

WRITING ASSIGNMENT 4

Longer Essay: 30% of your final grade

Due Date

11:59 PM, Thursday, Dec 12

Assignments must be submitted through Turnitin on CCLE.

Topic & Structure

Your assignment is to write an essay of no more than 1000 words (approximately 3 pages) about the Knowledge Argument against Physicalism. Your job is to describe the argument and a reply, and ultimately to evaluate both the reply and the argument. Your essay should consist of 3 major sections, outlined below, and divided up as you choose. Be sure that your TA can easily distinguish each section, and watch that each paragraph within each section serves a clear and unified point.

<p>Part 0. Introduction</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p><i>Explain the outline of the paper. What will you be saying? What will you conclude?</i></p>	<p>5%</p>
<p>Part 1. The Argument</p>	<p>Introduce the argument</p> <p><i>What is the point of the argument? Does it support or attack dualism or physicalism? Provide any necessary background or scene-setting for Premises 1 and 2.</i></p> <p>Premises</p> <p><i>State and explain Premise 1 and 2. Why is each premise plausible or even likely true? Introduce key concepts (like “consciousness”) along the way, if you haven’t already.</i></p> <p>Conclusion.</p> <p><i>State and explain the Conclusion. Explain why the conclusion is implied by the premises. What does it mean for the dualism/physicalism debate?</i></p>	<p>30%</p>
<p>Part 2. The Reply</p>	<p>Reply</p> <p><i>Identify an especially promising or interesting reply to the argument. (It can be one we discussed in class or something else.) Be sure to identify <u>one</u> premise which the reply claims is false. Explain the reply: what is it claiming? What concepts does it draw on? Also justify the reply: why is it plausible?</i></p>	<p>30%</p>
<p>Part 3. Evaluation</p>	<p>Evaluation</p> <p><i>In your judgement, does the reply succeed? If not, what is the most serious worry about the reply? If yes, how do you overcome the most serious worry about the reply?</i></p> <p><i>Either way, what are the consequences for (i) the success of the knowledge argument; (ii) the dualism/physicalism debate more broadly? Ultimately, in light of the argument, the reply, and your evaluation, what view of the mind seems correct to you?</i></p>	<p>35%</p>

Advanced Options

You should only pursue one of these options if you have done well on previous papers, and feel comfortable with the material. In either case, the paper should be as clear and structured as the standard assignment, and should have an equally clear thesis.

Advanced Option 1: write a 1000 word paper on consciousness based on Nagel’s argument from “What is it like to be a bat?”

Advanced Option 2: write a 1000 word paper on the Correlation Argument (or Simplicity Argument) for physicalism, discussed by Kim.

Writing Constraints

- The paper should be submitted anonymously. Do NOT include your name. DO include your student ID #.
- The paper must be no more than 1000 words. (Use the “word count” function in your word-processor.) Title, citations, and bibliography do not count towards the word limit.
- No limit on number of words per sentence.
- The paper must be double spaced.
- The font size must be 12 point.

Quotation Policy

- (1) Do not quote any source, with the following exceptions:
 - a. Boxed definitions from the handout. But do not quote the “core idea” text,
 - b. Individual words or terms used by an author.
- (2) Instead of quoting, describe the author’s position in your own words.
- (3) Remember that word-for-word paraphrase is a form of plagiarism, so when you describe someone’s view, use your own phrasing. (Ask your TA if you aren’t sure what a word-for-word paraphrase is.)

Citation Policy

- (1) Use at least two readings as sources for your discussion. Citations from the handouts and outside readings do not count toward the two source minimum.
- (2) Cite two readings within the body of the text.
- (3) External sources are allowed, but discouraged. Of course they must be cited.
- (4) If you quote material from handouts, you must include a citation and bibliography entry.
- (5) Otherwise, you can use ideas (but not exact phrases) from handouts and lecture without citation.
- (6) Do cite all readings (or external sources) which you use, in the following way: at the end of the series of sentences in which you make reference to that reading write (Author Date, Page) e.g. “(Huxley 1874, p.13)”.
- (7) Any sources that are cited in the text must be listed in the bibliography. Any readable and complete bibliography style is acceptable.

Evaluation

Your paper will be graded along four dimensions:

- (1) Understanding. Have you correctly described the views and claims at issue? Have you done so without mixing in your own opinion?
- (2) Clarity & Precision. Have you expressed yourself in a way that is both clear and precise? Have you avoided ambiguity and merely suggestive language?
- (3) Dialectic. Do you understand how the various claims interact logically? Do you understand why some are compatible and others are not? Does your assessment of the claims make sense?
- (4) Writing policies. Have you followed the citation and quotation policy? Are your sentences really under 18 words long?