

Instructions for Formal Research Paper Grading Rubric and Guidelines

Write a formal position paper on one of the eight contemporary ethical issues discussed in class (Weeks 5-8), reflecting how study of the Abrahamic religions and their approaches to values and decision-making has influenced your thinking. The bibliography (or works cited page) must include a minimum of 6 sources in addition to the textbook and required videos. (Note: A bibliography should contain both sources quoted/paraphrased and those used for background reading.) The paper should be approximately 5 to 6 typed, double-spaced pages in length and must follow the guidelines for formal research papers noted below. The paper is DUE by Sunday night of the eighth week and is worth 240 points.

A. Writing Standard and Grading Rubric

1. Ideas/Content
 - addresses the writing prompt/assignment
 - insightful, creative, original, and comprehensive
 - reflects critical thinking
2. Organization
 - logical and coherent
 - proceeds from a sharply focused thesis
 - contains an introduction and a conclusion
3. Balance
 - acknowledges/presents conflicting viewpoints fairly
4. Assertions
 - supports major points with strong arguments and/or reliable authorities (citations)
5. Writing Style
 - clear, concise, and energetic
 - smooth transitions between paragraphs and major ideas
 - variety of sentence style and length
 - rich vocabulary and appropriate word choice
 - academic tone
6. Mechanics
 - correct grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling
 - correct form (MLA or APA style)

B. Special notes

1. Use inclusive language.
2. Do not plagiarize. Plagiarism is borrowing ideas, words, and sentences from another person without acknowledgment. (Note: Plagiarism includes paraphrasing as well as verbatim borrowing.)
3. Write in the third person; first person singular is permissible if used appropriately (e.g., when the student is stating her/his personal position).
4. Do not use contractions or non-standard abbreviations.
5. Avoid the imperative mood.
6. Use a standard font of readable size (e.g., Times New Roman, 12 point)
7. Use a one-inch margin for all margins. Do not justify the right margin.

8. Double space the paper. Do not triple space between paragraphs or after the title or headings.
9. When appropriate, the use of headings for subdivisions is encouraged.
10. Number the pages consecutively, except for the first page, in the upper right hand corner (i.e., last name followed by a space followed by the page number in Arabic numerals).
11. If you use endnotes, include the Notes page as a separate page before the Works Cited page.
12. Begin the Works Cited (works cited/consulted) page on a new page.