

Philosophy of Physics Grading Rubric

General Guidelines

The relative weight assigned to the following categories is intended to give you a good idea of what virtues we want an assignment to exhibit, not to pretend that there exists some automatic mechanism for grading philosophy assignments. Each category is evaluated at either three or five levels of quality, depending on the relative weight of the category.

Presentations

The standards for presentation grading are as follows:

(1) Organisation (10%)

- well-organised: indicates the main topics to be covered, where they come from in the text, and how they relate to each other. Justifies the chosen focus.
- somewhat organised: indicates the main topics to be covered and which texts they come from
- poorly organised: does not explicitly share the organisation of the seminar with the other participants

(2) Exposition (40%)

- excellent exposition: mastery of material, conveys complete comprehension to participants, focuses on the most important points
- good exposition: no major mistake, conveys main line of argument to participants
- fair exposition: no major mistake, shows grasp of material, but conveys it inadequately
- poor exposition: major mistakes or doesn't show grasp of main argument
- misfire: completely off target

(3) Critique (10%)

- thoughtful: accurately indicates the limitations of the arguments and shows that author has thought about issue independently
- unoriginal: presents counter-claims, but they come entirely from the other readings and/or do not clearly indicate how they impact the argument
- ineffective: fails to indicate genuine difficulties with the presented arguments

(4) Visual aid [handout, slides, or whiteboard] (30%)

- very helpful: clearly indicates the organisation of the seminar, summarises the main arguments clearly, and adds helpful graphics or videos to explain difficult points in the text
- helpful: adequately indicates the organisation of the seminar and summarises the main arguments
- unhelpful: does not allow the viewer to grasp the main arguments

(5) Seminar leadership (10%)

- well-led: recognises when students have questions and answers them or directs them to instructors as appropriate, while moving to keep the seminar on-topic and complete the presentation
- adequately led: is able to recognize and answer some questions
- poorly led: does not engage the other participants

Papers

Papers must be:

- Within the indicated word limit, with the word count clearly indicated
- On-topic (please consider discussion topics with instructors in advance)
- Submitted on-time
- Properly cited (if the plagiarism case is sufficiently severe, it's an automatic zero)

Papers which fail to meet these standards will receive a general deduction.

The standards for paper grading are as follows:

(1) Writing (10%)

- well written: easy to read with short, clear sentences, no recurring grammatical errors
- no recurring errors, though not easy to read (e.g., difficult sentence structure)
- very difficult to read or recurring grammatical errors

(2) Organisation (10%)

- clearly organised: clear paragraphs and transitions, structure of paper reflects structure of argument
- somewhat organised: reader is sometimes lost
- poorly organised: reader is often lost

(3) Exposition (30%)

- excellent exposition: mastery of material, conveys complete comprehension to reader
- good exposition: no major mistake, conveys main line of argument to reader
- fair exposition: no major mistake, shows grasp of material, but conveys it inadequately
- poor exposition: major mistakes or doesn't show grasp of main argument
- misfire: completely off target

(4) Critique: effectiveness (30%)

- highly effective: effectively overturns a major claim, or casts the argument into doubt
- effective: makes well-supported point and shows understanding of what has been achieved
- somewhat effective: lacks development or makes minor argumentative errors or doesn't understand what's been accomplished
- somewhat ineffective: has promise of amounting to more than mere counter-assertion
- ineffective: makes large argumentative errors or amounts to mere counter-assertion or doesn't engage with exposition or is opaque to reader

(5) Critique: originality (20%)

- creative: shows significant creativity and originality
- thoughtful: shows that author has thought about issue independently
- unoriginal: rehashes reading or class material