

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY GRADING RUBRIC

4 = Exemplary; 3 = Accomplished; 2 = Competent; 1 = Marginal; 0 = Unsatisfactory

I. ARGUMENTATION

AVERAGE SCORE: _____

An exemplary paper:	4	3	2	1	0	An unsatisfactory paper:
Presents strong and well-developed arguments in support of its central claims.						Fails to adequately defend its central claims.
Addresses any relevant counterarguments and also anticipates and defuses potential objections to its central claims and arguments.						Fails either to rebut relevant counterarguments or to anticipate and defuse potential objections to its central claims and arguments.
Is in many ways subtle, original, and/or insightful.						Is always trite, trivial, or unoriginal.

II. EXPOSITION

AVERAGE SCORE: _____

An exemplary paper:	4	3	2	1	0	An unsatisfactory paper:
Gives an accurate and charitable exposition and interpretation of the pertinent philosophical texts and views, providing textual support where appropriate.						Provides an incomplete, inaccurate, and/or uncharitable exposition and interpretation of the pertinent philosophical texts and views.
Fully explains key philosophical terms, concepts, and distinctions in an illuminating way, using the author's own words, examples, and descriptions.						Fails to provide adequate explanations for key philosophical terms, concepts, or distinctions.

III. INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

AVERAGE SCORE: _____

An exemplary paper:	4	3	2	1	0	An unsatisfactory paper:
Has an introduction that motivates the project and defines a sharp focus by clearly stating its central aim(s), e.g., a thesis or controlling idea relating to the assigned topic.						Has an inadequate introduction, one that fails to motivate the project or establish a clear focus by stating a thesis or controlling idea that relates to the assigned topic.
Has a conclusion that summarizes results clearly, explores implications/limitations of those results, and leaves readers with a sense of the paper's importance.						Has an inadequate conclusion, one that fails either to summarize results or to explain their implications, limitations, and importance.

IV. ORGANIZATION

AVERAGE SCORE: _____

An exemplary paper:	4	3	2	1	0	An unsatisfactory paper:
Has a clear and logical organizational plan, wherein the ordering of ideas, sentences, and paragraphs builds naturally toward the achievement of its central aim(s).						Has an illogical or indiscernible organizational plan—the paper is a hodgepodge of ideas.
Provides a user-friendly guide to the organizational plan by using transitional words/phrases/sentences to show how the various ideas, sentences, and paragraphs relate to the paper's central aim(s) and to each other.						Fails to provide a clear guide to the organizational plan, e.g., by failing to use adequate transitions or jumping from one idea or point to another without establishing any connection between them.

V. WRITING

AVERAGE SCORE: _____

An exemplary paper:	4	3	2	1	0	An unsatisfactory paper:
Exhibits a sophisticated (but unpretentious) writing style as it presents its ideas clearly, concisely, and precisely, such that what's being said is almost never open to misinterpretation and contains almost no unnecessary words, imprecision, or irrelevant content.						Has a writing style that significantly detracts from the argument, involving repetitive and simplistic sentence structures, unnecessarily inflated language, imprecise wording, and/or language that is unclear, wordy, repetitious, or contains irrelevant content.
Contains virtually no errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation, and documents sources properly.						Is riddled with grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors and/or fails to acknowledge sources properly.