

CLST 212 = PHIL 212A
ESSAY 1 ASSIGNMENT

Project Description

In this essay, you're invited to articulate and argue for a creative *thesis*, engaging with the primary (ancient) ideas and arguments studied in this course. You may also draw on your own opinions and other disciplinary perspectives, as long as you provide sound evidence.

Word Target 1,500 words.

Evaluation Criteria

- **Thesis:** Is your thesis (the claim that your essay will develop and argue) creative, demonstrating substantial independent thought? Have you provided a clear and succinct statement of your thesis? Is your thesis appropriate for a paper of this length – neither too broad, nor too narrow?
- **Argument:** Does your essay develop clear and valid arguments? Are your arguments relevant to your thesis, building a consistent, interconnected case throughout your essay? Do you make claims that aren't (or can't be) supported in an essay of this scope?
- **Evidence:** Do you make effective use of primary (ancient) texts and sources, demonstrating a broad and deep knowledge of the texts and ideas discussed in this course by paraphrasing, quoting, and citing those texts where relevant? Do you explain what you take each text to mean, and why? Do you support your arguments consistently from evidence, where necessary?
- **Engagement with Counterarguments:** Do you consider at least one possible *objection* to your thesis in your essay, articulating your views in the context of possible alternatives?
- **References and Presentation:** Is your essay coherently written, grammatically correct, and clearly presented? Have you used a consistent reference and citation scheme throughout your essay (for example, APA, MLA, or Chicago format)?

Suggested Essay Questions

The following link points to a series of suggested questions for the essay assignment. Your *thesis* should be an answer to one of these questions, referencing and discussing a range of ancient texts in addition to your own arguments.

If you prefer to write on a different topic, please feel free to email the instructor with a proposal. For all of these topics, you may use Cooper and Ricken as secondary sources, or conduct your own research (for example, on Google Scholar).

See list of topics online: <https://goo.gl/oDZzix>

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How to submit

Please submit your essay online via turnitin.com.

If you do not yet have a TurnItIn account, please register:

- Visit www.turnitin.com.
- Click “Create account”, then click “Student”
- Enter the class ID, as follows: **14316254**
- Enter the class enrolment password, as follows: **eudaimonia**

FYI: TurnItIn.com is hosted in the United States. You are welcome to use an alias in place of your real name during registration, ensuring that your identifying details are not hosted in the USA. If you do, please email your alias to the instructor. (Note also that we will not store your essays on TurnItIn’s database after the course is complete). For full instructions, see: <http://elearning.ubc.ca/toolkit/turnitin/for-students>

If you already have a TurnItIn account: log in, click “enroll in a class”, and enter the appropriate class ID and class enrolment password above.

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Tips

- A good essay will begin with a clear and appropriately narrow thesis. (Try to finish this sentence: “This essay will argue that...”) You may find that you need to narrow your thesis: for example, instead of discussing the entirety of Greek poetry, focus on one text or passage, or a single idea in a small number of passages.
- Your paper should support your thesis by means of structured argument. Every point in your essay should ideally contribute something to your thesis: try to avoid introducing unnecessary facts, ideas, or speculation.
- You should directly reference and engage with primary (ancient) sources. To reference the textbook, you may use a citation style of your choice: for example, APA, MLA, or Chicago style, or any other, as long as you are consistent. See “Resources” at socrates.arts.ubc.ca/resources (under the Greek/Mediterranean philosophy section) for further information on citation styles.
- Try not only to *quote* or cite the sources, but discuss critically what you think they mean, and why you agree or disagree.
- Pay close attention to your source(s)’ language, and be careful not to attack a straw man. If you’re arguing against a philosopher’s position, consider whether she or he actually said that. Using direct quotation (rather than loose paraphrase) can help you with this.
- In the course of your essay, you should at least briefly engage with (i.e., critically examine and potentially challenge) an alternative view – one that might run counter to your own.
- Always proofread your paper before submitting. If possible, go away for a few days and come back for another look. (Plato, we’re told, wrote the opening of the *Republic* 10 times!)

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EVALUATION GRID	
A – Outstanding	
+	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear, original, and appropriately narrow thesis defended by independent argument • Excellent command of primary sources • Creative, independent, and accurate interpretation • Engages critically & independently with at least one alternate viewpoint, ideally including some critical analysis of secondary sources • No factual errors 	
B – Good	
+	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong command of primary sources • Clear thesis statement supported by clear argumentation • Demonstrates some ability to consider and criticize alternative interpretations • No significant errors of fact • Good writing and presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis imperfectly supported by arguments • Scope too big (or too small) for assignment • No consideration of alternative views • Minor factual slips
C – Adequate	
+	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates adequate awareness of some primary texts • Some evidence of a thesis or theory that is supported • Adequate, clear writing and presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources badly handled or clearly referenced • Little critical interpretation or engagement • Limited or confused argumentation • Some significant factual errors
D – Inadequate	
+	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance to course content; awareness of sources • Readable, connected prose • Timely existence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent factual errors • Very limited awareness of sources • Sources very poorly cited or badly handled