

RUBRIC EXPLANATION

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Mediocre	Unacceptable
General Requirements Expected Throughout				
Technical Requirements	The paper follows all the "Formatting Requirements" from page 32 of the syllabus and posted on UB Learns.	The paper generally follows the formatting requirements.	The paper does not follow some of the more important formatting requirements.	The paper demonstrates a lack of awareness concerning the formatting requirements for this assignment.
Clarity	The paper follows the conventions of standard written English, with no errors hindering comprehension.	The paper generally follows the conventions of standard written English, with errors not hindering comprehension.	The paper generally follows the conventions of standard written English, with some errors hindering comprehension.	The paper does not follow the conventions of standard written English, with major errors hindering comprehension.
	All words are chosen and used for their precise meanings.	Most words are chosen and used for their precise meanings.	Words are not clearly chosen and used for their precise meanings.	The paper does not acknowledge that key words have precise meanings.
Context	The paper ensures all new or unusual terms and course jargon are well-defined.	The paper ensures that most new or unusual terms and jargon are well-defined.	The paper generally fails to clearly define new or unusual terms and jargon.	The paper uses new or unusual terms and jargon incorrectly or in ways that make no sense.
	Necessary background information (key concepts, theories, etc.) is accurately and completely explained.	Necessary background information (key concepts, theories, etc.) is explained.	Necessary background information (key concepts, theories, etc.) is poorly explained or not explained at all.	Necessary background information (key concepts, theories, etc.) does not make sense or it is used inaccurately.
Reflection	The paper displays in-depth introspection into and personalization of the paper's assigned topic, meaningfully connecting course material to the author's own life and experiences.	The paper displays general introspection into and personalization of the paper's assigned topic, making some good connections between course material and the author's own life and experiences.	The paper displays a minimal introspection into and personalization of the paper's assigned topic, making few connections between course material and the author's own life and experiences.	The paper displays a lack of introspection into and personalization of the paper's assigned topic, making no substantive connections between course material and the author's own life and experiences.
Originality	The paper expresses everything clearly in the student's own words without ever directly quoting the text, the professor, or any other outside sources.	The paper generally expresses everything in the student's own words, though there is occasional material that could have been better paraphrased.	The paper expresses much in the student's own words, but it also has significant and lengthy material that should have been better paraphrased.	The paper has very little written in the student's own words, but primarily consists of quotations or poorly paraphrased material.
Academic Integrity*	The paper properly cites and/or acknowledges all its sources using APA-style formatting.	The paper cites and/or acknowledges its sources, but with sloppy or inconsistent APA-style formatting.	The paper displays a minimal effort to cite and/or acknowledge its sources, but without any clear formatting.	The paper commits plagiarism or another academic integrity violation.
	As relevant, the paper includes "References" and "Acknowledgments" sections at the end.			

**Depending on the severity of the circumstances, a mark of mediocre or unacceptable for academic integrity may also result in the instructor reporting a possible academic integrity violation to the Chair of the Philosophy Department, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Academic Integrity Office (see page 25 of the syllabus).*

REFLECTION PAPERS: RUBRIC EXPLANATION

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Mediocre	Unacceptable
Introduction: Background & Main Thesis				
Background	The paper and its topic are introduced with minimal fanfare in at most three sentences.	The paper and its topic are introduced with little fanfare in at most three sentences.	The paper and its topic are introduced with too much fanfare, in more than three sentences.	The paper has no discernible introduction at all.
	Any relevant background information for understanding the paper's main thesis is clearly presented.	Some relevant background information for understanding the paper's main thesis is presented, but some ambiguities remain.	Very little relevant background information is presented, making the paper's main thesis difficult to understand.	
Thesis Statement	The introductory paragraph clearly states the paper's main thesis (or central position) in response to the assigned topic.	The paper's main thesis is obvious, but there is no single clear statement of it in the introductory paragraph.	The paper's main thesis is not in the introductory paragraph, but must be uncovered or reconstructed from what is actually written in the paper.	The paper's main thesis is not in the introductory paragraph, and it is never clear what that thesis might be.
		The paper's thesis is not clearly responding to the assigned topic. A connection between the thesis statement and the topic seems to exist, but requires further clarification and/or explanation.	The paper's thesis is only partially relevant to the assigned topic. It seems to be responding to a somewhat different topic.	The paper's thesis is not responding to the topic prompt at all. The majority of the paper addresses an unrelated topic.
Body: Justification & Explanation of the Main Thesis				
Organization	The paper's justification and explanation of its main thesis is very easy to follow.	The paper's justification and explanation of its main thesis is generally easy to follow.	The paper's justification and explanation of its main thesis is somewhat difficult to follow.	The paper's justification and explanation of its main thesis is impossible to follow.
	It is made explicit which claims are being used as premises (assumptions, reasons, evidence, and/or other important considerations).	It is clear which claims are being used as premises (assumptions, reasons, evidence, and/or other important considerations) .	It is somewhat unclear which claims are being used as premises (assumptions, reasons, evidence, and/or other important considerations).	It is completely unclear which claims are being used as premises (assumptions, reasons, evidence, and/or other important considerations) .
	New premises are each distinguished and introduced separately.	Usually, new premises are distinguished and introduced separately.	Separate premises are lumped together without being clearly distinguished.	Premises are presented and discussed randomly, or not at all.
Premises	The paper clearly presents each premise offered in support of its main thesis.	The paper is generally clear about the premises supporting its main thesis.	The paper is unclear about the premises supporting its main thesis, and they must be uncovered or reconstructed from what is actually written.	The paper never identifies any premises—it merely repeats and restates its main thesis in different ways.
	As much as possible, each premise is presented in a single statement.	Each premise, however, may not be presented in a single statement.		

REFLECTION PAPERS: RUBRIC EXPLANATION

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Body: Justification & Explanation of the Main Thesis (Continued)				
Plausibility	<p>The paper is clear about which premises are controversial and which are not.</p> <p>Persuasive justification and/or explanation is provided for all controversial premises.</p> <p>Premises without justification are logical, reasonable, and seem obviously true.</p> <p>All information (names, facts, etc.) is accurate.</p>	<p>The paper is pretty clear about which premises are controversial and which are not.</p> <p>Persuasive justification and/or explanation is provided for most controversial premises.</p> <p>Premises without justification are at least plausibly true.</p> <p>Most information (names, facts, etc.) is accurate with only minor errors.</p>	<p>The paper is not clear about which premises are controversial and which are not.</p> <p>Persuasive justification and/or explanation is not provided for the controversial premises.</p> <p>The plausibility of the premises that are taken as given is questionable.</p> <p>Some information (names, facts, etc.) contains obvious errors and/or inaccuracies.</p>	<p>The paper makes claims that are much more likely to be false than true. Important claims seem to be fabricated or entirely made up.</p> <p>Most information (names, facts, etc.) is incorrect or mistaken.</p>
Support	The paper's premises clearly support its main thesis, and the exact kind of support those premises provide is explained.	The paper's premises support its main thesis, and the general kind of support those premises provide is explained.	The paper's premises somewhat support its main thesis, but the kind of support those premises actually provide is not explained.	The paper's premises do not support its main thesis in any meaningful way.
Examples	The paper uses effective, clear examples from the author's life and experiences to illustrate important concepts and issues. They are relevant, insightful, and well-used.	The paper's uses clear examples from the author's life and experiences to illustrate important concepts and issues. They are relevant and well-used.	The paper's examples are not clear, only somewhat relevant, and/or not well-used. They do not seem to reflect the author's life and experiences.	The paper's examples are confusing, irrelevant, misused, made-up and/or altogether missing.
Relevance	The paper clearly and insightfully shows the relevance of its parts for defending and/or explaining its main thesis.	The paper is generally clear in showing the relevance of all its parts for defending and/or explaining its main thesis, though some inessential details appear.	The paper is somewhat unclear in the relevance of its parts for defending and/or explaining its main thesis, and inessential details repeatedly appear.	The paper has significant parts that do not seem relevant for defending and/or explaining its main thesis, and there are too many inessential details throughout.
Overall Synthesis	<p>Overall, the paper successfully integrates all its parts into a coherent and compelling response to the assigned topic.</p> <p>In doing so, the paper provides a complete response to that topic.</p>	<p>Overall, the paper integrates most of its parts into a fairly coherent and compelling response to the assigned topic.</p> <p>The paper provides a nearly complete response to that topic.</p>	<p>Overall, the paper integrates some of its parts into a somewhat coherent and compelling response to the assigned topic.</p> <p>The paper fails to respond to some important points required by that topic.</p>	<p>Overall, the paper fails to come together as a coherent and compelling response to the assigned topic.</p> <p>The paper fails to respond to the paper's topic and/or misunderstands that topic.</p>
Conclusion				
No Conclusion	There is no conclusion. Once the defense and/or explanation of the main thesis is complete, the paper immediately ends without any further discussion.	There is a brief (one- or two-sentence) conclusion, where earlier points are repeated and/or nothing substantively new is introduced.	There is a small (three- or four-sentence) conclusion, where earlier points are repeated and/or nothing substantively new is introduced.	There is a lengthy (more than four-sentence) conclusion, where earlier points are repeated and/or nothing substantively new is introduced.