

Essay Introduction

This assignment has two parts: 1) writing the introduction; and 2) commenting on another student's introduction. The two parts are weighted equally.

You will need to submit the introductory paragraph of your final essay for assessment and feedback. This assignment is an important one, as the feedback given – if applied – should improve your final essay grade considerably.

Introductions received late will receive no grade and students will not be able to participate in the peer feedback activity.

Part 1: Writing the Introduction

Submission Instructions

Submit the essay introduction online. These will be graded anonymously, so you must not include your name anywhere on the document.

It is your peer reviewer, rather than the instructor, who will be deciding on your grade for this part of the assignment.

Tips

A good introduction should do the following:

1. **Answer the question:** What is the essay about? Outline the subject and the basic question motivating the essay. Why does this essay exist (aside from being compulsory for this course)? What will the reader learn from it?
2. **Outline your position on that question.** Where do you stand on the question being asked? You'll need to argue for one position, and one only. I don't want "many positions are right," nor do I want "no positions discussed are right." Pick your positions such that you feel comfortable arguing for one over the other. In saying that, make sure that the position you are arguing against is a viable one. If it's obviously wrong, your essay will not be very interesting.
3. **Tell us why you hold that position** – i.e., what your central argument is. This is incredibly important: it isn't enough just to say what your view is and leave it there. You also need to explain your argument for this position. This argument will then be the central thread running through your essay, and everything you say from this point on will need to be explicitly connected to it.
4. **Be specific!** It's not enough to say "I will discuss theory a and theory b" or "I will explain idea x and idea y." Tell the reader *why* you are talking about these things. Specifically, how do these things connect to your central argument? What work are they doing in the essay?
- 5.

Part 2: Providing Peer Feedback

Each student will be assigned another student's essay introduction. They should then assess that introduction using the rubric provided and offer as much constructive feedback as they can, in order to help their fellow student improve their final essay.

The author will then assess the feedback on the basis of how helpful they found it. Feedback that only praises the introduction, as well as feedback that criticises but offers no constructive advice, is far less helpful than feedback that points out areas where the essay can be improved and offers suggestions as to how.

Once you have received the feedback, you should incorporate it into your Final Essay as best you can.

There is also a rubric to fill out about how helpful you found your fellow student's feedback. This rubric determines their grade for the second part of this assignment. It should be submitted at the same time as your final essay (not before).

In Summary

The important steps in this assignment are:

1. Submit your essay introduction online by the deadline.
2. You will then receive another student's essay introduction.
3. Complete the Peer Feedback form by the second deadline.
4. Upload the Peer Feedback form online.
5. Carefully read the feedback your fellow student has provided and incorporate it as best you can into your Final Essay.
6. Complete the Feedback Assessment form prior to uploading your Final Essay.
7. Upload the Feedback Assessment form online.