Guidelines for Philosophy 1301 Research Essays

Theme:

The assignment paper should focus on the philosophical contributions of an individual in the Western tradition. For this research paper, choose an individual from Socrates to the 1950's C.E. This individual should not include religious figures although some scientific individuals may be appropriate in the period when science and philosophy were fused.

Although some biographical information should be included at the beginning of the essay, **it should not be the focus of the paper.** Instead, analyze one or two of the individual’s major ideas/works and assess his/her contribution to the philosophical tradition and their impact today.  You will need to access the library for databases and books to complete this assignment.  You can do this online through the library guide for philosophy.  I would expect to see at least 5 quality sources including background research and specialized research relating to your thesis.  Sources should be a combination of scholarly books and articles.  Any websites used must be scholarly or authoritative.

Format:

The essay should be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins. Any clear 12-point font is acceptable. Include a cover page with your name, date and class information. A bibliography must be included in the essay. Use standard MLA formatting for the bibliography.  Encyclopedias are not appropriate for college-level work. Other inappropriate sources include Wikipedia, biography.com, and any television shows.  EasyBib, a service available on the library homepage, can help you with formatting citations.

All information and opinion, which does not come out of your own head, must be cited in the body of the essay. To do otherwise is plagiarism, which is rewarded with a zero. Use the standard MLA format for citations i.e. (Vaughn 34).  APA is also acceptable for citations as long as it is consistent.

The essay should be formatted in MS Word with an electronic copy turned to the dropbox on the due date.

As with any formal essay, spelling, grammar, and sentence construction should be carefully checked before the paper is turned in. Spell checkers are a marvelous modern convenience but they don’t always catch words that are spelled correctly but used incorrectly. So proofread.

Five pages of text are required to cover your topic. This does NOT include the cover page and bibliography.  If you need a little more room, feel free to take it, but keep in mind this assignment is not designed to be a 20-page research project.