

Compare and Contrast Assignment

1. Your compare and contrast essay should analyze the arguments of two philosophers on a single topic discussed in Classes 7-10. Choose between comparing the arguments of Newton and Leibniz on the nature of space and comparing the arguments of Zimmerman and Smart on the nature of time. You may invoke any other material you think is relevant, but either space or time should be your primary focus.

Like the first two writing assignments, this is not a rhetorical, argumentative paper. It is like two exegeses, put together. You need not defend a thesis. The goal of the compare and contrast assignment is to focus on a point of disagreement and present the arguments on either side carefully.

2. The compare and contrast essay is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, October 7.
3. The essay should be double spaced, approximately 800-1000 words, in a reasonable font, such as 11 point Times, with reasonable (e.g. one-inch) margins. Paginate your paper. Do not right justify (i.e. fully justify) it. Late papers will be penalized.
4. Do not be misled by the brevity of the assignment. Expect to revise your paper several times before submitting it. Revisions ordinarily involve tightening and clarifying your writing.
5. Feel free to consult others about how to improve your compare and contrast essay prior to submitting it. Links to excellent advice for writing philosophy papers are available on the course website. The Writing Center has excellent peer tutoring; make an appointment in advance. Acknowledge any assistance you have had on your paper.
6. Standards for academic writing vary by discipline. Philosophical writing should be attentive to every detail. Write simply, and clearly. Minimize use of jargon. Observe standard rules of grammar and spelling. Avoid history and biography. Focus on the arguments.
7. Your work for this paper should mainly consist of you and your chosen readings. Other sources you consult while writing, including any websites you visit and any persons with whom you talk, must be noted. References to our assigned readings may be indicated in line: "Some truths there are so near and obvious to the mind, that a man need only open his eyes to see them" (Berkeley, §6). Other sources require a list of references at the end of the paper along with in-line citations. Internet sources must include a live URL. I must be able to trace any source.
8. You may re-write the second paper, for a possible improved grade. All rewrites must be completed by November 20.
9. Violations of academic integrity, like plagiarism, will lead to failing grades. Acknowledge any assistance you have had on your paper.

The Hamilton College Honor Code will be enforced.