

Paper #1

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PHIL 30304

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Your first paper is due on Tuesday, 9/25. It should be handed in by email attachment.

The paper should have four parts, which should be clearly separated:

1. A statement of the thesis which you will be defending. This should be 1-2 sentences. Here are examples of theses you might defend: persons are immaterial substances; mental properties are identical to brain properties; mental properties are logical constructions out of behavior. But you can pick any thesis relevant to the material we have been covering. If you have a question about whether a given thesis would be appropriate, just send me an email.
2. A statement of what you take to be the strongest argument for the thesis stated in §1. This is the section in which you explain why you believe the thesis stated above. The argument should be explained in your own words. It may be stated in premise/conclusion form, or in ordinary prose. Either way, it should be clear (i) what the premises are, (ii) why you take those premises to imply the conclusion, and (iii) why you believe that these premises are true.
3. A statement of what you take to be the strongest objection to your position. This objection may be (a) an argument that the thesis in §1 is false or (b) an objection to the argument in §2. This should take 1-3 paragraphs.
4. An explanation of why in the end you are not convinced by the argument in §3. This should take 1-2 paragraphs.

Papers will be evaluated based on (1) clarity, (2) cogency of argumentation, and (3) originality.