

## PHIL 210 Assessment: Reflective Journal (30%)

Throughout this course, you will be invited to write about what you are learning in a Reflective Journal. You should consider your journal as a place for you to try out new ideas, to test your assumptions, and possibly share what you are learning with your community.

This assessment is worth 30% of your course grade. You will complete a Reflective Journal entry for Units 1, 4, 7, 8, and 9 (6% each).

### *Instructions:*

There are three steps to submitting your Reflective Journal:

**Step 1:** Respond to the questions presented in the unit.

**Step 2:** Discuss your reflections in class. Take notes on key learning from the discussion.

**Step 3:** Submit your final Reflective Journal entry to your professor via the Moodle assignment dropbox. Be sure to include any final ideas you learned through the class discussions.

### *Guidelines for Discussion Responses*

Bring your Reflective Journal to class and share your responses with your peers. Take notes, as you will need to share 1-2 more ideas in your journal response, highlighting what you learned from the discussion with your peers.

As you discuss, be sure to respond substantively.

*Substantive responses may include:*

- Providing a new thought, idea, or perspective;
- Citing an experience or example of what we are learning;
- Adding a new twist on a perspective;
- Critically thinking about an idea/concept;
- Questioning or challenging a principle/perspective;
- Asking a question or making a comment that shows you are interested in what another person says or encourages another person to elaborate on something they have already said;
- Sharing a resource (a reading, web link, video) not covered in the syllabus that adds new information or perspectives to our learning;
- Making a comment that underscores the link between two people's contributions and making this link explicit in your comment. Or making a summary observation that takes into account several people's contributions and that touches on a recurring theme in the discussion.

What Substantive Participation is **NOT**:

- Very basic comments such as "I agree" or "I disagree;"
- Restating what has been said (*unless there is a direct purpose in doing so*);

- Disrespectfully disagreeing;
- Pat answers that are not thought-provoking or do not move the dialogue forward;

Below are examples of how to stimulate your own and others' thinking:

- What would happen if...
- Other times it may be helpful to...
- It is my understanding...what is your experience with this?
- You might approach this from...
- Is it possible that...
- Would you consider...
- Maybe...
- Possibly...
- Sometimes...
- I'm wondering if...
- Do you think...

#### *Assignment Submission*

Assignments should be submitted on Moodle by the end of the week (confirm date with your Facilitator). Be sure to include your initial journal response, as well as ideas from your class discussion.

#### *Grading Rubric:*

Here are the grading criteria that will be used to mark your journal and discussions:

	Criteria	Weighting
<b>Comprehensiveness</b>	Evidence of having reviewed all readings and comprehensiveness of responses to questions	/5
<b>Critical Thinking and Self-Reflection</b>	Demonstration of your ability to use critical thinking and self-reflection in discussing thoughts and feelings about the course material and the course in general.	/5
<b>Personal Application</b>	Integration of your views of the readings with your own experiences, biases, and knowledge of ethics.	/5
<b>Communication Skills</b>	Demonstration of your ability to communicate your ideas in writing and to organize your responses clearly, thoroughly, and concisely.	/5
<b>Discussion Participation</b>	Participation in discussions. Responses are thoughtful and insightful and promote the learning of fellow students.	/5

## Unit Questions

### Unit 1: (6%)

After completing this unit, including the learning activities, you are asked to write a 400-500 word journal entry responding to the following questions:

- Take one or two of the thought experiments presented in Unit 1 and explain briefly the difficulty of the dilemmas.
- How would moral reasoning help us?
- What are two ways principles of moral reasoning could provide direction in resolving the dilemmas in the thought experiences?
- In your response, work with key terms and concepts from your readings. Show how a cultural relativist would approach this issue differently from a moral objectivist.

### Unit 4: (6%)

For your second Reflective Journal in this course, you are invited to write about what you have learned in this unit. Remember that you should consider your journal as a place for you to try out new ideas, to test your assumptions, and to possibly share what you are learning with your community.

After completing this unit, including the learning activities, you are asked to write a 250-400 word journal entry responding to the following question: “Why Be Moral?”

### Unit 7: (6%)

After completing this unit, including the learning activities, you are asked to write a Reflective Journal entry of 250-400 words, answering the following:

Examine Peter Singer’s basis for moral obligation to animals, including an analysis of Singer’s extension of the principle of equality to animals. On what is this principle based? What does it mean to say animals are “equal” to humans? State your agreement or disagreement with this principle along with your reasons.

In addition, consider the issue of animal abuse. What steps could you take to solve this problem or advocate for animal rights?

### Unit 8: (6%)

After completing this unit, including the learning activities, you are asked to write about what you have learned in this unit.

State John Stuart Mill’s case for the moral permissibility of capital punishment and show how it grows out of his utilitarian perspective. Then explain a number of questions Hugo Bedau would raise about the argument made by Mill. Tell why, in the end, he would favour the abolition of capital punishment. Finally, discuss which view, Bedau’s or Mill’s, you would prefer and why.

## Unit 9: (6%)

After completing this unit, including the learning activities, you are asked to write about what you have learned in this unit. Remember that you should consider your journal as a place for you to try out new ideas, to test your assumptions, and to share what you are learning with your community.

Write a 250-400 word journal response discussing the reasons Alan Dershowitz believes that, in certain cases, torture is morally permissible when carried out under rigorous regulations. Then show how he believes his view follows from a utilitarian perspective. Following that, analyze his view and formulate two searching questions you think he would need to answer to defend his view further. Finally, tell how you think a different utilitarian thinker could argue against the moral permissibility of torture?