

Phil 5330 Spring 2023 First Paper Assignment

Instructions: Write an argumentative paper of around 2,500 to 3,000 words (roughly 6-8 double spaced pages – this is not a hard limit). The general guidelines are as follows. First, your paper must critically engage one or more of the topics we have discussed in the first 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.

Topics: Anything relevant to our class is fine. For example, general points about causation are fine (is causation reducible to counterfactuals). Specific details like whether Lewis's approach to preemption works is fine too. If you are citing at least one of our readings, it is probably fine. If you are worried about the appropriateness of the paper, just talk to me about it (much better than finding out later it wasn't appropriate!).

Due Date: You should submit your paper to me by email by Monday morning, March 6th. Any easily readable format such as .pdf or .docx is okay. Any extensions or possible alterations for the assignment should be discussed with me ahead of time.

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

Tutorial: Well in advance of the paper deadline you will have had a tutorial with me discussing an outline for your paper. The natural thing to do is to just fill out that outline. But you may change topics if you wish. If you do, it is a good idea to discuss it with me before writing the paper.