

Evaluation Criteria	Exceeds Expectations 100%	Meets Expectations 80%	Approaches Expectations 70%	Below Expectations 60%
I. Thesis The thesis of the essay is the <u>main conclusion of your core argument</u> . It should address the main issue of the writing scenario and be clearly presented in the introduction to the essay. (10 points)	The thesis is presented in the introduction and is a clear, unambiguous statement that responds to the appropriate issue. The main argument is introduced with the thesis. (10)	The thesis is presented in the introduction and is a clear, unambiguous statement that responds to the appropriate issue. (8)	The thesis is presented in the introduction and responds partially or fully to the appropriate issue but is equivocal or ambiguous or stated indirectly. (7)	The thesis does not respond to the appropriate issue or is not presented in the introduction or is not presented at all. (6)
II. Claims Claims are the main premises or <u>reasons</u> that you offer in support of your thesis and core argument. Your claims should provide reasonable and relevant support for your thesis and core argument. They are supported by authoritative* sources. (20 points)	The essay introduces a series of reasonable and relevant claims in support of the thesis. Claims are supported with <u>sub-arguments and authoritative* sources</u> . Claims employ clear and unambiguous terms that are not emotionally charged. (20)	Most of the claims are as described in the column to the left. BUT: One or, at most, two claims are described in the column to the right. (16)	Most or all of the claims are unacceptable at face value or are not supported with cogent sub-arguments. Evidence is derived from <u>non-authoritative sources or anecdote</u> . † Claims employ emotionally charged language, and are only minimally relevant to the thesis. (14)	There are few if any claims offered in support of the thesis. The author simply <u>states an opinion</u> and often begs the question. Many claims simply restate facts from the writing scenario or reiterate general ideas. The argument is often stated by means of <u>rhetorical questions</u> . (12)
III. Support Taken collectively your claims should provide sufficient <u>support for your thesis</u> to persuade a reasonable and informed person that your thesis is acceptable. (20 points)	The essay offers a series of claims that provide <u>strong</u> support for the thesis. The arguments are well developed and internally consistent. The essay anticipates possible objections and counterarguments. (20)	The essay provides <u>adequate</u> support for the thesis. Claims are presented in a logical order and establish a clear chain of reasoning, but there are <u>missing links</u> or otherwise <u>under-developed arguments</u> . The essay doesn't anticipate possible objections and counterarguments. (16)	The essay has only weak support for the thesis. Arguments are poorly developed, with many <u>missing links or logical failures</u> . Obvious objections and/or <u>counterarguments are ignored</u> . (14)	The essay offers little or no support for the thesis. Claims are presented in a seemingly random order. There is no apparent order establishing a logical argument. Serious errors of reasoning are made. There are obvious objections and/or counterarguments that are not addressed. (12)
IV. Ethical Framework Philosophical arguments should reflect a commitment to a coherent, developed, and reasonable theoretical framework, drawn from classical ethical theory or contemporary ethical arguments. (20 points)	The arguments and claims collectively reflect a single, well-established coherent ethical framework. The author demonstrates a command of the relevant ethical concepts and arguments. Claims attributed to specific ethical theories are accurately and charitably made. (20)	The claims may be somewhat inconsistent and arguments are presented drawing on <u>divergent ethical frameworks</u> . The author fails to demonstrate a command of the relevant ethical concepts and arguments. Claims attributed to specific ethical theories <u>may be misleading</u> . (16)	The author relies on a <u>weak</u> or conceptually flawed ethical framework. The author fails to demonstrate a command of the relevant ethical theories. The framework relied upon has obvious deficiencies not addressed in the essay. Claims attributed to specific ethical theories are <u>inaccurate</u> . (14)	There is no coherent, well established ethical framework in the essay. The essay mostly summarizes key facts of the writing scenario and engages in little or no analysis. Claims attributed to ethicists or ethical theories are obviously wrong. (12)
V. Organization A good philosophy essay will have an introduction that states the thesis and briefly provides an overview of the argument, a body that logically develops the key arguments, and a conclusion that ties everything together. (10 points)	The essay has a clear concise introduction that establishes the thesis and briefly reviews the core argument. The body of the essay presents a linked series of claims supporting the thesis and introduced in a reasonable manner. The conclusion ties things together and addresses any relevant remaining points. (10)	The essay's concise introduction establishes the thesis. The direction of the core argument is not clear. The body presents a series of linked claims supporting the thesis but the order of claims and direction of reasoning is not clear. The conclusion largely reiterates relevant points from the introduction. (8)	The essay's introduction rehearses relevant details of the prompt. The direction of reasoning in the essay is not apparent and it is not clear how the author transitions from one paragraph to another. The conclusion repeats points made in the introduction, or introduces new points not made in the body. (7)	The essay has an overly long introduction that doesn't clearly introduce the thesis and doesn't indicate the direction of argument. The body presents ideas in an unorganized fashion. There is no conclusion. (6)
VI. Style You should strive to present your ideas clearly and concisely, avoiding vague and ambiguous language, using well-defined terms and examples, and avoiding informal or colloquial language. (10 points)	The author demonstrates a sophisticated command of language. Ideas are presented clearly, concisely, and precisely. Avoids language that is vague, ambiguous, emotionally charged, or overly colloquial. Key terms and examples are well-defined. No irrelevant content is included. (10)	Ideas are presented clearly but could be more concise. Language is occasionally vague, ambiguous, emotionally charged, or colloquial. Key terms and counterexamples are left undefined. Irrelevant content is included. (8)	Ideas are not presented clearly and concisely. There is much content that can be condensed. Language is often vague, ambiguous, emotionally charged, or overly colloquial. Key terms are poorly or wrongly defined. Irrelevant content is included. Word choice is often poor. (7)	Ideas are presented poorly, are neither clear nor precise. There is repetition of ideas and many passages that could be condensed. Much of the language is vague and ambiguous. Much of the content is irrelevant. (6)
VII. Mechanics Your essay should be free of problems related to spelling, punctuation, grammar, and syntax, and should reflect an academic writing style. (10 points)	There are no errors of spelling, punctuation, or grammar. The author employs college-level sentence structure in accordance with standard English. (10)	There are minimal errors of spelling, punctuation, or grammar. The author mostly employs standard college-level sentence structure with no serious deviations from standard English. (8)	There are a few errors of spelling, punctuation, or grammar. The author employs simple sentence structure with deviations from standard English. (7)	There are several errors of spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The author employs minimally basic sentence structure. There are distracting deviations from standard English. (6)

*As defined by the instructor †“non-authoritative,” e.g., Wikipedia, Answers.com, “personal interest” stories in the media; “pro/con” sites that do *not* quote authoritative sources