

Midterm Essay Project

Metaphysics in Film Assignment

Due: **Sunday 11:59pm end of Unit 4**

Mid-Term Paper Instructions and Rubric

- Assignments submitted through this link will be checked using SafeAssign by Blackboard. Your work will not be used for any purpose other than preventing plagiarism in the University. Ownership of the intellectual property contained in your written work will not be transferred to any third party. Please submit your paper as a Word Document.

The requirements for this assignment are to:

- Choose one movie from the list below and thoroughly examine it using the metaphysical concepts that we have studied thus far in the course. How does this film look at Metaphysics? Which concepts that we have studied do you recognize in this film? Does the film take more of an idealist or materialist view of existence? Are there religious or cosmological aspects of this film? Does the film seem to remind you at all of the Allegory of the Cave by Plato? What role does human purpose play in the film? How do people in the film understand the notion of the enduring self? Are there any references to the concept behind the Theory of Forms by Plato (i.e. references to freedom, justice, beauty, equality, love)? You do not have to answer all of these questions, these are just to demonstrate the kind of questions that you should consider answering in the paper, regarding the film.
- There are tons of resources online that examine these films and their philosophical implications, so please make sure to reference at least 2-3 resources about the movie that you have researched on your own, as well as referencing 2-3 resources from the materials we have examined in units 1-4.
- **Film Choices:**
 - a) **The Matrix (1999);**
 - b) **Inception (2010);**
 - c) **Conversations with God (2006);**
 - d) **Hereafter (2010);**
 - e) **Being John Malkovich (1999);**
 - f) **Waking Life (2001 Animated);**
 - g) **Stranger Than Fiction (2006);**
 - h) **Fight Club (1999);**
 - i) **Synecdoche, New York (2008);**
 - j) **Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2004);**
 - k) **Memento (2000);**

- l) **The Sixth Sense (1999);**
- m) **I Heart Huckabees (2004);**
- n) **Pi (1998);**
- o) **A Beautiful Mind (2001);**
- p) **Vanilla Sky (2001)**

- Use APA Formatting, Double-Spacing, 12 point Times New Roman Font, Cite all references used at the end of the paper (on a separate page with a References heading).

For this assignment you will choose a movie from the list provided and write a paper on the metaphysical elements that are in the paper. This paper can be written from a cosmological (scientific) perspective, a religious perspective, or a philosophical perspective, or any mixture of the three perspectives. The paper should be organized clearly with:

- An introductory paragraph that states the name of the film and the metaphysical concepts that you will be exploring as related to the film (for example, free will v. determinism, first principles, existentialism, the existence of God, human purpose, etc.).
- The second paragraph should contain a brief synopsis of the film in order to introduce the reader to the plot and to provide the reader with the pertinent details that will be necessary to understand the metaphysical implications of the film.
- By the third paragraph you will have introduced your metaphysical concepts and explained the film already in your first two paragraphs, and you will be ready to explore the metaphysical concepts you mentioned in the introduction in more detail. This will make up the main body of your paper.
- The final paragraph will be a conclusion paragraph that will tie up all of the concepts in the body of your paper and bring them around to any concluding thoughts you have on the film and its relationship to metaphysics, or any arguments that you feel you have proven in the body of your paper.

The Unit 4 Mid-Term Essay assignment must be at least 1000 words when complete (roughly 4 full pages, excluding title and reference pages), double spaced, and formatted according to APA style, using Times new Roman type and size 12 Font. You must use at least 4 scholarly resources to support your claims (at least two that you researched on your own, and at least two from the materials in units 1-4). Cite your sources within the text of your paper and on the reference page. For information regarding APA, please visit the *Student Success Resources* page in the PHL101 Introduction to Philosophy Blackboard course.

For a detailed grading report, please refer to the rubric on the next page before submitting.

Students: Be sure to read the criteria, by which your paper/project will be evaluated, before you write, and again after you write.

Evaluation Rubric: Mid-Term Essay Assignment (120 Points possible)

CRITERIA	<i>Deficient</i>	<i>Basic</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>
Discusses Metaphysics (40 Points Possible)	<i>(0 – 10 points)</i>	<i>(11-20 points)</i>	<i>(21 – 30 points)</i>	<i>(31 – 40 points)</i>
For full credit here, student must thoroughly explore and explain the chosen topics in metaphysics, in a clear and detailed manner that shows a strong grasp of the subject matter, and relates back to the course content.	Addresses the topics, but the paper is unclear, inaccurate, and/or includes a minority of the important elements of the topic subject matter. Answer Reveals a poor grasp of the topics related to metaphysics.	Somewhat accurately addresses most aspects of the chosen topics. The paper lacks clarity, structure, and/or is not comprehensive. Exploration of metaphysical topics may be weak or incomplete.	Accurately addresses most important aspects of the chosen metaphysical topics/concepts. The essay is clear and mostly comprehensive, showing a good understanding of the subject matter.	Accurately addresses all important aspects of the metaphysical topics. The response is clear and comprehensive, and demonstrates an above average grasp of the concepts related to metaphysics.
Critical Thinking (40 Points Possible)	<i>(0 – 10 points)</i>	<i>(11-20 points)</i>	<i>(21 – 30 points)</i>	<i>(31 – 40 points)</i>
For full credit here, the student must show a high level of critical thinking which demonstrates unbiased, informed, and reasonable thinking, free of assumption and fallacy, and based on evidence from course materials and research.	Student does not demonstrate clear and consistent thought, evident of college-level critical thinking.	Student shows a moderate level of critical thinking. Answers are not supported by evidence from course materials or clear reasoning.	Student shows average critical thinking and uses the course materials, reason, and evidence to backup points. Essay is free of assumption, bias, and logical fallacies.	Student shows an exceptional grasp of critical thinking, discussing the chosen topic clearly and logically using course resources and outside research to support ideas with evidence.

References (10 Points Possible)	<i>(0-1 points)</i>	<i>(2-4 points)</i>	<i>(5-7 points)</i>	<i>(8-10 points)</i>
For full credit here, student must use at least four resources from the course materials or from outside research conducted by the student. Resources must be used in text, cited correctly, and placed in the reference list.	The references are either nonexistent, completely lack proper formatting, or are inappropriate resources for an academic paper.	Uses few sources that provide little or no support for ideas. The sources may not be scholarly, and citations are not formatted correctly within the body of the assignment and/or on the reference page.	Uses at least 3 scholarly sources to support ideas. Citations may not be formatted correctly within the body of the assignment and/or on the reference page.	Uses at least four scholarly sources to support ideas. The sources are used and cited correctly within the body of the assignment and on the reference page.
Grammar, Punctuation, and Syntax (10 Points Possible)	<i>(0-1 points)</i>	<i>(2-4 points)</i>	<i>(5-7 points)</i>	<i>(8-10 points)</i>
For full credit here, the essay must show a strong understanding of proper use of grammar, punctuation, and syntax leading to a clear and comprehensible piece of writing.	Fails to display basic comprehension of syntax or mechanics, such as spelling and grammar. Written work contains major errors, which distract the reader.	Displays basic comprehension of syntax and mechanics, such as spelling and grammar. Written work contains a few errors, which may slightly distract the reader.	Displays comprehension and organization of syntax and mechanics, such as spelling and grammar. Written work contains only a few minor errors, and is mostly easy to understand.	Displays meticulous comprehension and organization of syntax and mechanics, such as spelling and grammar. Written work contains no errors, and is very easy to understand.
Length (10 Points Possible)	<i>(0-1 points)</i>	<i>(2-4 points)</i>	<i>(5-7 points)</i>	<i>(8-10 points)</i>
For full credit here, student must adequately discuss their chosen topic in at least 1000 words, excluding the title page and references.	Essay is less than half of the required length, excluding title page and references.	Essay is between 500-750 words, excluding title page and references.	Essay is between 751-999 words, excluding title page and references.	Essay is at least 1000 words or more, excluding title page and references.
APA (10 Points Possible)	<i>(0-1 points)</i>	<i>(2-4 points)</i>	<i>(5-7 points)</i>	<i>(8-10 points)</i>
For full credit here, student must use APA formatting consistently throughout the paper, (including proper in-text citations), title page and reference page.	Fails to exhibit basic knowledge of APA formatting. There are frequent errors, making the layout difficult to distinguish as APA.	Exhibits basic knowledge of APA formatting throughout the paper. However, layout does not meet all APA requirements.	Exhibits APA formatting throughout the paper. However, layout contains a few minor errors.	Accurately uses APA formatting consistently throughout the paper, title page, and reference page.