

Philosophy 2330: Science and Society Spring 2022, Final Paper Assignment

Purpose: One central purpose of our class as a whole is to think about the nature of science. This question includes thinking about how values do and should or should not play a role in scientific practice.

The standard unit of philosophical analysis is the argumentative essay. Writing is an extension of thinking. It allows you (and forces you!) to think more deeply about a topic than you are able to do by keeping things 'in your head.' Exposition of someone else's views (including careful description of those ideas, issues, terms and scope) allows you to understand them better, and it is then much easier to critically evaluate these views. Laying out your own argument or that of someone else often forces you to be explicit about connections which can reveal weaknesses in your own thinking which must be acknowledged so they can then either be fixed or can lead to better views overall. Thus the purpose of assigning an essay is both as an effective way to evaluate your learning and progress in the class and to help improve your philosophical skills.

Instructions: You are to write an argumentative paper on some topic relevant to the role of values in science. Your paper should engage with Kevin Elliott's book *A Tapestry of Values* and the ensuing class discussion. You are strongly encouraged to attend a tutorial session May 2nd or 3rd to discuss your paper and then write your paper using the outline discussed in your tutorial though this is not a requirement. The paper should be between roughly 1300 and 1800 words. If you double space and have natural fonts and margins, your essay would be about 4-6 pages.

Due Date: Your essay should be uploaded into Blackboard before 11:59pm on Saturday, May 7th.

Grading: This paper will be worth 25 points (25% of your final grade).

Guidelines: An argumentative essay is a reasoned defense of some particular claim. A general guideline for a paper like this is that you should spend about half of your time in exposition and half your time in evaluation.

Here are some useful guides to writing philosophy papers:

https://philosophy.fas.harvard.edu/files/phildept/files/brief_guide_to_writing_philosophy_paper.pdf (from Harvard College's Writing Center)

<https://www1.cmc.edu/pages/faculty/akind/Intro01s/Writing.htm> (from Amy Kind)

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html> (from Jim Pryor)

http://joelvelasco.net/teaching/120/How_to_Write.pdf (from Chris Hitchcock)