Guidelines:

1) Students must write an argumentative philosophical essay on a topic relevant to any of the course themes.

2) Each student must select **at least two academic sources besides the assigned course reading** (e.g. peer-reviewed journal articles, books, or book chapters) to cite in their essay. Students may incorporate and cite assigned course readings in their papers in addition to citing two other academic sources. Short book reviews in academic journals (usually 2-3 pages) will not count as one of the two required academic sources. Besides academic works, relevant news articles may be cited as needed, though these do not count as academic sources. Please reach out if you have any questions about what counts as an academic works, or whether particular sources that you have found are academic sources.

3) Essays must be at least 1200 words (not including bibliography), double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12-point font, with one-inch margins. Sources must be cited in APA style.

4) Essays must be argumentative. You should identify a position that you think needs to be challenged or modified in some way. Present the problem that you are dealing with as fairly and clearly as possible. Then, advance your own argument. Finally, raise at least one objection to your own position, and provide a response to this objection in defense of your view. Avoid "fluff," or unnecessary statements. Everything you write should be relevant to your topic.

**Basic Essay Structure**

1. **Introduction** -Describe the problem on which you are focusing. What is the debate? Briefly summarize your position, the objection you are considering, and how you intend to respond to the objection.
2. **II. Your Argument** -Present your own argument. You should aim to expand upon, reject, modify, or otherwise contribute to some aspect of an ongoing discussion.
3. **III. Objection** -Set up the objection from your "opponent" as clearly and fairly as possible. Be sure to represent their position accurately (as if it were your own position). This objection can come from a real or imagined opposing side. Basically, you should present what you take to be the strongest and most legitimate objection to your own view.
4. **IV. Your Response** -Provide a response to the objection in defense of your own position.
5. **V. Conclusion** -Similar to the introduction; summarize what you've done in the paper and how you've done it. Don't add anything new in the conclusion; only refer to points that are already addressed within the paper.

**Example Paper Skeleton (Yes, you can be this straightforward in your writing!)**

I. Introduction "In this paper, I argue that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I argue for this by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I examine the objection \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I respond to the objection by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_."

II. Your Argument (Present your own argument as clearly as possible.)

III. Objection "The strongest objection to my position is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_." (Set up the objection from your 'opponent' as clearly and fairly as possible.)

IV. Your Response "In response to this objection, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_." (Defend your thesis against what you take to be the strongest objection to your position.)

V. Conclusion "In conclusion, (reiterate your thesis). I have argued for this by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. While the strongest objection to my position is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I have countered this objection by arguing that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_."