

**Introduction to Philosophy**  
**Fall 2020**  
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**How to write a discussion post**

Critical posts:

1. Pick some idea in the reading that you find interesting or confusing. You don't need to be 100% clear on what the author is saying.
2. Write a short paragraph (50-100 words) explaining the idea. This should be a **brief** summary of the idea; you do not need to introduce the reading or the background.
3. Write a second paragraph (around 100 words) explaining what you find interesting about that particular idea.
4. Write a third paragraph (around 100 words) giving your own thoughts on the topic. Anyone reading this paragraph should be able to figure out exactly what you think. Use the first person freely.

Clarificatory posts:

1. Pick some idea in the reading that you find confusing.
2. Write a short paragraph (50-100 words) summarizing the idea as best you can.
3. Write a second paragraph (around 100 words) explaining **why** you find the idea confusing. Is it because you don't know what a technical term means? Is it because you think the author is contradicting something they said earlier? Is it because you think something is very counterintuitive?
4. Write a third paragraph (50-100 words) explaining why you think this matters. Does this ambiguity undermine some idea that they are presenting? Is their idea so counterintuitive that we should reject the entire theory?

### Rubric

These are the components of your posts that I will be looking at. If you ever want to know why you received the grade that you received, you should set up an appointment with me during my office hours to discuss it.

Component:	A	B	C	D or below
Clarity	The student clearly identifies what they are talking about. The student's own views are clearly identified.	The ideas presented in the discussion post are mostly clear, but the student does not identify their own views.	The student does not state what they are talking about and does not identify their own views.	It is difficult to understand what the student is talking about. The student does not clearly identify the issue or their own views.
Accuracy	The student offers an accurate interpretation of the idea that they discuss.	The student offers an explanation of an idea in the text and makes only minor errors.	The student makes major errors in their understanding of the idea presented in the text.	The student does not present an idea offered in the text or makes a fundamental error in their interpretation.
Length	The post is 200-300 words.	The post is 200-300 words.	The post is shorter than 200 words or longer than 300 words.	The post is significantly shorter than 200 words or significantly longer than 300 words.
Scope	The student focuses on one particular idea in the reading.	The student focuses primarily on one idea in the reading but also discusses other ideas.	The student focuses on more than one idea in the reading.	The student does not focus on one idea in the reading or discusses multiple readings.