

First Semester Paper CMSC/MATH 350

Outline Due: Feb. 9th, 2017 (by 11:59:59pm)

Rough Draft Due: Feb. 23rd (by 11:59:59pm)

Final Draft Due: Mar. 2nd (by 11:59:59pm)

In class, we have discussed (or will be discussing) several different ethical theories: Utilitarianism, Deontology, Kantianism, and Social Contract Theory. In this assignment, I would like you to apply these theories to the analysis of a contemporary ethical problem. I have posted a link on the course web site to a list of topics:

<http://topics.marmorstein.org>

Each topic is in the form of an ethical question “Should X do Y?” You must either support or attack the proposed policy. In order to ensure a variety of topics, I have written some software that keeps track of which topics are already taken. You must register for a topic by writing your full name either in the “Affirmative” or “Negative” field that follows each question.

Submission

You will turn in your paper in three stages. First, you will submit an outline. The outline will give both the structure of the document and the results of your initial research. Second, you will submit a rough draft of the paper in which the outline structure has been replaced by English prose. Last, you will submit a final copy of the paper in which any mistakes and grammar errors have been corrected.

All submissions must be in OpenDocument text format (.odt format). I will not accept papers in Microsoft Word format, PDF, **or any other file format**. If you do not have a word processor on your computer that supports .odt, you can download the free “Libreoffice” suite from

<https://www.libreoffice.org/download/libreoffice-fresh/>

which will allow you to easily create documents in .odt format. Libreoffice is also available in several computer labs on campus.

To turn in your paper, go to <http://marmorstein.org/~robert/submit> and log in with the username and password I will be handing out in class. Click “Submit” next to the proper assignment and use the “Browse” button to select your document. You may submit as many copies of the assignment as you like. I will only grade the last copy you turn in.

Writing an Outline

At the top of your file, you should place the following:

A Title, Your Name, “CMSC/MATH 350”, Spring 2017
(Each of these can go on a separate line)

If you are supporting a position or policy change, your outline should have the structure I described in class:

I. Introduction

- Hook

II. Description of the Problem

- Harms or Needs
- Significance/Impact
- Link to issue

III. Plan for solving problem

- What is it, Who will do it, Where will it be applied,
- When it will be done (Timeframe)
- How will it be done (especially - how will it be funded)

IV. Solvency

- Evidence that the plan will solve the problem
- Empirical examples that show it worked elsewhere or that something similar has worked

V. Conclusion

- Mandate

However, for most of the topics, you will be arguing the ethicality or morality of a position rather than proposing a specific policy change. A better outline for this type of argument is the one below:

I. Introduction

- Hook

II. Background

- History of the issue
- Explanation of any technical terms needed to understand the issue

III. Policy Reasons for supporting (or not supporting) the proposal

- Effectiveness of the proposal
- Social impacts/consequences of the proposal
- Political impacts/consequences of the proposal
- Technological impacts/consequences of the proposal
- Financial/Economic impacts/consequences of the proposal

IV. Ethical Reasons for supporting (or for not supporting) the proposal

- Positive or Negative Effects of the Proposal
- Analysis of those effects using various ethical theories
 - Utilitarianism
 - Deontology
 - Kantianism
 - Social Contract Theory

V. Conclusion

- Mandate

Supporting your argument

Each point of your outline should be numbered (or lettered) and should be justified using either:

1. Source Evidence with proper citation
2. Logical argument from sources already cited
3. Examples (hypothetical or empirical)
4. Analysis of patterns
5. Reasoning backwards from consequences to action

I would like to see at least two or three points of support for each major division of your outline. Of these, the vast majority should be citations from credible sources. The rest should (for the outline) be one-line summaries of the argument you intend to make in the paper.

For now, you only need to include source citations in the outline. If you plan to use any of the other justifications (such as a hypothetical example), just add a bullet point like:

A. Example that illustrates social networking can be dangerous

You will fill in the details when you write your draft. However, for source citations, I want a complete quote with source information. All quotes should be tagged with a one-line summary and be cited properly. For example,

B. Multiple vaccinations provide little benefit

Dana Scott, "Taking the Risk out of Puppy Shots", Dogs Naturally Magazine, 2014,
<http://www.dogsnaturallymagazine.com/taking-the-risk-out-of-puppy-shots/>

"When titers were measured(titers are a way to measure a dog's level of immunity), 100% of the puppies vaccinated once at 12 weeks were protected. But only 94% of the puppies in Group B were protected.....despite receiving two vaccines as opposed to one. It would appear that the first vaccine reduced the effectiveness of[sic] the second vaccine."

Notice that the tag is in bold and the rest of the text (including the citation) is not. This makes it much easier to read the outline. You should also bold the structural elements of the outline. For instance:

I. Introduction

A. Hook

- Story about dog who died from allergic reaction to rabies shot

II. Background

- Louis Pasteur
- Salk Vaccine
- Ethics of vaccination
- Vaccination of animals

And so forth.

Since the letter I is a Roman numeral, we skip from H to J when "numbering" subpoints (though hopefully you won't have that many!)

Rough Draft

For the rough draft, I would like you to turn your outline into a full-fledged paper of at least 1500 words and no more than 3000 words (roughly 3-5 pages) not counting bibliography and title. Your paper must use proper English grammar, spelling, and syntax. You should use ½ inch margins on all four sides and a 12-point serif font.

To do this, remove the outline structure (though it's okay to keep the major divisions as section titles), flush out your logical arguments, examples, and other main points, and add transitions so that the paper flows smoothly from point to point.

Final Draft

For the final draft, you should fix any mistakes in your rough draft. Be thorough. If you have made the same grammar or structural mistake in many places, I may only have commented on it the first or second time. You should go through your paper carefully and make sure that you have checked the entire paper for places that may be affected. If I catch grammar errors on the final draft that I missed on the rough draft, I will still deduct points, so be extra vigilant. Feel free to make an appointment at the writing center to get help or for additional proofreading.

Plagiarism

Please be very, very careful to properly cite your sources. Make sure that:

- A. You have given me enough information to find the source for myself
- B. You have clearly indicated which sentences/thoughts are from the source

I am not particularly concerned about your choice of bibliography style as long as it is clear and easy to follow. I much prefer parenthetical citations with endnotes to footnotes, but I will accept either. Use of in-text citations, when appropriate, is also a good idea.

If you have questions about plagiarism or the honor code, PLEASE ask me! I am available by e-mail or Facebook almost all the time (even late at night) if you can't talk to me in person. It is much better to get a poor grade on the assignment than to get an F in the class following an honor trial.

Writing Rubric for CMSC/MATH 350

Your papers will be evaluated using the rubric below which is largely derived from the department's writing intensive rubric:

Content Mastery (15 pts)

- Proper use of sources
- Support: Support is developed fully, from multiple angles
- Analysis: Analysis is insightful
- Synthesis: Student demonstrates synthesis of ideas with clear and complete explanations
- Originality: Writing is an appropriate mix of original work and (acknowledged) outside content that shows mastery of the material.

Organization/Flow (10 pts)

- Main Points: The student has structured the paper to make the arguments or main points clear
- Transitions: The student competently uses transitions between points
- Sentence Structure: The student properly uses parallel and contrasting sentence structures
- Fluidity: The student's writing is fluid and clear

Writing Mechanics (10 pts)

- Grammar: The student uses correct grammar
- Spelling and Punctuation: The student makes essentially no spelling or punctuation mistakes
- Citations: Citations are formatted correctly

Content Fundamentals (10 pts)

- Content: The student presents enough technical content to address the assignment
- Terminology: The student correctly uses appropriate technical terms
- Correctness: The paper contains no factual errors.

Purpose/Thesis (5 pts)

- The purpose or thesis is on the assigned topic, strong, and clear from the introduction, and remains consistent through the conclusion.