

Spring 2026 Introduction to Philosophy Grading Rubric

[Download the Course Rubric Here](#)

Weekly Reflections: Each reflection is worth a possible total of 8 points. There are 12 possible reflections. I will only grade 8 or your best reflections.

Reflective Analysis 1 & 2 (160 points): Each reflective analysis is worth a possible total of 20 points per category, times 4 categories equals 80 points times 2 reflection pieces.

Essay 1 & 2 (80 points): Each Quiz is worth a possible total of 10 points per category, times 4 categories equals 40 points times 2 Quizzes.

Presentation: Your grade in this area depends on your preparation and participation in the DND class meetings. [We will use the dnd adventure sheet linked here to gage participation.](#)

Students will be evaluated based on a total of 640 points, with the final grade determined by the percentage of points earned. The components are as follows:

There are four possible point values for each category:

1. An unacceptable category area is worth 1/4 of the possible points for that category.
2. One that needs improvement is worth 1/2 of the possible points for that category.
3. A good submission is worth 3/4s of the possible points for that category.
4. An excellent submission will be awarded full points.

For each type of assignment, you will be graded on:

- It's thesis
- The premises supporting the thesis
- The support offered for those premises

- Your evaluation of the material.

Thesis (main conclusion of the reading)

- Excellent: A single, clear, obvious statement of your main point.
- Good: The thesis is present and fairly obvious, but not stated in one sharp sentence.
- Needs Improvement: You have to dig through the paper to find or reconstruct the thesis.
- Unacceptable: No real thesis at all.

Premises (the reasons supporting the thesis)

- Excellent: Every reason is clearly stated (ideally in single sentences), you distinguish premises taken as given from those you defend, you provide sub-arguments for controversial claims, and the basic premises are at least plausibly true.
- Good: Premises are mostly clear (though maybe not always single statements), sub-arguments appear for controversial points, and basic premises are plausible.
- Needs Improvement: Premises are hard to identify, unclear which are basic vs. defended, missing sub-arguments for controversial claims, or basic premises are questionable.
- Unacceptable: No real premises, or the premises are very likely false.

Support (how well, logical, valid, sound?, the premises actually justify the thesis)

- Excellent: The premises clearly and strongly support the thesis; the argument is either logically valid or makes the conclusion very plausible.
- Good: Premises support the thesis reasonably well; the argument is valid or at least makes the conclusion plausible.
- Needs Improvement: Premises only weakly support the thesis; the argument is invalid and the conclusion isn't really made plausible.
- Unacceptable: The premises do not support the thesis at all.

Student Response (how you handle objections/counter-arguments)

- Excellent: You thoughtfully address both obvious and less obvious objections, counterexamples, or opposing views, and give original or insightful replies.
- Good: You address the most obvious objections and give reasonable responses.
- Needs Improvement: You miss some obvious objections, or your responses are weak/empty (e.g., just saying "this is wrong" without explanation).
- Unacceptable: You ignore objections, counterarguments, and opposing positions completely.

This rubric rewards clear, well-structured, carefully defended, and critically aware philosophical writing. The strongest papers have a sharp thesis, transparent and plausible reasoning, strong logical support, and serious engagement with possible criticisms.

Attendance (5% of final grade, 32 points):

- Based on unexcused absences throughout the semester.

Grading Scale (equal increments of 8 points):

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|-----|---------------------|-----------|
| 0–1 | unexcused absences: | 32 points |
| 2 | unexcused absences: | 24 points |
| 3–4 | unexcused absences: | 16 points |
| 5–6 | unexcused absences: | 8 points |
| 6 | unexcused absences: | 0 points |