

**PHL 202, Spring 2006
Project Assignment**

Option One:

Your assignment is to write a 1250-1500 word essay (5-6 typed, double-spaced pages). This is your chance to explore a primary work in ethics and respond to it. You may choose any one of the five topics/philosophers listed below. You should read both secondary works describing the philosopher's approach to ethics (use at least two), and then read at least a piece of the philosopher's own writing on ethics. In your paper, 1) present what you have learned about the approach to ethics, 2) evaluate it (you may include what others say about it, but give your own assessment as well), then 3) offer your own ideas in reaction to it. Do not merely echo what other people say; use your own creative judgment to move beyond what you have read.

Your options for topics:

Virtue ethics as presented by Aristotle (Nichomachean Ethics)

Natural law ethics as presented by T. Aquinas (Treatise on Happiness; Summa Theologica)

Deontological ethics as presented by I. Kant (Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals)

Utilitarianism as presented by J. Bentham (An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation) or J. S. Mill (Utilitarianism)

Ethics of Care as presented by Carol Gilligan (In A Different Voice) or Rita Manning (Speaking from the Heart)

Most of these texts can be accessed on the web through Philosophy Around the World. See the library research guide for philosophy for the URL.

Important points

Your paper needs to be at least 1250 words, but no more than 1625. Titles and works cited should not be included in the word count. Standard academic style should be used.

You need to include a "Works Cited" page, separate from the text of the paper. In it, include any source of both ideas about the topic and actual quotes used in the paper. These should be done in MLA style (see the library Research Gateway for a guide).

Your essay should include an introduction and conclusion, summary sentences, clear antecedents for pronouns, and solid reasons to support your conclusions.

The paper is worth 60 points. When it is turned in, the instructor will read the paper and raise questions, in writing, about what you have written. The grade on the paper will be 90% on content and 10% on form. This paper needs to be submitted on time, so that it can be graded and returned to you. Please proofread before you submit the paper.

You will then respond to the questions in writing, returning both the answers and the original paper to the instructor for the second grade. These responses will also be worth 40 points. They should be typed and proofread as well.

Use standard English (no contractions). Make your language inclusive.

The paper is due on May 27, and must be turned in on time. In case of emergency, contact the instructor about alternatives. If you would like instructor feedback before the paper is due, please submit a draft by May 13.

The answers to the questions will be due on June 17. These will be accepted up to one week late with an immediate loss of 5 points.

Option Two:

Your final product will be an essay of the same length, responding to one of the same theories listed above. However, instead of doing research to evaluate and analyze the work, you will do at least 6 hours of service-learning volunteer work. Before you go to do the work, review the section of the Clark-Poorenga text on the theory you choose for reflection (and you can look at other writers on it as well). Then, as you do your volunteering, and afterwards, reflect on what the theory says both about your service (how does it fit with this theory of morality), and about any moral situations that arose for you or others during your service.

In your paper, briefly describe what the theory says, your volunteer situation, and then present your reflections on the theory as described above. How well does the theory work in actual life situations, based on your observations? Can it guide people making moral choices in the circumstances in which you worked? Does it describe choices you made yourself?

All other requirements for the paper are the same in terms of the writing and expectations of quality and due dates. If you need any date changes due to when the volunteering is scheduled, please let the instructor know as soon as possible.

Grading Rubric for Project Assignment

Please attach this form to the essay.

Name _____

Content (90% of grade)

Paper has a clear focus _____ Paper lacks focus _____

Paper deals with a major theory _____ No theory _____

Basic ideas of the theory are clearly presented _____ No presentation _____
Presentation is incomplete or inadequate _____

Theory is evaluated/reflected on _____ No evaluation/reflection _____
Evaluation/reflection is incomplete or inadequate _____

Author's own position is clearly presented _____ No position taken _____
Presentation is incomplete or inadequate _____

Good understanding of the theory is shown ___ Fair understanding ___ Poor understanding ___

Depth of analysis/evaluation/reflection is Impressive _____ Adequate _____ Lacking _____

The paper is persuasive for its point: Strongly _____ Moderately _____ Weakly _____ Not _____

Form and Style (10% of grade)

Effective introduction _____ Adequate _____ Weak _____
Effective conclusion _____ Adequate _____ Weak _____

Clear organization _____ Adequate _____ Confusing _____
Smooth transitions _____ Adequate _____ Awkward _____

Always chooses appropriate words _____ Usually _____
Often chooses inappropriate words _____

Phrasing flows well and conveys meaning _____ Usually _____
Choppy, forced, rambling or awkward phrasing _____

Correct grammar/no spelling errors _____ Few _____ Incorrect/many errors _____
Correct citations _____ Incorrect _____ Inadequate/missing _____