

Evaluation criteria (Sensorveiledning)

FIL1009 – Science and Democracy: Philosophical Perspectives

For the final assignment, students can choose between two assignment types:

- a) A traditional philosophy term paper of about 8 pages (without references) which presents a philosophical argument on one of the topics from the course.
- b) A case study (also about 8 pages without references) applying some of the concepts and theories from the course to a real-life case not discussed in class.

Evaluation criteria for the two assignment types are as follows:

A) TRADITIONAL PHILOSOPHY TERM PAPER

A traditional philosophy term paper presents a philosophical argument for a clear thesis, building on the relevant scholarly literature on the topic. Students are free to choose any topic that is related to the course's broader focus on science and democracy.

Formal requirements:

- Length: 8 pages (without references) with normal formatting.
- At least 3 references

Grading rubric:

- A – Outstanding
 - The paper has a clear philosophical thesis and a clear argument defending the thesis.
 - The paper demonstrates a deep understanding of the topic and relevant philosophical literature.
 - The paper accurately represents opposing views and responds thoughtfully to possible objections.
 - The paper stays tightly focused on the research question; all sections contribute to the main argument.
 - The paper follows norms of academic writing, citation, and reference use, and uses a consistent reference style.
- B – Very good
 - The paper has a clear philosophical thesis and a generally coherent argument defending the thesis, though it may be less fully developed or precise than an A paper.
 - The paper demonstrates very good understanding of the topic and relevant philosophical literature, with only minor gaps or inaccuracies.
 - The paper represents opposing views accurately and considers objections, though responses may be less comprehensive or insightful than in an A paper.
 - The paper remains focused on the research question, with only occasional sections that are less clearly connected to the overall argument.
 - The paper follows norms of academic writing, citation, and reference use, with a consistent reference style and only minor formal errors.

- C – Good
 - The paper presents a recognizable philosophical thesis and some argumentative support, but the argument may be partly unclear.
 - The paper demonstrates generally good understanding of the topic and literature, but with noticeable gaps or misunderstandings.
 - The paper engages with opposing views or objections to some extent, but this engagement may be insufficiently developed.
 - The paper addresses the research question, though some parts are only loosely connected to the central argument or include digressions.
 - The paper mostly follows norms of academic writing and citation, but the reference style may be applied inconsistently or with several minor errors.
- D – Quite good
 - The paper has a thesis, but it may be unclear; the argumentative structure is present but often unclear or weak.
 - The paper demonstrates partial understanding of the topic and literature.
 - The paper makes limited or superficial use of opposing views and objections or does so in a way that is not well integrated into the argument.
 - The paper contains substantial amounts of irrelevant details.
 - The paper attempts to follow norms of academic writing and citation, but there are repeated formal errors, inconsistencies in reference style, or unclear source use.
- E – Acceptable
 - The paper has at best a rudimentary or implicit thesis, and the argument for it is weak and contains substantial mistakes.
 - The paper demonstrates minimal but recognizable understanding of the topic, with many gaps and several significant misunderstandings of the literature.
 - The paper rarely engages seriously with opposing views or objections, or does so in a confused or largely ineffective way.
 - The overall argumentative direction is difficult to discern, and much material is only loosely relevant.
 - The paper makes some use of citation and references, but academic norms are followed only in a basic way, with numerous errors or inconsistencies in style and documentation
- F – Fail
 - The paper lacks a clear philosophical thesis, or the thesis is not meaningfully defended; there is no coherent argumentative structure.
 - The paper shows little or no adequate understanding of the topic or relevant philosophical literature, and may be largely off-topic or based on serious misunderstandings.
 - The paper does not meaningfully engage with opposing views or objections, or misrepresents them in a way that undermines the discussion.
 - The paper fails to address the research question in any substantial way, and most of the discussion is irrelevant to the topic.
 - The paper does not follow basic norms of academic writing and citation; referencing is absent or highly deficient, and/or there are serious issues of academic integrity (e.g. plagiarism or undisclosed use of AI).

B) CASE STUDY

A case study analyses a specific event or situation in the light of a specific theoretical (philosophical) approach. It shows how theoretical concepts apply in a given case, and, ideally, how the relevant theory can guide possible solutions to the problem presented in the case.

The structure of a case study

Case studies are relatively rare in philosophy, so you might not know where to start. I suggest the following structure for your case study, but of course you are free to use other formats as well:

- **Introduction:** briefly introduces the topic
- **Theoretical background:** Introduces the relevant philosophical concepts and arguments that will be used in analysing your case
- **Case description:** Describes the relevant facts of the case.
- **Analysis:** applies the relevant theoretical framework to the case, notes, how this framework helps understanding the case, as well as how the case sheds further light on the theoretical background, or help us achieve a mere nuances understanding of it.
- **Recommendations (optional):** discusses potential solutions to the problem presented by the case, based on the analysis

Formal requirements:

- Length: 8 pages (without references) with normal formatting.
- At least 3 references

Grading rubric:

- A – Outstanding
 - The case study shows a clear understanding of the relevant philosophical theories.
 - The case study contains a clear description of the case in question with all relevant details.
 - The case study clearly shows how the case can be analysed using the relevant philosophical theory; it applies the appropriate concepts to understand the relevant phenomena.
 - The case study clearly shows how the case does not only illustrate the philosophical theory, but analysing the case in philosophical terms brings out important insights regarding the case
 - Optional: The case study shows how analysing the case in philosophical terms helps us better understand and refine the philosophical theory itself, that is, how real-life cases can feed back into philosophical theorizing.
 - The case study uses credible academic sources to reconstruct the philosophical theory.
 - The case study uses only reliable sources and builds on verifiable information in reconstructing the details of the case.
- B – Very good
 - The case study shows a very good understanding of the relevant philosophical theories, with only minor gaps or imprecisions.
 - The case study contains a clear description of the case with most relevant details, though some aspects could be more fully developed.

- The case study shows well how the case can be analysed using the relevant philosophical theory, and mostly applies the appropriate concepts accurately to understand the phenomena.
- The case study shows that philosophical analysis of the case yields important insights, though these may not be fully articulated or systematically explored.
- Optional: The case study may gesture toward how the case can inform or refine the philosophical theory, but this feedback is only partially developed.
- The case study uses credible academic sources to reconstruct the philosophical theory, with only minor issues of completeness or precision.
- The case study relies on mainly reliable sources for the case details and generally builds on verifiable information, with only minor uncertainties or omissions.
- C – Good
 - The case study shows a generally good understanding of the relevant philosophical theories, but with noticeable gaps or misunderstandings.
 - The case study describes the case in a way that is broadly clear, but some relevant details are missing or unclear.
 - The case study attempts to analyse the case using the relevant philosophical theory and applies some appropriate concepts, but the analysis may be incomplete or unclear.
 - The case study offers limited insight into how philosophical analysis helps us understand the case.
 - The case study mostly uses some credible academic sources to reconstruct the theory.
 - The case study mostly uses reliable sources for the case, but there may be gaps, unverified claims, or insufficient documentation for some details.
- D – Quite good
 - The case study shows partial understanding of the relevant philosophical theories, but with significant gaps or misunderstandings.
 - The case description is present but may be incomplete or missing important contextual details needed for analysis.
 - The case study makes some attempt to use the relevant philosophical theory to analyse the case, but the connection between theory and case is often weak or unclear.
 - The case study offers limited insight into how philosophical analysis illuminates the case; philosophical concepts may be mentioned but not clearly used to deepen understanding.
 - The case study uses only a few academic sources to reconstruct the theory, or most sources are not in fact relevant.
 - The case study attempts to use reliable sources for the case, but there may be notable reliance on questionable sources.
- E – Acceptable
 - The case study shows only minimal but recognisable understanding of the relevant philosophical theories, with many gaps and several significant misunderstandings.
 - The description of the case is fragmentary, unclear, or lacking many important details.
 - The case study makes only a rudimentary or confused attempt to use philosophical concepts to analyse the case.
 - The case study provides little insight into how philosophical analysis helps us understand the case.

- The case study makes limited use of academic sources for the theory, and referencing is incomplete, unclear, or unreliable.
- The case study's account of the case relies on sources that are only partly reliable or insufficiently verified.
- F – Fail
 - The case study shows little or no adequate understanding of the relevant philosophical theories.
 - The case is poorly or barely described, or the information presented is so incomplete or confused that meaningful analysis is not possible.
 - The case study fails to analyse the case in terms of the relevant philosophical theory in any substantial way.
 - The case study does not show how philosophical analysis yields insights about the case.
 - The case study does not adequately use credible academic sources for the theory, or sources are absent.
 - The case study relies on unverifiable or clearly non-credible sources for the description of the case.