

Phil 164, Spring 2018 Grading Information for All Assignments

Grades will be assigned according to the rubrics below. Additionally:

- * In all cases, points may be deducted for late work as described on the syllabus.
- * 1-3 points may be deducted for failing to respond to the assignment instructions: e.g. writing on the wrong topic, significantly too long or too short, or not including all of the required parts of the assignment.

Here is some additional information about end-of-semester grades:

- * Numerical values are provided for record-keeping purposes. For end-of-semester grades, we will use the standard UMass cutoffs (described below).

Highest	Lowest	Letter
100.00 %	93.00 %	A
92.99 %	90.00 %	A-
89.99 %	87.00 %	B+
86.99 %	83.00 %	B
82.99 %	80.00 %	B-
79.99 %	77.00 %	C+
76.99 %	73.00 %	C
72.99 %	70.00 %	C-
69.99 %	67.00 %	D+
66.99 %	60.00 %	D
59.99 %	0.00 %	F

This is a screenshot from Moodle showing the standard UMass numerical-to-letter-grade conversion. Our grading will correspond to this scale.

The numerical grade we will assign for your papers, using the rubrics below, will always be the midpoint of one of the ranges set out here. This means that when we calculate the weighted average at the end, the letter grades will not be distorted.

Rubric for papers 1 and 2 (argument + objection)

	Excellent	Good	Needs work	Poor
Accuracy (6 points available)	<p>Excellent understanding of the argument you are summarizing and the objection you are considering.</p> <p>Uses appropriate details and citations from the text(s).</p> <p>The essay considers a forceful and relevant objection. The dialectic between the argument and objection is clear.</p> <p>(5-6 points)</p>	<p>Mostly right; some minor details misstated or omitted.</p> <p>Uses appropriate details and citations from the text(s).</p> <p>The essay considers a forceful and relevant objection.</p> <p>(3-4 points)</p>	<p>Significant misunderstandings. Important pieces of the argument are misstated or omitted.</p> <p>Little to no textual evidence to back up your understanding of the debate.</p> <p>The essay considers an objection, but the objection is weak or irrelevant.</p> <p>(1-2 points)</p>	<p>Very substantial misunderstandings. Important pieces of the argument are misstated or omitted.</p> <p>Textual evidence is missing or irrelevant.</p> <p>Objection is misstated, irrelevant, or missing.</p> <p>(0 points)</p>
Clarity (4 points available)	<p>Few, if any, spelling or grammatical errors.</p> <p>Reads well. Would clearly convey the dispute to someone who had not taken the class.</p> <p>(4 points)</p>	<p>Some spelling or grammatical errors.</p> <p>Mostly readable; includes some confusing passages.</p> <p>(3 points)</p>	<p>Significant errors that interfere with understanding. (For instance: many spelling errors, ungrammatical sentences, no paragraph breaks...) Or: wastes space on irrelevant tangents that distract from the main point.</p> <p>(1-2 points)</p>	<p>Very difficult to understand; many errors.</p> <p>(0 points)</p>

A+ (98.5%) 10 pts

A (95%) 9 pts

A- (91.5%) 8 pts

B+ (88.5%) 7 pts

B (85%) 6 pts

B- (81.99%) 5 pts

C+ (78.5%) 4 pts

C (75%) 3 pts

C- (71.5%) 2 pts

D (68.5%) 1 pt

F (58.5%) 0 pts but turned in

0 Not turned in

Rubric for papers 3 and 4 (full paper: argument + objection + reply, with intro and conclusion)

	Excellent	Good	Needs work	Poor
Accuracy (6 points available)	Excellent understanding of the argument you are summarizing. Uses appropriate details and citations from the text to back up the views you are attributing to authors. Citations provided for any empirical claims. (5-6 points)	Mostly right; some minor details misstated or omitted. Uses appropriate details and citations from the text to back up the views you are attributing to authors. Citations provided for any empirical claims. (3-4 points)	Significant misunderstandings. Important pieces of the argument are misstated or omitted. Little to no textual evidence to back up your understanding of the argument. Argument rests on some unsubstantiated empirical claims. (1-2 points)	Very substantial misunderstandings. Important pieces of the argument are misstated or omitted. Textual evidence is missing or irrelevant. Significant unsubstantiated empirical claims. (0 points)
Clarity (4 points available)	Few, if any, spelling or grammatical errors. Reads well. Would clearly convey the argument to someone who had not taken the class. Intro gives a “road map” for the rest of the paper, incl. a thesis. Conclusion clearly states the thesis and how it was arrived at. Good “signposting” throughout. (4 points)	Some spelling or grammatical errors. Mostly readable; includes some confusing passages. Adequate road map and signposting throughout. (3 points)	Significant errors that interfere with understanding. (For instance: many spelling errors, ungrammatical sentences, no paragraph breaks...) Road map or thesis is missing or unclear. Structure is hard to follow. (1-2 points)	Very difficult to understand; many errors. Road map or thesis is missing. Structure is unclear. The paper does not come together as a coherent argument. (0 points)
Original, critical thought (3 points available)	The paper considers an original, relevant reply to the objection. The paper clearly sets out the “next step” in the conversation. (3 points)	The paper considers a relevant reply, but it is either not very forceful or not original. (2 points)	The paper considers a reply, but it is either very weak or irrelevant. (1 point)	Reply is missing or very irrelevant. (0 points)

A+ (98.5%) 13 pts
A (95%) 12 pts
A- (91.5%) 11 pts

B+ (88.5%) 10 pts
B (85%) 9 pts
B- (81.99%) 8 pts

C+ (78.5%) 7 pts
C (75%) 6 pts
C- (71.5%) 5 pts

D (68.5%) <5 pt
F (58.5%) 0 pts but turned in
0 Not turned in

Rubric for group projects (Individual group project grades will be determined 90% by the rubric grade, and 10% by peer- and self-assessment.)

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Poor
Empirical overview (3 points available)	<p>Informative summary of relevant background and historical context. Audience can clearly see how this question is relevant to the medical field.</p> <p>Reputable sources provided. Group indicates which claim comes from which source, either out loud or in written material.</p> <p>(3 points)</p>	<p>Mostly informative summary of relevant background and historical context.</p> <p>Reputable sources provided. Group indicates which claim comes from which source, either out loud or in written material.</p> <p>(2 points)</p>	<p>Empirical background is so-so: sometimes informative and relevant, but sometimes irrelevant or drawn from inappropriate sources.</p> <p>(1 point)</p>	<p>Empirical background is irrelevant or very sparse. Sources are not provided or not appropriate.</p> <p>(0 points)</p>
Philosophical arguments (6 points available)	<p>Presentation discusses one compelling argument on each side, perhaps mentioning and responding to obvious objections. Audience gets a clear sense of the debate.</p> <p>Arguments are drawn from appropriate sources (philosophy articles), and citations are provided for the audience.</p> <p>(6 points)</p>	<p>Presentation discusses one compelling argument on each side, perhaps mentioning and responding to obvious objections. Some minor mistakes or omissions.</p> <p>Arguments are drawn from appropriate sources (philosophy articles), and citations are provided for the audience.</p> <p>(4-5 points)</p>	<p>Presentation discusses one argument on each side, but does not explain the argument well. Audience comes away confused about the reasons for and against each side.</p> <p>Sources may be missing.</p> <p>(2-3 points)</p>	<p>Arguments are missing, very unclear, or drawn from inappropriate sources.</p> <p>(0-1 point)</p>
Quality of presentation (4 points available)	<p>Presentation is easy to follow and presents the information in an organized manner.</p> <p>(4 points)</p>	<p>Presentation is fairly easy to follow and presents the information in an organized manner. Some unclarities or disorganization.</p> <p>(2-3 points)</p>	<p>Presentation is disorganized and hard to follow.</p> <p>(1 point)</p>	<p>Presentation is significantly too short or too long; OR very disorganized and hard to follow.</p> <p>(0 points)</p>

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C+ (78.5%) 7 pts
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C- (71.5%) 5 pts

D (68.5%) <5 pt
F (58.5%) 0 pts but turned in
0 Not turned in