

Signature Assignment for AA/IDS/I [=BA/PHI/1]

Course: 320 Medieval Philosophy
Instructor: Dr. Jason L. Reed
Assignment Title: Research Paper

Outcomes to be assessed: PHI/BA/1: Articulate the philosophical views, theories, and methods contained in the primary works of historically important philosophers.

Assignment Description: The research paper is meant to measure how well students can accurately read and understand philosophical works. Papers will be judged on how accurately the philosopher's idea(s) is expressed, does it deal with issues relevant to the philosopher's ideas (or is time spend discussion non-relevant issues?), and is the evaluation coherently structured.

You may choose to write your paper on one of the topics given below. Papers should be approximately 6-8 double spaced typed pages. They must be typed. The papers should follow the guidelines of Turabian's' *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* for footnotes and bibliographical entries. Bibliographies should include at least 3 articles form the *Philosopher's Index*. No papers will qualify for an A unless they are reasonably free of grammatical and spelling errors as well as ill-formed sentences.

Evaluation criteria: The paper will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

Rubrics for PHI/BA/1

R1.1: The philosophical ideas discussed (theories, arguments, and methods) are explained clearly.

R1.2: The philosophical ideas discussed (theories, arguments, and methods) are logically organized.

R1.3: The student demonstrates understanding of the philosophical ideas discussed.

Each student will be given a numerical grade assessing how well their research paper meets the evaluative criteria expressed in the above rubrics.

4= Exceeds Expectations: The skill, or understanding, identified in the rubric is demonstrated excellently, or masterfully in the paper.

3= Meets All Expectations: The skill, or understanding, identified in the rubric receives reasonably good expression in the paper.

2= Meets Most Expectations: The skill, or understanding, identified in the rubric is displayed only in an average, or mediocre way, for the most part, in the paper.

1= Meets Some Expectations: The skill, or understanding, identified in the rubric is displayed very little, and for the most part poorly, in the paper.

0= Unable to Score (Missing or Incomplete Work): There is insufficient information to evaluate the paper on how well it satisfies this rubric.

Paper topics:

You can choose one of the topics given below or choose one of your own. The topic that you choose on your own requires pre-approval.

- The logos concept in Greek and Christian thought
- Faith and reason in early Christian thought
- A comparison of St. Augustine and St. Thomas on Divine Illumination.
- Augustine's Platonism
- A critique (or defense) of Augustine's theological determinism
- St. Anselm's Argument for God's existence.
- St. Anselm's Perfect Being Theology.
- A comparison of St. Thomas and Moses Maimonides on naming God.
- The controversy over universals in the Middle Ages
- Contemporary critics and defenders of Anselm's ontological argument
- A comparison and contrast of Augustine's and Aquinas's epistemology
- Bonaventure vs. Aquinas on whether the world necessarily had a beginning
- The medieval controversy over intellectualism vs. voluntarism in ethics
- Ockham's contribution to the decline of medieval thought
- Ockham's influence on modern philosophy