion?**

**YES** If so, identify the absurd/false implication of the argument, explain in your own words how you understand the objection to threaten the argument, and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength of the objection, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this section.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly express their objection in a way that corresponds to this strategy, how they could improve their explanation of how the conclusion implies an absurdity, and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be a reductio of the author’s argument, there is no explanation of the implied absurdity given, or there is no objection presented at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how someone might object to the soundness of the author’s argument.

**RESPONSE #2 Is a response to objection #2 provided which addresses any and all issue(s) raised?**

**YES** If so, explain how sufficiently the response addresses each issue raised and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this response.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly address each issue raised by the objection, and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be a response to the objection

raised, or there is no response presented at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how someone might respond to the objection raised.

**OBJECTION #3** Is an objection presented which specifically challenges one or more of the rationales used by the author to justify their argument? Is it explained how each rationale being challenged is problematic? Is it explained how each rationale being challenged could never be sufficiently justified?

**YES** If so, identify the rationale(s) being challenged, explain in your own words how you understand the objection to threaten the argument, and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength of the objection, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this section.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly express their objection in a way that corresponds to this strategy, how they could improve their explanation of the criticism, and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be an objection to the justification of the author’s argument, there is no explanation of the criticism given, or there is no objection presented at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how someone might object to the justification of the author’s argument.

**RESPONSE #3** Is a response to objection #3 provided which addresses any and all issue(s) raised?

**YES** If so, explain how sufficiently the response addresses each issue raised and make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the strength, clarity, organization, and/or flow of this response.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could more clearly address each issue raised by the objection, and identify any specific points which require further clarity or explanation in greater detail. If this section does not clearly appear to be a response to the objection raised, or there is no response presented at all; please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how someone might respond to the objection raised.

**TONE & WORKS CITED** Does the author make it clear that each objection is not their own position, but what someone might say in response to their argument? Does the author present each objection charitably and mention what might motivate someone to make each critique? If the author used any existing objections in the literature, are sources cited correctly both in-text and at the end of the assignment?



**YES** If so, please identify the motivation behind each objection, make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the charity/strength of each objection, and, if applicable, make at least one suggestion as to how the author could improve the MLA formatting of their citations.

**NO** If not, please state how the author could make it clearer to the reader that these are possible objection, and identify any specific points where they could improve the charity of their explanation of each objection. If the author does not mention that these possible objection (rather than their own views), or does not mention what might motivate someone to make each critique, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest how they could make these points more clearly. If sources are cited only in-text or at the end, please identify where further citations/support should be provided. If there are no sources cited when there should be, please mark ‘missing’ and suggest potential sources for the author to reference.

Be sure to be thorough and constructive in your feedback. I would recommend what is called the compliment sandwich: begin with something strong that the author did well in that section, so that they know what not to change. Then mention the areas that require improvement, by being as specific and thorough as possible. Then ending with something else you liked about that section to end positively.

### Logistics

**LENGTH:** Varies depending on amount of feedback needed. Approximately one page.

**FORMAT:** Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins. Organized according to rubric sections.

**SUBMISSION:** Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox. Although this is a group project, each student should individually submit this assignment. Submissions *cannot* be identical.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 5 points depending on completeness (+35 points for Objections, see previous section).

Sample Rubric:

PEER REVIEW #1	2.5 points
PEER REVIEW #2	2.5 points

**Note** Please note the following with respect to your peer reviews:

If you turn in the original assignment late you will not receive any peer reviews.

How you are peer reviewed will have no bearing on your actual grade for that assignment.

Completing all of your assigned peer reviews will be part of your final assignment grade.

#### 5.1.1.11 Interview

Since you have begun imagining objections to your own argument, it is the time to practice engaging in constructive dialogue with those who may disagree with you. You will now select one person to arrange an interview with following the guidelines below and write up a report documenting the conversation. This report will describe the result of a **one hour** conversation you arrange with a friend or acquaintance.

**Checklist** Be sure to complete the following:

1. Talk to someone with whom you **disagree** about the topic you have chosen for your writing assignment.

This will help you practice dialoguing with those who hold views different from your own in a respectful and productive manner.

2. Your first aim in that conversation is to identify some specific sentence(s) about which you *disagree*.

This could be a premise or conclusion from your argument, an assumption you have made underlying your argument, or some implication of your position.

This could be one of the objections you anticipated in your previous assignment, or some new objection you have not yet identified.

3. Your second aim is to then try to find your deepest point(s) of *agreement* about that topic.

This can help you to potentially bring someone around to your side, and

It can also help you find a launching point for how to respond to an objection and defend your original position.

In your report, be sure to include the following:

#### Details

The date, time, and location of your conversation, the specific sentence(s) about which you (a) disagreed, and the resulting point(s) of (b) agreement.

**Summary**

To your best ability, (c) summarize how you led the conversation from (a) to (b) through intentional questioning. In order to best recall the conversation, you should ask your conversational partner if they are comfortable with you recording the conversation, either with audio or notes. In this summary, be sure to include:

- (i) some of the specific questions that you used, as well as
- (ii) how your conversational partner responded.

**Documentation**

Also, be sure to confirm the participation of your conversational partner by including the following (d) documentation:

- (i) their signature on your interview notes or final report, and
- (ii) a photo of the two of you together (to be included in the final report).

**Advice**

Disambiguation (“Tell me more about how you understand this word. . .”).

Discussing other views in the area that you might agree or disagree about (“Who else do you think gets this topic right/wrong?”).

Test out the implications of the views (“How would your view apply to an unusual case, such as. . .”).

*A trick to keep things running smoothly:* Repeat your conversational partner’s view back to them, making them feel heard (e.g., “Let me make sure I’m understanding you right. Is your view that. . .?”)

**Logistics**

LENGTH: Approximately one and a half-two pages (not including visual/audio documentation).

FORMAT: Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins.

SUBMISSION: Please submit your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox. *Please note that without documentation, no credit will be given.* Although this is a group project, each student should individually submit this assignment. Submissions *cannot* be identical.

GRADE: Worth up to 30 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

DISAGREEMENT (a)		5 points
AGREEMENT (b)		5 points
SUMMARY (c) (10 points)	QUESTIONS (i)	5 points
	RESPONSES (ii)	5 points
DOCUMENTATION (d) (10 points)	SIGNATURE (i)	5 points
	PHOTO (ii)	5 points

#### 5.1.1.12 Activism Report

Having prepared and practiced engaging in dialogue with those who disagree with you, each group will choose a specific date, time, and public location to go out and advocate for their position utilizing and distributing their informational pamphlets.

*IF YOU CHOOSE TO DO YOUR ACTIVISM ON CAMPUS:* Students Speaking on Campus and Passing Out Flyers. In most cases you are welcome to speak to the campus community and pass out flyers that you have created. It is an assumption of our department, that if this is a class project, that the content is acceptable to be distributed in public. As for all guests on campus, we ask you are considerate of others, and if they are interested in what you have to say and the printed information they will come to you. Please don't physically stop or block someone as they are passing by, you will be asked to stop and will not be granted permission in another area.

Below are some guidelines as to who to contact for different locations. In all cases, please know what date/time you intend to be communicating your message:

Instructor should provide points of contact, contact information, and approximate advance notice for popular areas of their campus based on institution policies.

In order to sufficiently experience this activism, students must be active in this public space and communicate with passersby for a minimum of **THREE HOURS**. Students will **(i) visually document** this experience with photographs or video – including a picture of time at beginning and end of advocacy to confirm duration, as well as write a minimum **(ii) two page report** of their experience.

**Checklist** In the written documentation of this activism, students must include the following:

1. A minimum of ONE page summary of your experience including any significant details including;
  - (a) The date, time, location, and approximate number of people interacted with/pamphlets handed out.
  - (b) What, if any, objections did you get from passersby?
  - (c) How did you respond to these objections?

2. A minimum of ONE page reflection on your project by summarizing your experience thinking deeply about the position you hold including significant details about:

The (d) content of the position you took, why you chose it, and what it means to you.

How, if at all, any part(s) of your position have (e) changed throughout the project.

*If some part(s) of your position did change, why do you think that is?*

*If nothing about your position changed, why do you think that is and is there anything that could have changed your view?*

How you (f) feel about the development of your argument throughout the project. Include. . .

*How you felt about having to construct rationales to justify your position.*

*Any intellectual roadblocks you encountered in presenting and/or explaining your argument.*

*How you felt about entertaining possible objections to your position.*

*How you felt before, during, and after your conversation with someone who disagreed with you.*

*Any points of intellectual discomfort you faced in evaluating your argument.*

The (g) value you think this process of rigorous thinking has on other beliefs you may hold and how you think you may use it (or something similar) in the future.

### Advice

Be cognizant of the formatting. Should include: heading, title, section headers, and each new paragraph should be indented.

See “Note on Plagiarism” at the end of this document.

### Logistics

LENGTH: Approximately two-three pages (not including documentation). Please put the word count at the end of the assignment before the documentation.

FORMAT: Typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins.

**Note** Students will create a *single file* which contains both the visual and written documentation as a .doc, .docx, or .pdf to be submitted in dropbox.

**SUBMISSION:** Please upload your assignment to the relevant assignment dropbox. *Please note that without documentation, no credit will be given.* Although this is a group project, each student should individually submit this assignment. Submissions cannot be identical.

**GRADE:** Worth up to 40 points depending on completeness.

Sample Rubric:

VISUAL DOCUMENTATION (i)		5 points
REPORT: SUMMARY (ii) (15 points)	LOGISTICS (a)	5 points
	OBJECTIONS (b)	5 points
	RESPONSES (c)	5 points
REPORT: REFLECTION (ii) (20 points)	CONTENT (d)	5 points
	CHANGE (e)	5 points
	DEVELOPMENT (f)	5 points
	VALUE (g)	5 points

#### 5.1.1.13 Note on Plagiarism

Plagiarism detection software will be used for this assignment. It should be clear without explicit statement that plagiarism of any form is unacceptable and will result in a zero on the assignment. A second infraction will result in a 0.0 for the course.

Referring to the work of others: Whenever you make reference to an existing work, whether it is something we have read in class or something you find on your own, you must cite it with in-text citation and include the work in your works cited.

Internal citations, rather than footnotes, should be used throughout. The format here should be: (Author, page number).

Examples:

... (Singer, p. 395)

... (Ferreira Lecture Notes, Oct. 14)

The format for works cited should be: Author last name, Author first name or initial. "Title of work". *Title of volume that contains work (if applicable)*. Edition (if applicable). Location of Publication: Publisher, year of publication. Page range of work.

Examples:

Singer, Peter. "The Case for Animal Liberation". *Philosophy: The Quest For Truth* edited by Louis P. Pojman and Lewis Vaughn. 8th ed. (Oxford 2010). pp. 147-151.

Ferreira, Rebeka. PHIL 243 Lecture, GRC, June, 2017.

Please refrain from directly quoting others in your work. While it is a useful skill, these assignments are so brief; I need to be able to make sure that YOU understand the material. This can only be done by writing the responses in your own words.

EXCEPTION: Defining terms – if you define any terminology and find it difficult to rephrase, be sure to quote and cite source using the appropriate format (explained above). Anytime a quote is necessary, it should not be longer than a single sentence.