

PHI243/POL312 - PHILOSOPHY OF LAW/JURISPRUDENCE

GRADED ASSIGNMENT #4 - DUE MAY 19

This assignment consists in writing a **5-7 philosophy page paper** on a topic that interests you and that is related to the course readings.

How should you proceed?

- Review the course readings and find a topic that interests you. This topic can be, but is not limited to, any of the following: NY penal code v. Hammurabi's code, court decisions about same sex marriage or environmental law; whether the law can be violated; Antigone; Socrates and Crito; law and morality; Hart v. Fuller; Nazi's laws; racial bias in algorithmic decisions.
- Narrow down the topic to a well-specified question. For example, the question whether the law can be violated is too broad, but the question whether Socrates should not violate the laws of Athens because they nurtured him, is more well-specified.
- Come up with a circumscribed thesis you want to defend. It is okay to revise your thesis as you refine your ideas.
- Think of arguments in support of your thesis. Use the readings as a source. If you change your thesis, your supporting arguments should be changed accordingly.
- Think of objections that other might raise against your thesis and think of how you could respond. Use the readings as a source of inspiration.
- Write an outline. A philosophy paper usually consist of four parts: an introduction which sets up the question and formulates the thesis; a body which develops the main argument; a discussions of possible objections, along with possible replies; a conclusion which identifies possible weak points in your argument.
- Write a first draft, then a revised draft, and finally submit your paper by the deadline.

What is a good philosophy paper? Rigorous argumentation, clarity, precision, originality are essential ingredients for a good paper. You will be graded on those four criteria.

Be honest! It is better to acknowledge weaknesses in your argument rather than hide them.

Be a creative writer! A philosophy paper is your own literary creation.

For more guidance on how to write a philosophy paper, check out the link below

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>