

PHIL 310A Essay 1

Due October 16, 2014

WORD TARGET

1,000 words.

OBJECTIVE

Write a concise essay that communicates the results of your independent investigation into a specific topic drawn from Plato's philosophical texts. Your paper should:

- **State and defend a strong, clear thesis.**
- **Discuss at least one, and preferably several, primary (ancient) sources.**
- You are also encouraged to engage with the **secondary (modern) sources** posted on the "Resources" area of socrates.arts.ubc.ca.
- **Either select from one of the topics suggested below; or formulate an alternative topic and confirm the instructor's approval by email, during office hours, or by separate appointment.**

TOPICS: SUGGESTED PROMPTS

A list of potential essay topics is posted online at <http://goo.gl/UqYHOo>.

You are welcome to research any of these topics or develop your own subject: if you are unsure of the topic, please approach the instructor to discuss.

RELATIONSHIP TO SECOND PAPER (RESEARCH PAPER)

Your second paper assignment will be a full research paper (approx. 2500 words). You're encouraged, but not required, to expand the topic and argument of your first paper into your second paper, incorporating feedback on the first paper into the second assignment.

GUIDELINES (SEE ALSO [SOCRATES.ARTS.UBC.CA/RESOURCES](http://socrates.arts.ubc.ca/resources))

- 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 Socratic ethics, focus on one view (like the denial of weakness of will) in one specific passage.
- 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](http://socrates.arts.ubc.ca/resources) FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON REFERENCING.**
- 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 *Republic* 10 times!)

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Please submit your paper online via turnitin.com.

1. If you do not yet have a TurnItIn account, please register:
 - (a) Visit www.turnitin.com. Click “Create account”, then click “Student”
 - (b) Enter the class ID: 10782499. Enter the class enrolment password: eudaimonia
 - (c) FYI: TurnItIn.com is hosted in the USA. You are welcome to use an alias in place of your real name, ensuring that your identifying details are not hosted in the USA. If you do, please email your alias to the instructor. (We will not store your essays on TurnItIn’s repository after course completion). For full instructions, see: <http://elearning.ubc.ca/toolkit/turnitin/for-students>
2. If you have an account: log in, click “enroll in a class”, & enter class ID and password above.

**Note that your TurnItIn class ID, given above, differs
for the Question Papers and Essay Assignments.**

How will the essays be evaluated?
See grading rubric on following page.

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Essay Evaluation Rubric

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 and independently with at least one alternate interpretation of the evidence (may be drawn from scholarly literature, but this is not mandatory) • 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

F – Fail

Paper does not exist; it exists, but it's not yours; it is incomprehensible; it has nothing to do with course content (right paper?)