

Term Paper: Bibliography

Overview

The major assignment for this course is a term paper. At this point, you should have settled on a topic and a literary work for your term paper, thanks to the brainstorm and exploration assignments. Now it is time to find an appropriate philosophical reading on your topic. This “bibliography” assignment is designed to help you get a sense of some of the possibilities.

Structure

To receive full credit, your bibliography must present and summarize two different philosophical readings on your chosen topic. For each reading, write out the following two things:

- (1) **A complete bibliographic entry of the reading:** Provide a full citation of the reading, in accordance with a standard citation style of your choosing (e.g., APA, MLA).
- (2) **A concise & original summary of the reading:** Summarize the reading, in three or four sentences and in your own words. Clarify, for example, what question(s) it addresses, what view(s) it argues for, what view(s) it rejects, and so on. Note that you should not have to actually read the whole reading in order to write this summary; skimming the reading should be sufficient. The key here is just to get a sense of what the reading is saying, so that you’ll know better whether you should focus on it in your term paper.

Finally, after you’ve listed out your two readings, specify which reading you are more interested in incorporating into your term paper and why.

Guidelines

Your readings must come from reputable peer-reviewed journals or university presses, or must be a “classic” philosophical work. **You may not use websites as readings.** If you have any questions about the legitimacy of a reading you’ve found, please check with me in advance.

A good resource for finding appropriate readings is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, freely available at plato.stanford.edu. Simply type your chosen topic into the search bar and see what you find. Note that a bibliography of relevant readings is included at the bottom of each encyclopedia entry, and many of these readings are summarized within the entry itself.

For your summary, you may not simply copy the reading’s abstract (if it has one), nor may you copy anyone else’s summary of the reading. Doing so would constitute an act of plagiarism.

None of your readings may be the same as any of the works that we are reading in class.

You will receive full credit for this assignment so long as you present and summarize two different philosophical readings, as per the instructions above; in particular, you will not be graded on the accuracy of your summaries or the quality of your writing.

Turning it in

Please submit your bibliography via Quercus, in the textbox provided on the “Bibliography” assignment.