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Lehman College CUNY

PHI 169 - Fall 2014

The Final Paper

Parts of a Paper

1. Introduction
2. Body
3. Conclusion

The Purpose of the Introduction

To introduce the reader to the topic, and more specifically, to persuade the reader that the topic is important and worth reading about

What the Introduction Contains

It depends on what you want to do in the paper, but typically, a good introduction contains:

- A. History, data and statistics relevant to the topic
- B. Definitions of the main concepts and ideas
- C. Plan for what is to come in the rest of the paper

Examples of Introductions

(1) Have a look at the BBC Article on Capital Punishment

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/capitalpunishment/>

(2) Go back to my introductory slides when we discussed same sex marriage

Next, the Body of the Paper

What the Body of the Paper Does

1. Focus on one or a few specific questions and lay out the space of possible answers
2. Lay out arguments for and against certain answers and carefully scrutinize those arguments

Examples of Specific Questions

Should the death penalty be allowed in the United States for violent crimes such as murder?

Is the death penalty morally wrong?

Under what circumstances is the death penalty allowed if at all?

Scrutinizing Arguments

Have a look at how the BBC article on capital punishment formulates and scrutinizes different arguments

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/capitalpunishment/>

Ideally, you should use the graphical argument reconstruction you learned at the beginning of the course, so that you can

- (1) identify the premises of an argument, and
- (2) challenge the weak or implausible premises.

What the Conclusion Does

1. Summary of the main results of the paper
2. Raise awareness of certain unspoken ideological assumptions underlying the arguments for and against a certain position as discussed in the paper
3. Raise open questions for future research

How to Write a Paper

- Write the body of the paper first
- Write the introduction and the conclusion last
- Write a first draft and then revise it several times until it is perfect

For Monday

- Write down a first draft of the introduction
- Write down a first draft of the body of the paper

In class on Monday, you'll have the opportunity to present and workshop your paper draft and get feedback from your fellow classmates and me.

Grading Criteria

- **A range** — The paper does everything the paper is supposed to do (*see previous slides*). The paper is written in clear and elegant English. The paper shows subtlety, depth and precision in the analysis and scrutiny of the arguments.
- **B range** — The paper does everything the paper is supposed to do (*see previous slides*). The paper is at times unclear. The paper shows subtlety, depth and precision in the analysis and scrutiny of the arguments, although at times the analysis of certain arguments is superficial and cursory.
- **C range** — The paper does everything the paper is supposed to do (*see previous slides*). The paper is at times unclear. The paper shows limited subtlety, depth and precision in the analysis and scrutiny of the arguments.

If you were to hand in a written version of your presentation without showing any additional work, you would get a C or lower.

Expected Amount of Work

Each one of you should spend **AT LEAST**
6-8 hours working on the final paper

Final Paper is Due Wednesday
December 17th by Midnight *Via Email*
