

Bad Advice!!!



“

It is essential that you use a variety of supporting evidence: ~~personal anecdotes~~, facts, statistics, ~~repetition~~, ~~allusions~~, ~~appeals to authority~~, ~~rhetorical questions~~ and ~~quotations~~. Don't forget the ~~exaggeration~~ and ~~biased language~~.

”

The Key To Success



FTFI

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PHIL 110B Milestone Essay

Introduction to Ethics & Values

Department of Philosophy

University of Waterloo

Value: 20% of final grade

Due: Wednesday, June 29 by end of class. A late penalty will apply to all assessments handed in later than this time. See LEARN for more details.

Format: Write a philosophical essay that demonstrates your knowledge of the course concepts and your ability to apply these concepts. You must state a thesis and defend this thesis. Essays will be marked for clarity of writing, rigor of argument, and philosophical acuity. A detailed rubric will be provided in Learn.

Instructions: Your essay should be no longer than 2000 words. Include a word count. Marks will be deducted for exceeding the word count or for failing to include a word count. Please use any regular 12 point font and double-space your writing. Please reference external sources using the referencing style outlined in Learn. Your essay should be edited for spelling, grammar, and organization. Marks will be deducted for poor editing.

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Instructions

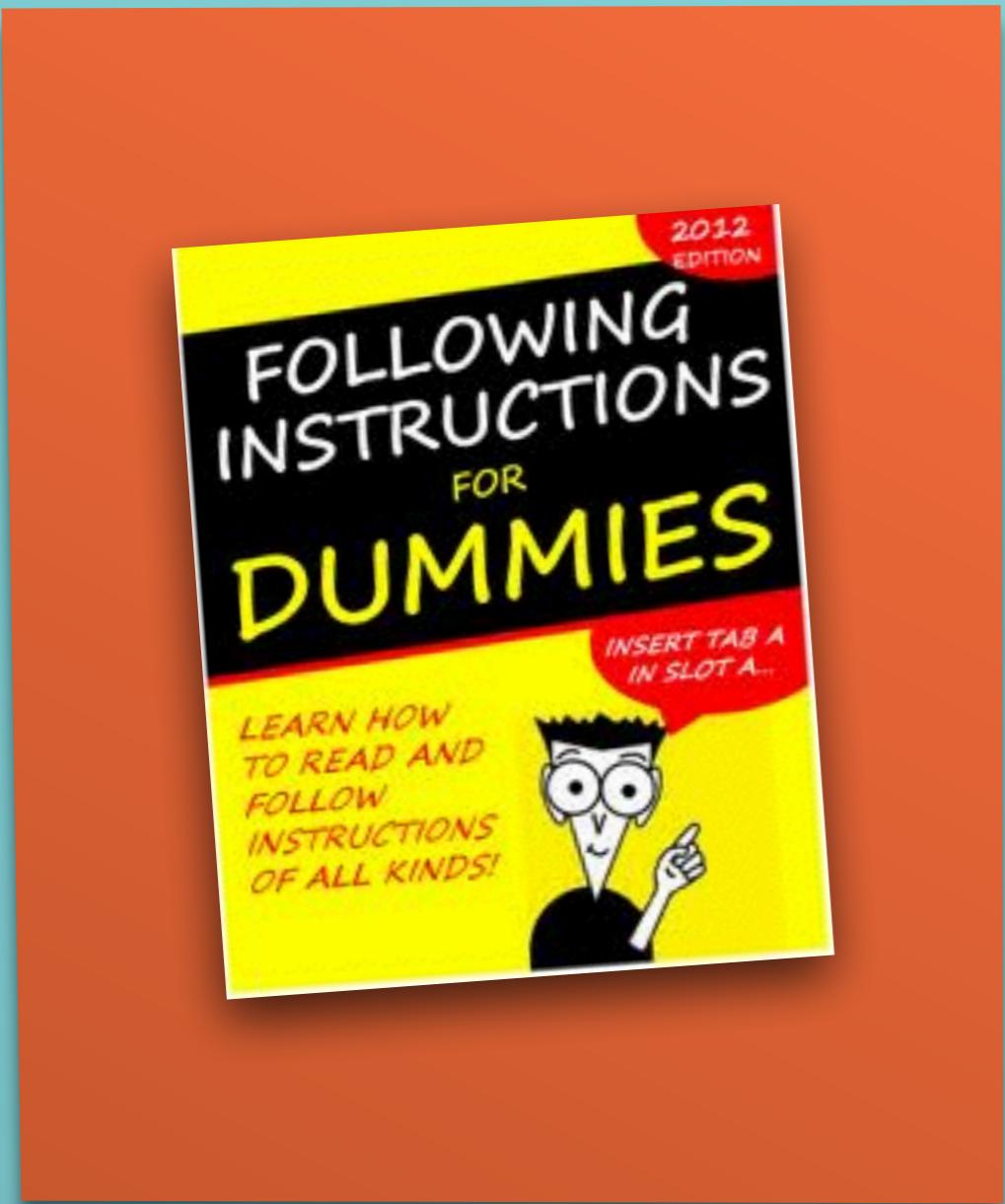
1. Take your Milestone essay and edit it. Incorporate the feedback from your peer and from me into the essay.
2. Track edits in your essay as you make them. This is easily done in Word. To see how visit: <https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Track-changes-while-you-edit-024158a3-7e62-4f05-8bb7-dc3ecf0295c4>
3. Download and complete this [document](#). Staple the completed document to your essay.

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Author's Reflections

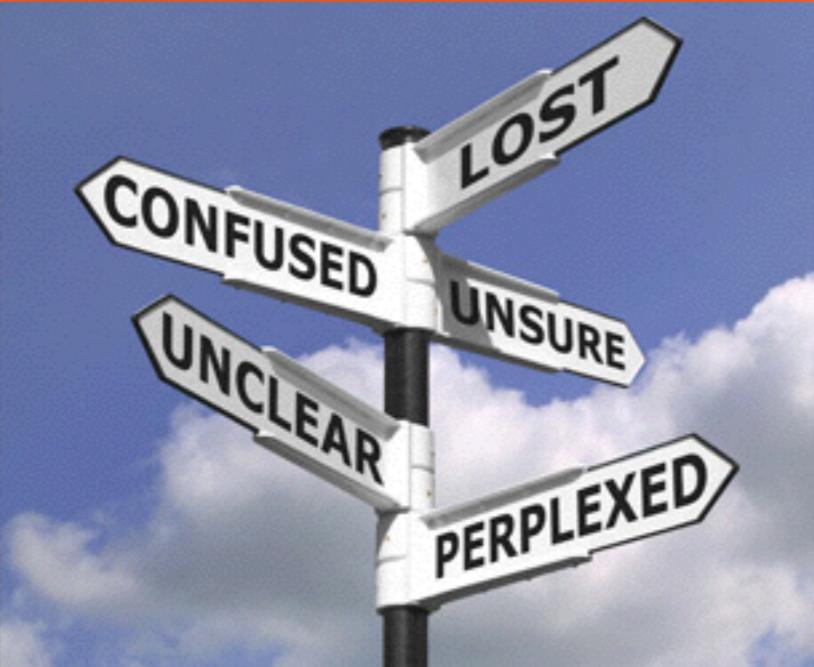
Please use the space below to indicate how the feedback from your peer and your instructor has been useful to you as you edit your Milestone Essay. Be specific. Please indicate any mistakes or misreading your peer or your instructor may have made in their review.

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General steps for writing a strong argumentative paper

1) Scope



Understand the scope of what you are being asked to do

- what is being asked?
- what information in the setup is relevant to the questions?
- you do not get to revise the question or change the scenario provided in the setup!

1) Scope

Issue to be examined

Option 1

Question: Is it in our self-interest to be good? Explain.

Sub Questions:

1. Would everyone be better off if each of us just pursued our own self-interest?
2. If there are limits to what self-interest can do, what other reasons are there to be good?



You've already been exposed to a question along the same lines. For the fourth written reflection I asked you, "Are there reasons to be good? What are these reasons? Defend." This essay gives you the opportunity to explore the question further.

In preparation, read:

1. **Chapter 8** of the text: *Ethical Egoism*.
2. **Ring of Gyges**. Click on the link and scroll down to the relevant bit of text. <http://philosophy.lander.edu/intro/articles/gyges-a.pdf>
3. **Collective Action Problem**. Click on this link and then search the phrase "Collective action problem". There is a section with that as a title. Read the section. <http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~jheath/ideology.pdf>

2) Thesis options



Map out your thesis options

- what do the key words mean?
- what do the key ideas assume and entail?

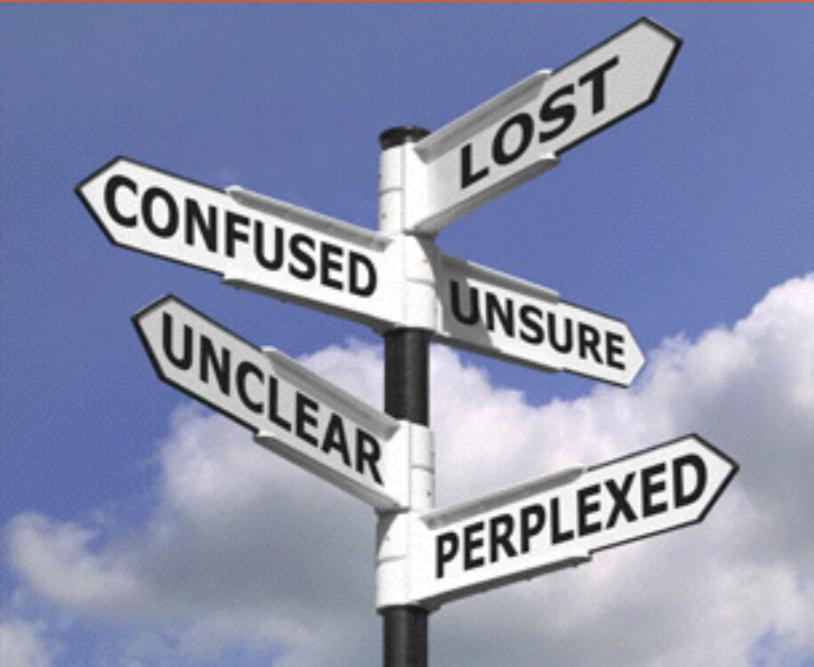
2) Thesis options (cont)



Map out your thesis options

- what reasons can I give to support each option? to undermine them?
- which option has the best overall support?

2) Thesis options (cont)



Map out your thesis options

- can the question be answered definitively?
 - if not, why not, and what does that mean?
 - if so, what follows?

Option 1

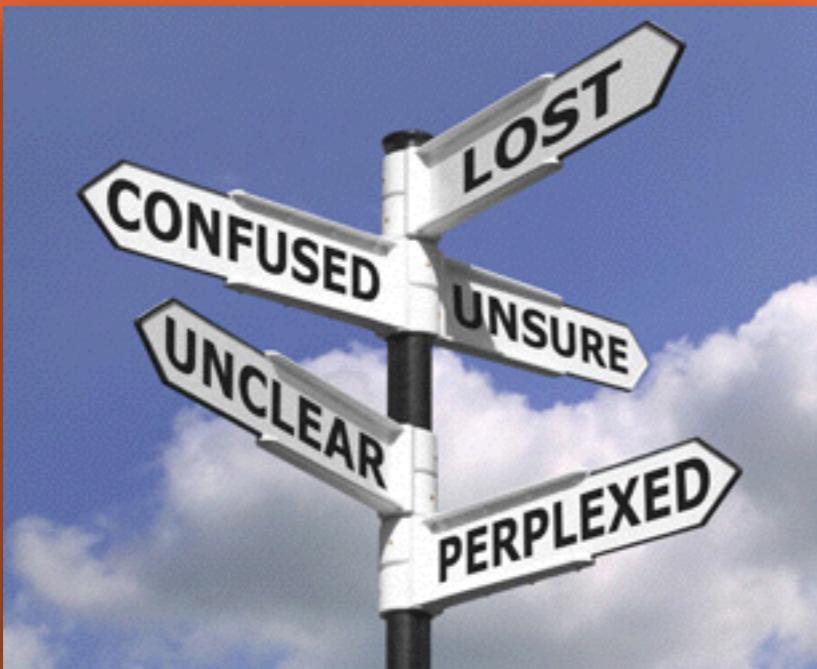
Question: Is it in our self-interest to be good? Explain.

Sub Questions:

1. Would everyone be better off if each of us just pursued our own self-interest?
2. If there are limits to what self-interest can do, what other reasons are there to be good?



3) Mull



Think about the topics

- What is the primary issue?
- Which option can I actually argue for in the given word limit?
- Where do I have to go to look for evidence?

Looking for Evidence



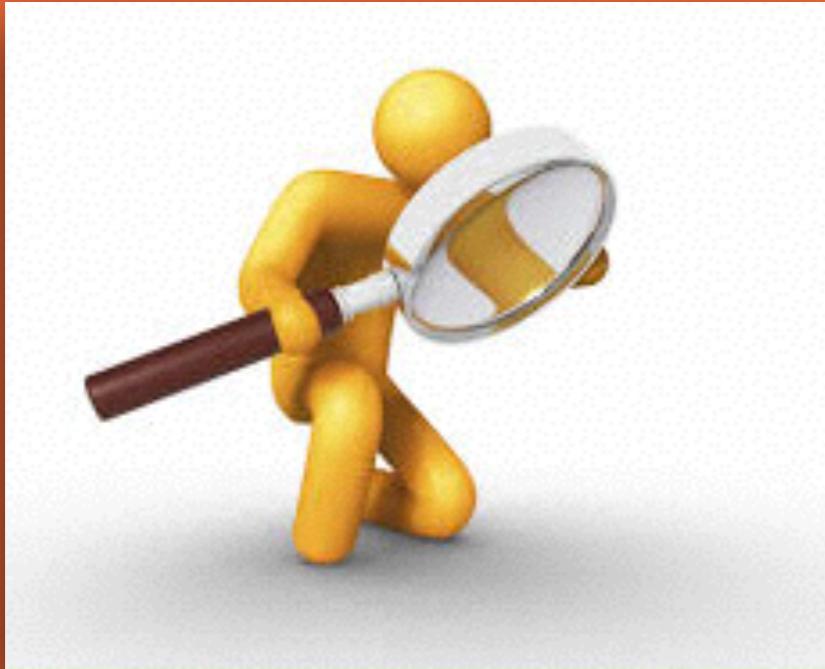
Theoretical claim

- The rationality postulate of economic theory predicts humans respond to incentives in predictable ways

Empirical claim

- Financial illiteracy played a part in the sub-prime mortgage crisis

Looking for Evidence



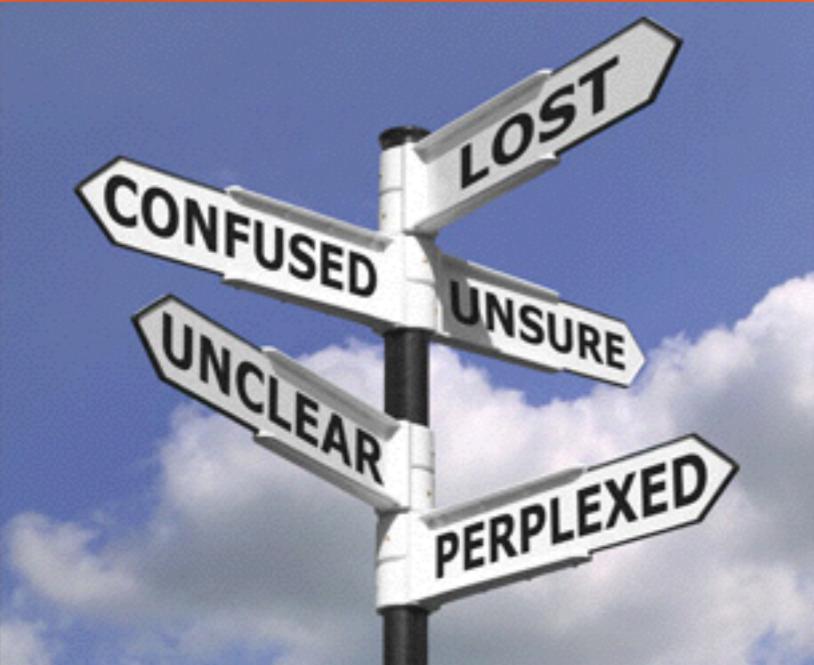
Theoretical claim

- Moral hazard arises when people are shielded from the full consequences of their behaviour

Empirical claim

- Bank of America sold 25% more mortgages because they were able to turn their debt into assets

4) Thesis



Formulate your thesis

- What is the question again?
- A strong thesis requires a strong supporting argument

4) Thesis (cont)



		Argument	
		Strong	Weak
Thesis	Strong	✓	✗
	Weak	?!	meh

Your Turn

Should all students be required to take a course in ethics?

Thesis



All students should be required
to take an ethics course.



Thesis



Students should not be required
to take an ethic course.



Thesis



An ethics education is an important part of a post-secondary education



Thesis



An education in ethics serves an important function in the cognitive development of a student



5) Argument



Formulate your argumentative approach

- A. Direct argument
- B. Conditional Argument
- C. Reductio
- D. Disjunctive syllogism

A) Direct Argument



Reason 1
Reason 2
Reason 3

Conclusion

A) Direct Argument



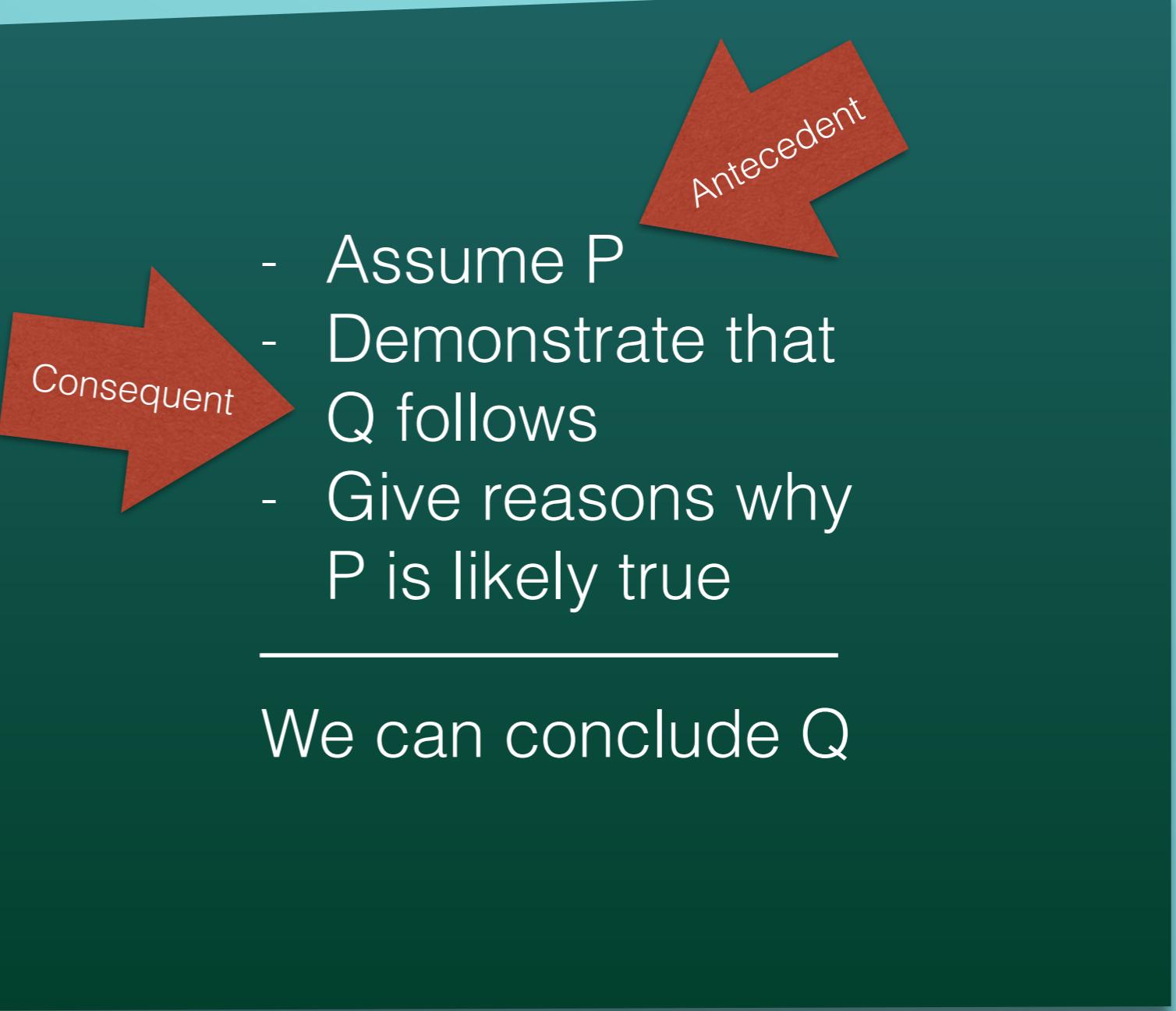
Pro

- Very easy to construct

Con

- Incredibly easy to refute

B) Conditional Argument



B) Conditional Argument



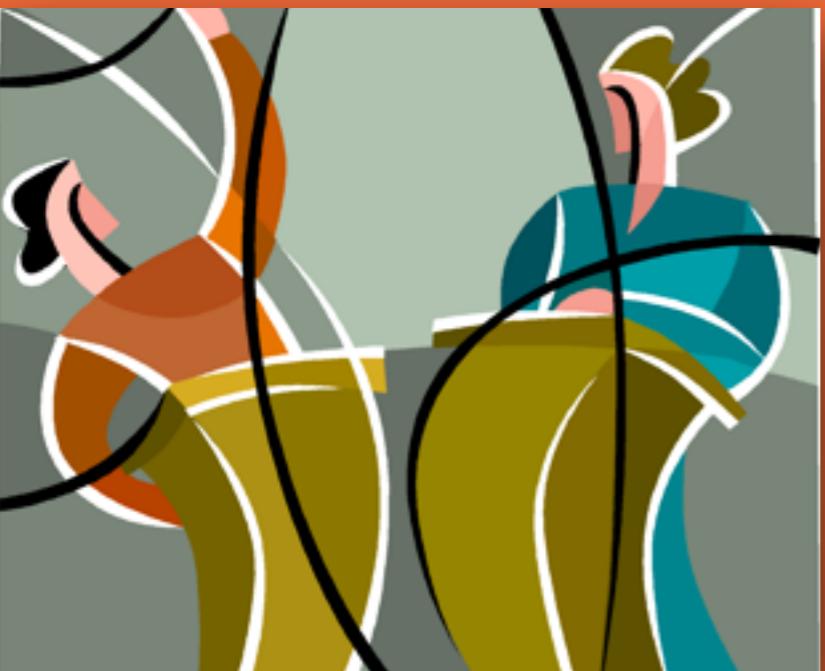
Pro

- A very compelling form of argument *if done right*

Con

- It requires a tight argument to demonstrate the consequent follows from the antecedent
- You need to give a compelling account of why your reader should believe the antecedent

C) Reductio ad absurdum



- Assume P
 - Show that an absurdity follows
-

P cannot be true

C) Reductio ad absurdum



Pro

- Very powerful form of argument

Con

- It takes a sophisticated argument to demonstrate that either a contradiction or undesirable outcome follows

D) Disjunctive syllogism



- Either P or Q
 - It can't be P
-

So it must be Q

D) Disjunctive syllogism



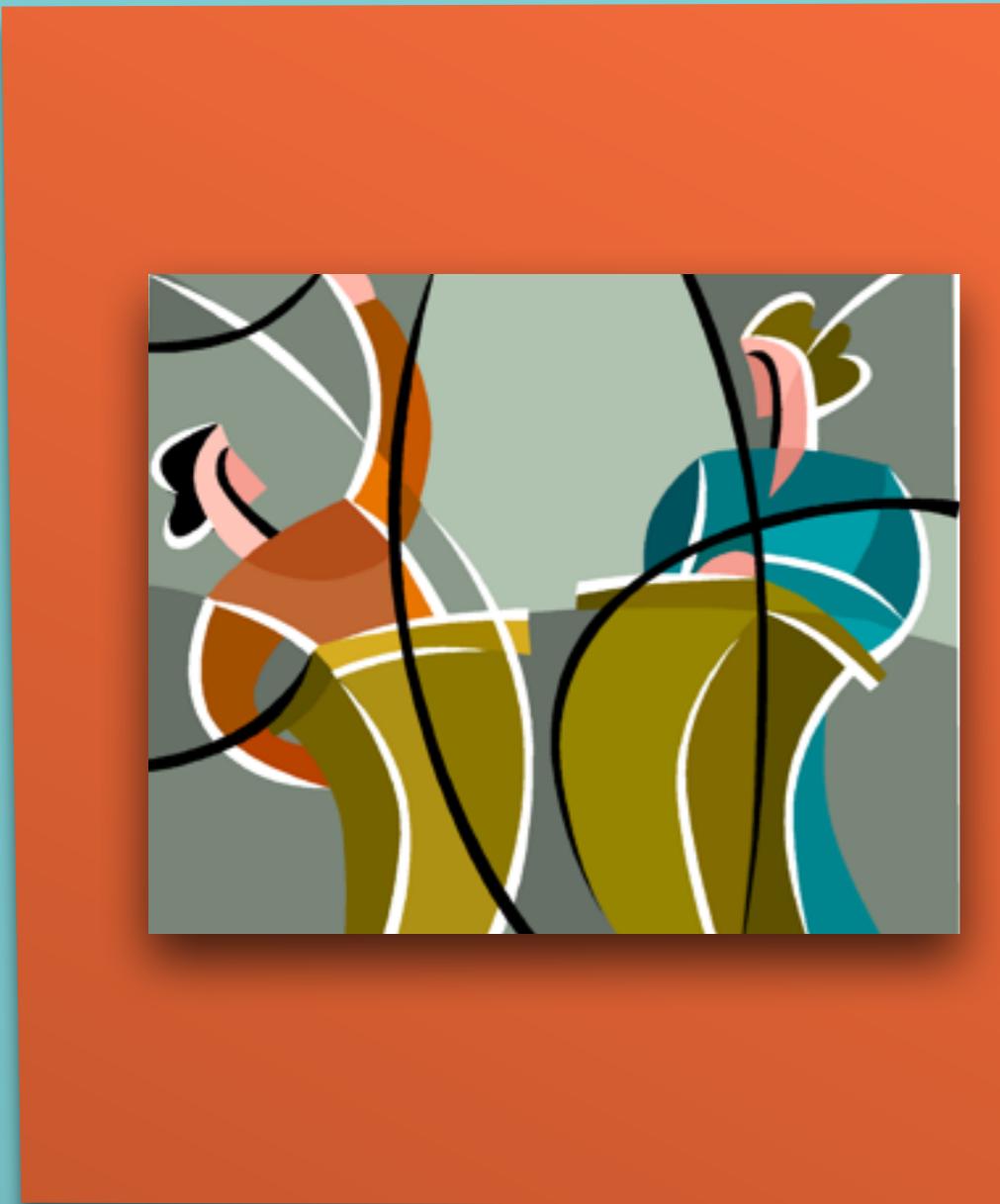
Pro

- Compelling form of argument

Con

- You must consider ***all*** possible options
- The options must be mutually exclusive

5) Argument



Formulate your argumentative approach



Option 1

Question: Is it in our self-interest to be good? Explain.

Sub Questions:

1. Would everyone be better off if each of us just pursued our own self-interest?
2. If there are limits to what self-interest can do, what other reasons are there to be good?



6) Write



Start Writing

Introduction:

- What is the paper about?
- Thesis
- Approach

Your Turn



Rewrite your introduction

6) Write



Start Writing

Body:

- use as many topical paragraphs as needed
 - make the flow of the argument clear
 - stay within space limits
 - treat it like a guided tour

6) Write



Start Writing

Conclusion:

- State what you have demonstrated (proved)
- restate your thesis
- do not introduce new ideas

6) Write



7) Proofread & Edit

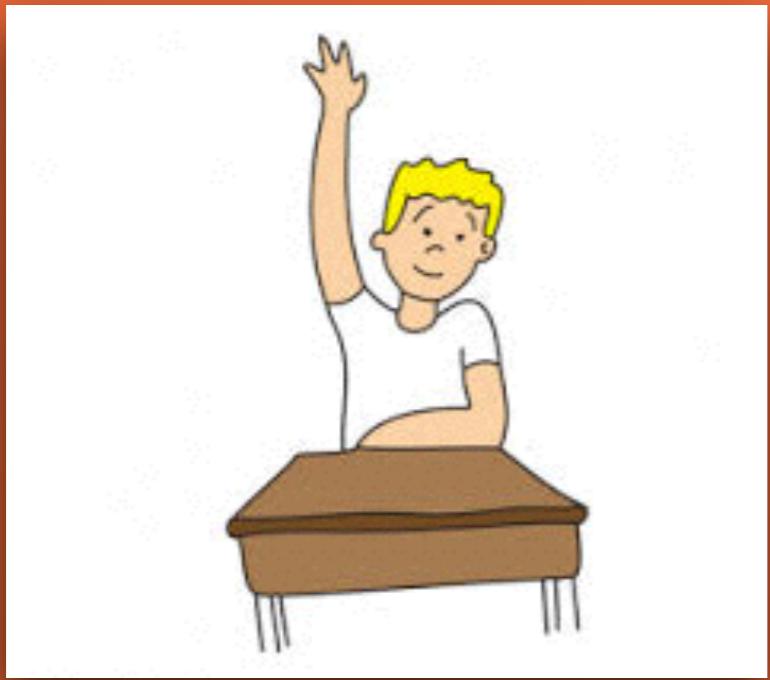
A good argument is like a fine wine: it takes time to develop and mature



7) Proofread & Edit



- 1) Make sure you use segues and sign-posts
- 2) Go through each paragraph and write down the main idea
- 3) Rewrite your introduction and conclusion



Questions?