

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
 Department of Philosophy

Philosophy Papers & Presentations

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Remember the 4 essential skills

- Exegesis
- Thesis
- Argument
- Style



Don't forget

Grades and (roughly) what they mean

A+	A philosophically interesting, original and well-focused thesis is supported by consistently good exegesis, analysis and a strong, clearly presented argument
A	There is good, clear argument for the student's own thesis. The work shows a good deal of independent thought and a clear understanding of the relevant issues
B	There is accurate, relevant exegesis and some critical evaluation
C	The expressed understanding of the issues is irregular and/or the essay consists purely of narrative description without any analysis
D	D grades are usually pure charity
F	Oh well

If your head doesn't hurt
you aren't doing it right

What's your point?

- Abstract
 - Thesis statement
 - What is the one thing of which you most want to convince your audience?
 - Argument outline
 - State main assumptions
 - State overall strategy
- When to do this
 - Planning: before you start
 - Checking: after each draft

The all-purpose paper generator

- Reply to a paper – move the conversation on
 - Pick one paper you disagree with
 - Pick the most interesting / challenging argument in that paper
 - Your paper's as good as written...
 - Thesis: Argument *blah* in paper *whosit* fails
 - Exegesis: *Blah* is interesting because...
 - Argument: *Blah* falls short because...
- If you are really stuck
 - Try setting topics for each other

**The dreaded thesis:
Do one thing & do it well**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audience - Word limits, etc. - Understanding of other views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Precise & focused - Original - Interesting - Challenging... - ...but doable
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Thinking about feedback



NOTHING PERSONAL

- View
 - 'final' showing 'markup'
- Consider
 - Strategy
 - Style
 - Substance
- Respond
 - Extensive revisions

Oops!

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vague - Overambitious - Banal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exegesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor focus - Underestimating your opponent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unfounded assumptions - Conclusion not what you argued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forgot audience - Blew credibility - Hand-waving - Obfuscation
