

Paper Assignment 2

Topics: As with the first paper, you have a lot of latitude in your choice of a topic. First, you can choose any one of the following topics:

1. Frey claims that indirect forms of consequentialism are more defensible forms of consequentialism than standard (i.e., direct) forms of consequentialism. What argument does he give for this claim, and does his argument provide adequate support for this claim?
2. Hooker claims that rule consequentialism is more defensible than act consequentialism. What argument does he give for this claim, and does his argument provide adequate support for this claim?
3. Hooker and Kamm both follow the method of reflective equilibrium, and yet they affirm theories that are significantly different from one another. What is the best explanation of this divergence in their views despite their apparent near sameness of method?
4. Hill argues that many of the most controversial aspects of Kantianism are separable from certain core ideas that are also important contributions made by Kant. Does Hill succeed in vindicating a recognizable, if minimal, form of Kantianism?
5. Sayre-McCord distinguishes two main contemporary forms of contractarianism: Kantian and Hobbesian. Which is more plausible, and why?
6. Both consequentialists and contractarians think of morality as an enterprise that should make people better off. Yet consequentialism and contractarianism are significantly different from one another. What is the best explanation of this divergence in views despite the aforementioned similarity between their starting points?
7. McNaughton argues that intuitionism is reasonably systematic, despite its opponents' objections to the contrary. What argument does he give for this claim, and does his argument provide adequate support for this claim?
8. McNaughton distinguishes generalism and particularism. Which is more plausible, and why?
9. Sumner argues for indirect consequentialism as the most plausible theoretical basis for rights. What are the merits and demerits of this approach to providing a solid theoretical basis for rights?
10. Narveson argues for libertarianism but seems to appeal to contractarian reasoning to justify his view. Is his view ultimately based on contractarianism? If so, is it Kantian or Hobbesian (or neither), and does he provide a good contractarian argument for his libertarian view?

Second, you can choose any one of the following topics:

11. State and argue for one or two significant objections to Frey's view. (Limit yourself to one or two objections that you can pursue thoroughly, rather than stating too many objections and having to handle some or all of them too briefly.)
12. same as topic 11, but for Hooker
13. same as topic 11, but for Kamm
14. same as topic 11, but for Hill

15. same as topic 11, but for Sayre-McCord
16. same as topic 11, but for McNaughton
17. same as topic 11, but for Sumner
18. same as topic 11, but for Narveson

Third, you can propose a topic to me, and if I approve it, you can use it. If you want to do this, send your proposed topic to me by e-mail, and I'll let you know whether it's acceptable. If it is, and you write on it, call it topic 19.

Length: Your paper should not be more than 2,000 words long.

A note on word counts: How word counts are computed depends on the circumstances. For a journal concerned about the cost of materials (e.g., paper and ink), word counts might include every single word. In contrast, our purposes have to do with establishing a level playing field for everyone in the class to express his or her ideas within the same constraints as everyone else. So, word counts do not have to include identifying text you should put at the beginning of everything you write for this course, or any bibliography which you might have occasion to put at the end of a paper. But they must include every word directly contributing to the content of the paper—including, for example, the paper's title, section titles (if applicable), regular text (of course), and footnote text. You do not have to have a bibliography—you can put citations in footnotes if you want—but if you are pressed for space then you can move the details of citations to a bibliography and not be “charged” for the words that appear there.

More on word counts: Word-count limits will be strictly enforced. If your paper is longer than 2,000 words, its score will be reduced by $100 \times \frac{n - 2,000}{2,000}$ percentage points, or (simplified) $\frac{n}{20} - 100$ percentage points.

Formatting your document: At the beginning of your paper, include at least the following identifying information: your anonymity-preserving random number (the same one for all three versions), the date when you are turning your paper in, the number of the topic on which you are writing (a number between 1 and 19), your paper's version number (1, 2, or 3), and your paper's word count. Note that the date as well as the version number (and probably the word count) will need to be updated as you move from one version to the next. For example, the beginnings of your paper might look like the following:

1234	1234	1234
November 11, 2009	November 13, 2009	November 23, 2009
topic 5	topic 5	topic 5
version 1	version 2	version 3
1,700 words	1,900 words	1,950 words

Stylistic expectations: Every version of your paper should be a finished, polished piece of philosophical writing. Additionally, it should be written as if intended for the general philosophical reader, not just for me or the members of this class.

Formatting your files: If you turn in any version of your paper to me electronically, it should be in a file whose format is .doc—that is, the format associated with Microsoft Word's versions 97 through 2003. If you use Word 2007, please take care to use the .doc format rather than the .docx format (the format associated with Word 2007) for work that you turn in. Note that merely changing a filename extension (from, e.g., .docx or .wpd) will not change the format of the file itself. Versions of Word capable of saving files in the .doc format are available on most, if not all, of the computers in KU's computer labs, and many other word processors than Word are also capable of saving files in the .doc format.

Tasks and deadlines: Here is how the process will work.

Starting on Monday, November 2, I'll bring to class the sign-up sheets on which you previously claimed anonymity-preserving random numbers (and on which you can claim more, if you need to). One of those numbers, instead of your name, is what you'll put on your paper to identify it. That way, when I start grading the papers, I won't know

who wrote which paper (for the most part, at least). As I mentioned above, you'll put the same number on all three versions of your paper.

Starting on Wednesday, November 4, I'll bring to class a sign-up sheet on which you can sign up for an appointment with me during the week of November 16.

Version 1 of your paper will be due in class on Wednesday, November 11. You will bring four hard copies to class—one for each of as many as three of your classmates for peer reviewing, and one to turn in to me. (You can also turn it in to me by e-mailing it to me by 12 noon on that day, in which case you needn't give me a hard copy.)

Version 2 of your paper will be due in class on Friday, November 13. (You can also turn it in by e-mailing it to me by 12 noon on that day, in which case you needn't give me a hard copy.) You just need to bring one hard copy to class. But when you are preparing this hard copy, you should also prepare an identical one for yourself, since you will need it for when we meet.

During the week of November 16, you will meet with me to discuss version 2 of your paper. In anticipation of these meetings, I want to emphasize a few things about them.

1. You must bring to our meeting an exact duplicate of what you turned in on September 25. We'll be going over the text of your paper closely, and it'll be important for you to be able to see the text I'm talking about and to make notations on your own copy of it.
2. It'll be important for you to be clear about the purpose of meeting with me. Some students treat their meetings with me as opportunities to offer further, oral, arguments in support of the claims they make in their papers. But in these meetings, I'm not interested in hearing you supplement, orally, whatever you attempted to accomplish in writing. Instead, I'm interested in helping you make the next (and final) version of your paper as good as possible. Remember, I am the person who's going to be grading that next version of your paper. You should use your meeting with me as an opportunity to find out what changes you can make to make the final version of your paper get as good a grade as possible.
3. If you miss your originally scheduled meeting with me (whether for a good reason or a bad one), it is not necessarily the case that I will have time to schedule another one with you. If we do not have our meeting, the deadline stated below, for version 3, will still apply.

Version 3 of your paper will be due in class on Monday, November 23. (You can also turn it in by e-mailing it to me by 12 noon on that day, in which case you needn't give me a hard copy.)

Please do not give me more than one version of version 1, version 2, or version 3 of your paper. That is, once you turn in a paper to me, please do not send or give me another paper that you would like to substitute for the one you already turned in.

These deadlines will be strictly enforced: late papers' scores will be reduced by 25 percentage points for each full or partial day of lateness (with each "day" starting at 12 noon).