

Philosophy 123 Class Projects

Introduction

Since Philosophy 123 has no pre-requisites, the students enrolled come from a variety of academic backgrounds. Some have little or no prior experience in any of the topics central to this course, while others have backgrounds in Philosophy, Mathematics, Science, Logic or all of the above. My goal in this class is to present introductory themes related to the many aspects of the Philosophical Foundations of Science, and to that end, the goal of the projects is to encourage individual (or group) exploration of a specific problem related to Philosophy, Science and/or Mathematics.

Hence the student (or group) is invited to pick a specific topic, research that topic and share the results of your research with your fellow class-mates in a class-room presentation. Those class-room presentations will occur during the last two or three weeks of this course.

Preliminaries

In order to help you along, here are some *required* steps you need to complete along the way.

1. Decide if you will work singly or in a group (I am indifferent to which path you chose)
2. Decide your main interest and topic.

As soon as you know the answer to 1 and 2, please email me your plans. The deadline for letting me know will be **Wednesday March 7** (the week before Spring Break)

Rough Draft: Due Wednesday April 4

After you have decided your topic, create (at the very least) a rough outline of what you plan to cover. Being specific is better than being overly general.

Together with your outline, I need an opening paragraph with a thesis statement. Your opening paragraph should clearly identify the topic of your research and why it is of both Philosophical and Scientific/Mathematical interest.

The period between the rough draft and the final presentation is a good time to consult with me. I can usually direct students to good preliminary and secondary source material. Send me emails, or try to fit some time into my schedule (yes, it is possible)

Final Presentation

I will require an actual written final research paper (typed) before a specific deadline *related to your presentation schedule*. Your written work will be shared with the rest of the students via our class webpage, so that they can read your results, and prepare comments and questions for you after your presentation.

For the presentation of your material, you can “talk us through” the main points of the paper, use power-points or other visual material to help explain your main discoveries, and naturally I am open to suggestions for anything else. You should aim for a total presentation time of 25 minutes, with about 5 minutes of question/answer afterwards (I will always have questions, guaranteed!)

Recall that your final audience will not just be me, but your fellow class-mates. Hence the introduction of complicated arguments or equations, which may be appropriate for me, will not be appropriate for every one else. This is not to say that the treatment of your topic should be superficial. Go as deep as you like, but try, try, try to take the rest of us along with you.

Research Paper details

Typed and submitted to me electronically one week before your scheduled presentation date.

Some form of citation style with a Works Cited page must be used (MLA, APA, etc. you chose your favorite)

At least two academic sources should be consulted. (this *does not* include wikipedia)

No formal minimum or maximum length. But recall, you should plan on being able to present your findings in about a 25 minute presentation. My *guess* would be 8 – 15 pages. If this seems daunting, find a partner, work in a group, and split things up!

Don't plagiarize. If you use material from an external source (which you should), properly cite it.

Grading

Rough Draft	25%
Content of Paper	50%
Presentation	15%
Your written comments to other student papers	10%