

Phil 5330 Fall 2017
First Paper Assignment

Instructions: Write an argumentative paper of 2,000 to 3,000 words (roughly 4-6 single spaced typed pages). The general guidelines are as follows. First, your paper must critically engage one or more of the topics we have discussed in the first seven weeks of class. Second, your paper should not *merely* summarize the position(s) of some of the authors you discuss or describe some factual or technical details; it should in some way locate ideas relative to each other, synthesize those ideas, criticize them, defend them against important objections, or develop them in your own way. Third, the topic of your paper should be of an appropriate scope given the length constraints.

Due Date: You must submit your paper to me by email before class on Monday, October 16th. Any easily readable format such as .pdf or .doc is okay. Any extensions or possible alterations for the assignment should be discussed with me ahead of time.

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

References: It is expected that you show a familiarity of any readings that have been assigned in class. If you write about underdetermination and discuss Duhem, great, but if you bring up some point which is directly relevant to something that Laudan says, and you ignore Laudan completely in your paper, this is inappropriate. However, it is not expected that you are familiar with anything outside of the assigned readings. Your paper might be improved by bringing in outside sources or material, and I can help point you in the right direction if you are looking for something relevant, but this is not required for a good paper.

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

Reading Drafts: I am happy to talk about your papers during office hours or if you make an appointment to meet me in my office. I am also happy to read drafts of papers, on a time-permitting, first-come, first-served basis. For example, if you get a draft to me on Wednesday the 11th, it is likely that I can get it back to you by Friday or Saturday.