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Lehman College CUNY

PHI 169 - Spring 2016

The Final Paper

Do Not Forget What We Did in the Course

arguments: premises v. conclusion; deductive v. inductive; good v. bad

necessary v. sufficient conditions

correlation v. causation

data and statistics: collecting them; visualizing them; interpreting them

fact checking: quantitative information v. anecdotes/stories

types of questions: definitional; descriptive; etiological; normative

reasoning beyond facts

As You Write the Final Paper Apply the Skills You Have Learned in the Course

Parts of a Paper

1. Motivation ("hook")

2. Introduction

3. Body

4. Conclusion

Paper should be a "Coherent Whole"

✤ Parts of the paper should all "hang together"

✤ Every sentence should be connected to the main message or thesis and to the sentences preceding it and following it

✤ Read every sentence *at least 10 times* and ask yourself:

    ✤ Why is it there?

    ✤ What does it do in the paper?

    ✤ Does it relate to the main message of the paper?

    ✤ Is it clearly and elegantly written?

What the Motivation and Introduction Should Contain

It depends on what you want to do, but typically:

    A. Invitation to the topic

    B. Definitions of the main concepts and ideas

    C. Main message or thesis and goal of the paper

    D. Plan for what is to come in the rest of the paper

An Example

BBC Article on Capital Punishment

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

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; *or*

2. If you are taking a stance, defend a specific thesis, consider objections and respond to the objections; *or*

3. If you are not taking a stance, lay out arguments for and against a certain position and scrutinize them

What the Conclusion Does

1. Summary ("take-home message")

2. Open questions and 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*

Grading Criteria

- **A range** — The paper does <u>everything</u> 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 <u>everything</u> 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 <u>everything</u> 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.

Final Paper is Due **May 23rd**

No Late Papers Will be Accepted