

PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY WRITING SECTIONS

TA: Jonathan Surovell

contact: jrs81@pitt.edu

office hours: 1425 CL Tue., Wed. 9:30am-10:30am or by appointment

GOALS

The recitations will give you an opportunity to improve your philosophical argumentation skills, both oral and, especially, written. Your participation in section will give you practice verbally constructing arguments, presenting objections, and interpreting others' views. Your written work will give you practice doing the same in writing. Some main virtues that we will try to develop in your writing are clarity, cohesiveness, and persuasiveness.

REQUIREMENTS

You are expected to attend and participate in recitation meetings and to write two papers and two exams, as described in the main course syllabus.

In addition, you will write:

- two 1-1.5 page paper introductions in advance of your full papers. You are welcome, but not required, to use these introductions in your papers, but if you do, you will be expected to improve them in response to my comments.
- four two page summaries of arguments presented in readings and discussed in lecture. I'll distribute prompts for the summaries.
- a revised *and greatly improved* version of your first paper.

To get a good attendance and participation grade, you will need to not only attend, but *participate* in every or nearly every meeting. This typically means making contributions in recitation, but you can also email me questions or comments by 9:30am the day of recitation. I may then raise the question in class.

Try to let the questions flow reasonably freely; you don't need to wait all semester for an earth-shattering insight. If something from the reading, from lecture, or that I've said confuses you, say so, and if possible, say why it's confusing. Just because the issue hasn't been gone over in detail, don't assume that it's simple and that everyone else understands. Many issues in philosophy are less simple than they seem, and even some simple things are worth going over carefully.

Your grades will be computed as follows:

- 10% Section Attendance and Participation
- 4% First Summary
- 4% Second Summary
- 4% Third Summary
- 4% Fourth Summary
- 2% First Introduction
- 2% Second Introduction
- 10% First Paper
- 15% Revised First Paper
- 10% Midterm
- 15% Second Paper
- 20% Final Exam

IMPORTANT DATES

Tues., Sept. 13	First Summary topics distributed
Tue., Sept. 20	First Summary due
Thu., Sept. 22	Second Summary topics distributed
Tue., Sept. 27	Second Summary due
Wed., Sept. 28	First Paper topics distributed
Tue., Oct. 4	First Paper Introduction due
Thu., Oct. 13	Third Summary topics distributed
Wed., Oct. 11	First Paper due
Tue., Oct. 18	Third Summary due
Mon., Oct. 24	In-Class Midterm
Thu., Nov. 3	First Paper Revisions due
Thu., Nov. 3	Fourth Summary topics distributed
Wed., Nov. 9	Second Paper topics distributed
Thu., Nov. 10	Fourth Summary due
Thu., Nov. 16	Second Paper introduction due

Tue., Nov. 22 Second Paper due

Mon./Wed., Dec. 5/7 Final Exam Questions handed out

Fri., Dec. 16 Final Exam (12pm-1:50pm)