

Paper 3 Guidelines

The most essential information

- Your paper 3 must be on a different philosopher than your paper 1 and 2.
- Strict word count: **1,500-1,750 words** (that's about 7 pages). Please see the syllabus (p. 5) for word-limit penalties.
- This assignment has **three parts**:
 - 1. Submit your paper topic (2% of your class grade)
 - 2. First draft for peer editing (8% of your class grade)
 - 3. Final draft (25% of class grade)
- Due dates:
 - Paper topic: 11/29, by 11:59 PM via Blackboard
 - First draft: 12/6 by 11:59 PM via Blackboard
 - Final draft: 12/18 by 11:59 PM via Blackboard

More detail

This is your final paper of the class. It is your chance to dive deeply into a reading that we covered this semester. Since you will need to think about this reading for a few weeks, I recommend choosing something that you found interesting – not necessarily something you found easy. I will grade slightly easier if the content you are grappling with is more difficult.

This paper is broken down into **three sub-assignments**.

1. You will submit **which prompt** you will write about **by 11/29 by 11:59 PM**. This counts for 2% of your grade. If you choose one of the prompts below, you can simply copy-and-paste that into Blackboard. If you want to make up your own prompt, you must submit this to Blackboard. I want to make sure everyone chooses a prompt that is suitable for this length of paper.
2. You will turn in a fully-written **rough draft** by **12/6 by 11:59 PM**. During class on 12/9, you will be paired up, and each student will read and give comments on their partner's draft. Your rough draft grade will be based on (i) turning in a complete draft and (ii) the quality of your comments on your partner's draft. This counts for 8% of the total class grade.
3. Finally, you will turn in your **final draft**. It is due **12/18 by 11:59 PM**. It counts for 25% of the total class grade. I encourage you to revise this draft extensively. See the **Grading Rubric** below for how it will be evaluated. After you have a first draft, you should apply this rubric to your own paper and edit it accordingly.

As always, I encourage you to come to my office hours for help. I am more than happy to discuss your argument and comment on sections of your paper during my office hours. You can also use [CCNY's Writing Center](#).

How do I write this?

Re-read [Pryor's "Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper"](#) for help on how to structure and write this paper.

You **must** copy-and-paste your prompt at the top of your assignment.

Your paper must **cite specific pages** of the readings that you are discussing when you refer to specific ideas or give quotations.

You should **not** do any reading outside of what we did in class. But if you do, make sure to cite your sources.

Your paper must have (1) an introduction, (2) multiple body paragraphs, and (3) a conclusion. Below, I list the mandatory elements of each section.

1. Introduction (see example on page 7 below)
 - a. A very brief summary of the issue
 - b. A clear thesis statement (you should make this obvious by writing something like “In this paper, I will argue...” or “My thesis is...”)
 - c. A map of your argument (this should say something like “My paper proceeds in three steps. In step one, I will.... In step two, I will...”)
2. Body paragraphs
 - a. At least one body paragraph must contain an explanation of the philosopher’s argument which you’re discussing. You will likely have **multiple** body paragraphs explaining their argument.
 - b. At least one body paragraph must defend your own thesis. Your thesis must say something that goes **beyond** what the philosopher says. Your paper **cannot** simply restate what the reading says.
 - i. Examples of the sorts of arguments you can make (from Pryor, p. 2):
 1. Criticize that argument; or show that certain arguments for the thesis are no good
 2. Defend the philosopher’s argument or thesis against someone else's criticism
 3. Offer new reasons to believe the philosopher’s thesis
 4. Offer counter-examples to the philosopher’s thesis
 5. Discuss what consequences the philosopher’s thesis would have, if it were true
 6. Revise the philosopher’s thesis, in the light of some objection
3. Conclusion (see example on page 7 below)

- a. Restate your thesis
- b. Summarize your argument

Prompts

Your paper must respond to a single prompt.

Below is a list of prompts. You must choose one of these (i.e., one numbered item), and answer it. If you would like to make up your own prompt, you must submit it by 11/29.

Popper

1. Godfrey-Smith argues that Popper's theory of falsification has difficulties because of "holism about testing." First, explain Popper's theory of falsification, then explain holism about testing, and finally explain why holism about testing causes difficulties for Popper's falsificationism. Argue whether Popper's view survives those criticisms.

The Raven's Problem

2. Godfrey-Smith discusses three ways one can reply to the Ravens Problem (i.e., Hempel's Problem). (1) Hempel's own reply, (2) a reply involving background assumptions, and (3) a reply involving the order that we learn information. Explain the Ravens Problem, then pick one of these replies, explain it, and argue whether it's successful.

Goodman's New Riddle of Induction

3. Godfrey-Smith discusses two ways that philosophers have answered Goodman's riddle: (1) there is some feature of the word "grue" such that good inductions shouldn't involve words with that feature, or (2) there is some feature of the property *grueness* such that good inductions shouldn't involve properties with that feature. Explain Goodman's riddle, then pick one of answers above, explain it and argue whether it is successful.

Bayesianism

4. Bayes' Rule can be used to provide a theory about inductive inference. But it does not explain how agents get their initial priors or likelihoods. Argue whether Bayesianism can deal with either or both of these problems. (Hint: you should discuss Godfrey-Smith's discussion of "convergence").
5. What is the Bayesian solution to Goodman's New Riddle of Induction? Do you think this solution is convincing? What problems does it have and how serious are they?

The Covering Law Model of Explanation

6. Godfrey-Smith ends up suggesting that a theory of scientific explanation demands a form of "contextualism". Explain what this Godfrey-Smith means by this, then provide and discuss at least one example from science (or the history of science) that supports this view.

Marr's Three Levels

7. Explain Marr's three levels of analysis (computational, algorithmic, and implementational) and discuss why Marr believes that understanding a system at only the implementation level would not be sufficient to understand that system. Please provide specific examples.

8. Explain Marr's three levels of analysis (computational, algorithmic, and implementational) and then apply them to a novel information-processing task (i.e., one that Marr does not discuss in the reading and that we did not discuss in class). Do the levels of analysis fit with your task? If not, why not?
9. Marr suggests that the computational level is concerned with *what* a system does and *why* it does that. What do you think Marr means by each of these: “what” and “why”? Do you think they are sufficiently clear? (Hint: focus on the cash register example.)

Kuhn

10. Drawing from the history of science, give an example of scientific development that does not fit within the “Kuhnian cycle”. Why does it not fit? Do you think Kuhn’s theory of change could be modified to accommodate it?
11. Kuhn gives two arguments that successive paradigms are incommensurable: (1) they use different vocabulary/concepts, so scientists of different paradigms cannot understand each other; and (2) each paradigm comes with its own standard of evaluation, so we have no neutral standards to compare them. Pick one of these arguments, explain it, and evaluate it. Please use a specific example of two paradigms to illustrate or undermine Kuhn’s notions of incommensurability.
12. In “Objectivity, Value Judgment, and Theory Choice,” Kuhn argues that even if there are agreed upon standards for theory choice, these often cannot help us choose one paradigm over another. Explain Kuhn’s argument. Is it convincing?

Longino

13. Longino identifies four criteria for achieving objectivity: avenues for criticism, shared standards, responsiveness to criticism, and evenly shared intellectual authority among practitioners. First, explain how each of these criteria contribute to the objectivity of science. Then, give an example of a scientific practice that falls short of fulfilling at least one of these criteria, and argue whether this makes the science more or less objective.
14. Longino argues that the exclusion of certain groups from a scientific discipline makes that science less objective. Explain why Longino thinks this. Do you agree that this is always true? Are we sometimes justified to exclude certain groups from scientific debates? If so, why?

Anderson

15. Anderson argues that emotions can be used as evidence to support values. Explain and evaluate Anderson’s argument that emotions are permissible evidence for certain values. Why is this relevant for Anderson’s broader thesis?
16. On page 6, Anderson lists five ways that values can affect science, even for theorists who think science should be value-free. First, explain these five ways. Then, answer the following: Does Anderson’s divorce example show a way that science is value-laden in a way that goes beyond

all of the five ways that all theorists could accept?

17. Anderson distinguishes between legitimate and illegitimate uses of values in science. Explain the distinction, and then give examples of both sorts of uses of values using an example that Anderson does not discuss.

Lichtenstein

18. Lichtenstein discusses the “argument from inductive risk” (AIR): evidential standards for a claim can rise or fall depending on non-epistemic (e.g., moral or political) costs or benefits. He then distinguishes costs/benefits that are okay to consider in AIR from those that are not okay. Explain Lichtenstein’s distinction between the different sorts of costs/benefits.
19. Lichtenstein writes that a “final reason not to alter evidential standards for (in)convenient hypotheses is that doing so allows scientists to trade on the epistemic authority of science without paying the price that grounds this authority” (20). Explain what he means. Do you agree or disagree?

Oppenheim & Putnam

20. Oppenheim & Putnam suggest that the unity of science should be adopted as a “working hypothesis” rather than a proven fact. Do you think that such a hypothesis is useful for scientific progress, or do you think it could hinder scientific progress? Provide examples to support your argument.
21. Oppenheim & Putnam argue that the relationship between higher sciences (like the social sciences) and lower sciences (like physics) is *micro-reducibility*. Explain what it means for one theory to be micro-reducible to another. Do you think that this is the proper way to conceive of higher and lower sciences?

Grading Rubric

Papers will be graded on a 25-point scale:

- **Prompt (1 point)**
 - **1 point** for copy-and-pasting your prompt at the top of your assignment
- **Introduction and conclusion (6 points)**
 - **1 point** for clearly setting out the issue that you will discuss.
 - **3 points** for clearly stating your thesis in **both** your introduction and conclusion.
 - **2 point** for laying out the structure of your argument in your introduction.
- **Summary (11 points)**
 - **4 points** for correctly identifying a claim and argument made by a philosopher and citing where in the text the claim and argument are made.
 - **5 points** for explaining the author's argument clearly.
 - **2 points** for giving an example that helps explain the philosopher's argument.
- **Defending your thesis (7 points)**
 - **2 points** for making a claim that clearly connects with the philosopher's argument.
 - **3 points** for persuasively defending your claim.
 - **2 points** for giving an example that helps explain your claim.

Example of an introduction and a conclusion

Introduction:

In her paper “Oppression,” Marilyn Frye gives an analysis of oppression. In this paper, I will argue that Frye’s analysis is incorrect because it counts some cases that are not oppression as oppressive. My argument has three steps. First, I will explain Frye’s analysis of oppression. Second, I present an example of a situation that is not oppressive but that Frye’s analysis counterintuitively counts as oppressive. Finally, I consider one condition Frye could add to her analysis so that the counterintuitive case no longer counts as oppression.

[the body of your paper]

Conclusion:

In this paper, I have shown that Frye’s analysis of oppression is incorrect. I did so by showing that there are cases that are not oppressive that her conditions predict are oppressive. In particular, I argued that...

Green: the issue that will be discussed

Yellow: the thesis

Blue: the structure of the paper