

DIMENSIONS OF EVALUATION

Grade	<i>Generally, those papers that meet all the expectations in the grade range are at the top of the range, those at the lower end of the range are missing some of the expectations or meet them at a lower level.</i>
<i>Exceptional (A-A+ range)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear thesis indicating what the author intends to argue. The thesis statement is clear and specific. • A clear focus of the paper in explaining the key themes, positions, and arguments. • Clear organization and structure that emphasizes the logical relationship among the views under consideration. Clearly written, well-structured and organized. • Accurate and detailed exegesis of positions under consideration. • A philosophically significant position taken and defended. Objection/response demonstrate excellent argumentative structure, engagement, and development. • Free of major grammatical errors; appropriate length and format.
<i>Exceeds expectations (B range)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear thesis/focus of discussion. • Lacking some parts of the argument/or lacking detailed explanation of some of the key points. Lacking sufficient detail, specificity, and clarity. • Attempted evaluation, that is, an evaluation that hit on a philosophically significant point-- but not developed in enough detail. Objection/response lacking in argumentative structure, engagement, and development.
<i>Satisfies expectations (C range)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often lacking a thesis at all. Sometimes vague or unclear thesis not clearly connecting to the themes of the paper topic. • Often missed some key points of the argument outlined above or did not develop explanation of these points in enough detail to demonstrate understanding. • Evaluation often very brief and underdeveloped. Or non-existent evaluation of arguments.
<i>Does not satisfy or significantly below expectations (F to D range)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No thesis, no outline of argument. • Failed to understand the goals of the paper topic, but did capture some of the key points to the argument. • Poor writing. • Very short in length, failed to develop ideas. • Also, some in this category misstated positions or made egregious interpretive errors.

Interpretation and Analysis (exegesis)

Significantly below expectations: There is an absence of interpretations and analyses of the philosophical positions and/or a failure to engage the text.

Does not satisfy expectations: Interpretations and analyses of the philosophical positions do not reveal an understanding of “what is at stake” and/or do not effectively identify the basic aims and assumptions of the text.

Satisfies expectations: Interpretations and analyses of the philosophical positions are correct on all basic points and fit within the standard interpretations and show an awareness of the basic assumptions and aims of the text.

Exceeds expectations: Interpretations and analyses of the philosophical positions are clear, precise, and reveal a rich understanding of the basic assumptions, strategies, and aims of the text.

Exceptional: Interpretations and analyses of the philosophical positions are exceptionally clear, precise, and reveal a rich and insightful understanding of the assumptions, strategies, and aims of the text.

Argumentation (your original argument, including an objection and potential response)

Significantly below expectations: There is an absence of argumentation and/or no indication of an awareness of other arguments for or against the position

Does not satisfy expectations: Argumentation is poorly organized, lacking clarity and structure, and not well-reasoned and/or does not effectively demonstrate an understanding of other arguments for and against the position.

Satisfies expectations: The premises clearly support the thesis, and the author is aware of exactly the kind of support they provide. The argument is either valid as it stands, or, if invalid, the thesis, based on the premises, is likely to be or plausibly true.

Exceeds expectations: Argumentation is well-organized, tightly constructed, clearly presented, philosophically sophisticated, effective, and well-reasoned. In addition, it shows a rich understanding of other arguments for and against the position

Exceptional: Argumentation is exceptionally well-organized, tightly constructed, clearly presented, philosophically sophisticated, effective, and well-reasoned.

Methodology (including paper structure)

Significantly below expectations: The project fails to employ fundamental philosophical concepts and methodologies and/or to demonstrate an awareness of theories and traditional approaches to the issue(s).

Does not satisfy expectations: The project is not clearly developed in accordance with fundamental philosophical concepts and methodologies and/or does not effectively demonstrate an understanding of theories and traditional approaches to the issue(s).

Satisfies expectations: The project is developed with a discernible structure and strategy.

Exceeds expectations: The project demonstrates facility with a wide range of philosophical concepts and methodologies. In addition, the project exhibits a deep understanding of the relevant theories and traditional approaches to the issue(s).

Exceptional: The project demonstrates facility with and mastery of a wide range of philosophical concepts and methodologies. In addition, the project exhibits a deep and insightful understanding of the relevant literature, theories and traditional approaches to the issue(s).

Communication

Significantly below expectations: There is an absence of clarity, precision, and/or organization. Plagiarism and/or missed citation.

Does not satisfy expectations: Many sentences are incomplete and/or ungrammatical. The author does not acknowledge that key words have precise meanings. Information (names, facts, etc.) is inaccurate. Paper has many spelling errors, rhetorical questions and/or uses of inappropriate language.

Satisfies expectations: Appropriate tone and word choice are generally employed. The project is developed with a discernible structure and strategy.

Exceeds expectations: Ideas and issues are presented with clarity and precision and in a style that is engaging and thoughtful. Tone and word choice is effective and demonstrates an awareness of the audience by attempting to eliminate potential misunderstandings and confusions. The project is developed according to a clear and effective structure and strategy.

Exceptional: Ideas and issues are presented with clarity and in a style that is engaging, thoughtful, and insightful. Tone and word choice is not only effective, but also elegant and demonstrates an awareness of the audience in a manner which not only eliminates potential misunderstandings but also enriches understanding.

A Checklist for papers

I. Introductory Paragraph

- Introductory Sentence
- Clear Thesis Statement

Reproduce the thesis statement here:

- Roadmap of the paper

*Make sure you haven't started your paper out with an overly flowery or overly broad introductory sentence.

*Make sure your thesis statement is clear and decisive

II. Exegesis / Background Section

- Definition of all relevant terms
- Rehearsal/Reconstruction of all relevant arguments
- Is there extraneous information?
- Is it clear that you are explaining someone else's view and not your own?
- Proper citations used

*Have you provided enough information such that a naïve reader (someone who hasn't taken a philosophy class) can then follow your argument?

III. Your Argument

- Premises support the conclusion (discussed in the introduction to this paper)
- Discrete premises are clear (at least three discrete premises)
- There is support for each of the premises
- It is clear that this is the author's argument, not another philosopher's

*Can a naïve reader reconstruct your argument in list form (P1,P2,P3 -> Conclusion) based on what you have given them?

*In fact, try to reproduce the argument here:

P1:

P2:

P3:

Conclusion:

IV. Objection / Response

- Provide an objection to one of your above premises
- The objection should not be a strawperson
- The objection should be fleshed out and explained
- The objection should be the most serious objection you can think of to your view
- The objection should not be the negation of your main claim
- Provide a response to your objection

V. Conclusion

- Provide a multi-sentence conclusion detailing what you have done in the paper

VI. Errata

- Did you cite all sources used?
- Did you make sure your name does not appear on any of the pages of your paper?