

U2.8 ESSAY: Unit 2 Essay

Purpose

Western philosophy begins with the Ancient Greeks. By approximately 600 BCE, phenomena that was traditionally explained via myth was facing challenges by explanations that were based on observation and logical reasoning. This gives rise to philosophy, a new method to examine everything.

The big metaphysical questions are about the nature of reality, time, divinity, the soul, and death. Plato, a young protégé of Socrates, was one of the first philosophers in the west to articulate a systematic account of all things important to humans: metaphysical questions, epistemological questions about knowledge, as well as questions about morality and beauty.

Aristotle, one of Plato's students and a tutor to Alexander the Great, followed, as the next systematic thinker. Later, the medieval philosophers of theology come to articulate their connections between various metaphysical questions and the divine. For this unit essay, you will be demonstrating your understanding of some of these shifts and influences.

Remember, writing is a process. You should begin working on your essay several days before the due date to ensure that you have time to understand the essay prompt, plan your essay, draft the essay, and proofread and revise your essay before submitting.

Lesson Outcomes

This reflective essay is your opportunity to demonstrate your understanding and mastery of the course learning outcomes as it relates to metaphysics:

1. Articulate philosophical issues and approaches to metaphysics.
2. Describe the views of influential philosophers.
3. Discuss metaphysics as a major branch within the history of philosophy.

Steps to Complete the Task

Step 1: Select an Essay Option

Select one of the following options for the topic of your essay. Review your notes and course materials as you consider which of the four essay options to select.

- **Option 1:** Using Plato's Divided Line, Allegory of the Cave, and simile of the sun compose an essay that explains his Theory of the Forms.
- **Option 2:** Compare and contrast Plato and Aristotle's respective understandings of primary substance, or that which is most real.
- **Option 3:** Using Plato and Augustine, discuss the influence Plato had on Augustine's articulation of the divine. What are the main similarities and differences between their respective understandings of metaphysics and the divine?
- **Option 4:** Discuss how EITHER Aquinas OR Anselm was influenced by Aristotle's metaphysics. What are the main similarities and differences between their respective understandings of metaphysics and the divine?

Step 2: Analyze, Plan, & Gather Resources

1. Look closely at the discussion prompt you've chosen.
 - a. What philosopher are you asked to write about?

- b. What works are referenced?
 - c. Is there more than one philosopher or writing to consider?
 - d. What exactly are you being asked to do? What is the ACTION in the option you've chosen?
For example, are you asked to ...
 - i. Explain or discuss something?
 - ii. Compare and contrast something?
 - iii. Identify similarities and differences (the same basic idea as compare and contrast)?
 - iv. Are you asked to DO more than one thing in the option you've chosen?
2. Review your notes on each of the philosophers and their writings that are specifically identified in the option you've chosen. Do you have notes about the philosophers' philosophical issues and approaches to metaphysics?
- a. If no, then you need to re-read the assigned readings with this purpose in mind.
 - i. Be sure to identify the location of important quotes that will support your explanation of the philosophers' views.
 - b. If yes, did you identify where in the readings you found this information? You will need this information when writing the essay, so if you don't have it, take time to look it up now.,

Step 3: Organize and Write Your Essay

You will **write a 4 to 5-page essay** (properly formatted) addressing the prompt you selected. Remember the three parts of an essay are the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.

The Body of the Essay

Body paragraphs are the "meat" of your essay. This is where you will address the issues brought up in the essay prompt.

1. Please note that you are NOT writing a 5-paragraph essay. You are writing a college-level essay of 4-5 pages.
2. Think of the body as sections. Each section of the body will contain 2-4 paragraphs addressing one of the issues in the essay prompt.
3. You will have as many body sections as you have issues in the essay prompt.
4. Use the planning guide you developed in Step 2 to help you identify the sections needed in your essay.

As you write, make sure that you are writing college-level paragraphs. Each paragraph should have a point, information (details) supporting the point, and an explanation of the significance of the paragraph's point. These details should be explained in your own words.

To review how to write effective college-level paragraph, please review the [Paragraph Development Refresher](#).

In the information and explanation parts of your paragraphs, you will need to directly reference the philosopher's assigned readings based on which you've selected for the essay.

- These references (quotes or paraphrases) should be integrated into the text using MLA, Chicago, or APA citation styles.
- For this length of an essay, you should have 4-5 quotes or paraphrased sections of the text in the body paragraphs of your essay.
- You will also need a Works Cited/References list at the end of the essay, also properly formatted using your selected citation style. **The Works Cited/References page is NOT included in your page count.**
- Information on APA and MLA style: [Purdue OWL Writing Lab](#) or [TCC Writing Center](#)

Introduction and Conclusion Paragraphs

You will need an **introductory paragraph** that explains the focus of the paper. Since this is an essay on metaphysics, introduce this branch of philosophy and indicate the main view of each of the philosophers you cover.

You will include a **concluding paragraph** that addresses the importance of the philosophers and content covered.

Step 4: Review and Revise Your Essay

All writers work through revisions. As such, you will review and revise your essay before submitting. Things to look out for when revising:

- Complex or unique terms defined according to philosopher and/or textbook
- Claims explained in depth
- Proper use of punctuation and grammar
- Efficient organization
- Citations are in proper in format

[Consider scheduling an appointment with the Writing Center](#) if you have questions about punctuation, grammar, finding and citing appropriate sources. I would suggest scheduling a “Writing Center Online LIVE” session or an “On Campus Writing Center” appointment.

Please set up a consultation with me, if you have questions about the content of your essay. My appointment information is available in the syllabus.

Paper Formatting

(Click the linked items below for tutorials on how to perform Word formatting tasks.)

1. The paper should be written on a Word Document.
2. Type your name and the date at the top of the first page.
3. **Title:** Add an original title and center it.
4. **Indent** the first line of each paragraph
5. **Length:** 4 to 5 pages
6. **Font:** Use an easy to read font like Calibri, Times Roman, or Garamond
7. **Font Size:** 11 or 12 is the standard font size
8. **Font Style:** just use regular text, no bolding, italics may be used for foreign words or titles of books, journals, movies, etc.
9. **Margins:** use 1-inch margins on all sides (older versions of Word have bigger margins so you will need to change them)
10. **Spacing:** double-space your text, there is still one "standard" double-space (one line) between paragraphs

[Click here to view an example of how a properly formatted paper will look.](#) I’m not worried about getting the heading exactly the same. Just make sure you have your name and date at the top of the first page. You do not need a title page.

Step 5: Submit Your Essay & Check Your Plagiarism Score

Submitting the Assignment

Your essay should be saved as a Word document (.docx). If you are using another word processor, that is fine. Most apps like Pages or Google Docs allow you to “Save As” or “Export As” a Word document (.docx).

In Blackboard, go to the Unit 2 > 9. ESSAY: Unit 2 Essay area and click the link with the name of the assignment to submit your essay.

Your Plagiarism Report

TCC uses a plagiarism detection tool called SafeAssign. When you submit your paper in Bb, a plagiarism check is automatically run.

1. Within a few hours of submission, you will be able to the gradebook, click on the name of your assignment, and view the SafeAssign Originality Report. (Look for the purple bar in the top-right corner of the assignment window. Then look for the “SafeAssign” link.)
2. Use this report to check to see if you’ve properly cited your sources.
3. If you have multiple citation problems, please revise your essay and resubmit.
4. Review this informational article on [How to read the SafeAssign Originality Report](#).

Criteria for Success

1. **Completeness:** Address each component of the essay prompt and falls within the 4-5 page range
2. **Accurate & Reasonable:** Articulation of philosophical content is factually accurate; interpretations are reasonable (logical)
3. **Depth & Detail:**
 - a. Clearly introduce the topic and each philosopher.
 - b. Use direct reference from the appropriate readings to support your explanation. (4-5 quotes or paraphrased sections).
 - c. Correctly use in-text citations with a Works Cited/References page at the end of your essay (MLA, APA, or Chicago citation styles) ***The Works Cited/References page is NOT included in your page count.***
4. **Writing Style:**
 - a. Make sure your own voice comes through. The paper should sound "like you" not like the Internet or the philosophers you’re writing about.
 - b. Use academic English (no slang or texting language) with minimal errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling. (Hint: read your responses out loud before submitting.)
 - c. Be properly formatted (double-spaced) and include a title, introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.

If your essay meets these criteria, you will earn points for the essay as follows:

Completeness	40 points
Accurate & Reasonable	50 points
Depth & Detail	25 points
<u>Writing Style</u>	<u>10 points</u>
TOTAL	125 points

The specific grading rubric with points and levels of achievement is found within the Bb course site. You can go to the gradebook and click the “View Rubric” link under the name of the assignment.