Advice on Writing a Philosophical Paper

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Introduction

The most important thing to remember about writing a philosophy paper is that philosophy papers are about *arguments*. They are about accurately reconstructing the arguments of other philosophers. They are about critically evaluating those arguments. And they are, finally, about constructing and defending your own arguments. This argumentative focus makes philosophy papers unlike most papers you've probably written in your life. And to some of you, the emphasis on long, carefully constructed arguments about seemingly obscure conceptual or far-fetched moral issues might seem pointless. But philosophers believe that precision and clarity regarding these seemingly small matters is indispensible for making progress on the Big Questions in life – how we should live, how our political institutions should be structured, what kinds of things exist and how we can know this. And since we attain precision and clarity by carefully considering the arguments for and against our beliefs, philosophers believe that the process of reading and writing argumentative papers is extremely important. So, what follows is a brief guide about how to write them well.

Structure of Your Paper

As should be apparent from the articles we have covered in this class, there are a variety of approaches one might take in structuring a philosophy paper. For the purposes of your own writing in this class, however, it will probably be helpful to stick to a simple, basic, but effective structure. The following should serve as a useful model:

1. **Introduction** (Here's the problem I'm trying to solve and why it matters)
2. **Reconstruction of the argument you are going to analyze** (Here's how so-and-so tries to solve the problem)
3. **Analysis of the argument** (Here's why so-and-so is wrong)

4. **Anticipation and response to possible counterarguments** (Here's what so-and-so would say in response to my criticism, and here's why that's wrong too)
5. **Repetition of 2 through 4 as necessary**
6. **Setting forth your own positive argument** (Here's *my* solution to the problem)
7. **Anticipation and response to possible counterarguments** (Here's an objection someone might have to my solution. And here's what I think of it)
8. **Conclusion (**Here's what I just told you and why it matters)

In the following sections of this guide, I will walk you through each of these steps.

Introduction

Ever since the dawn of time, students have started their papers with long, flowery, clichéd openings. Webster's Dictionary defines a "cliché" as "a trite phrase or expression." Opening your paper with a dictionary definition is one example of a cliché. It is also poor philosophy, as dictionaries are authoritative only with respect to the common usage of a word, and philosophical usage often has a specialized technical sense that is not captured by it. Do not start your paper with a paragraph like this one.

Your introduction should be short and to the point. And the point of a philosophical paper, to remind you, is argumentation. So, the purpose of your introduction should be to introduce your reader to your argument. And there really only three things you absolutely need to do in order to accomplish this. The first is to tell your reader what topic, issue, or question you're going to be addressing, and why it is important. The second is to tell your readers what it is that you are going to argue regarding that topic. And the third is to tell them how you are going to argue it.

Your Topic

A good argumentative paper tries to answer a **question**. Is price gouging wrongfully exploitative? Is the "experience machine" a valid objection to purely subjectivist theories of well-being? If you're permitted to pick your own topic for your paper, then try to pick a question that is *relevant*, *interesting*, and *manageable*. Your topic should be relevant to the material that we've covered in class. It should be interesting in the sense that the answer to the question you're asking *matters* for addressing some philosophical issue. And, finally, your topic needs to be one that you can adequately address given the constraints of space to which you will be subject. "What is the meaning of life" is a

terrifically interesting question! But probably not one you're going to be able to say much of value about in a 2-page paper.

Whether you pick your own topic or not, you need to clearly *communicate* your topic to your reader very early in your introduction. Tell your reader what question you're trying to answer. If there's a relevant context that is necessary to understand what your question means or why it matters, briefly explain it. It's important to explain your topic clearly because your thesis is really just your *answer* to the question posed by your topic. And your reader is not going to be able to understand your answer unless they understand what question it's trying to answer.

Your Thesis

Your thesis statement is where you tell your reader what you're going to be doing in your paper. Don't doddle around with this. Get right to it, preferably in the first paragraph, but certainly no later than the second.

A good thesis will be debatable, specific, and concise.[1] This, for example, is a bad thesis:

- Locke's argument for a natural right to property is interesting and complex.

Lots of things are interesting and complex. So what? This thesis is concise, and sort of specific. But it's far too vague or just plain lacking in substance to be debatable.

Here's a better thesis:

- Locke's argument for a natural right to property fails because consistent application of the Lockean Proviso would render *any* act of original appropriation illegitimate.

This thesis is debatable, it is specific, and it is reasonably concise. It takes one side of a possibly refutable argument. It is closely tied to issues that we may have talked about in class, but you are taking a position that is novel and distinct enough to show that you have taken what you learned here and applied it in a new way. But while it displays some novelty, the thesis is not too ambitious. A good philosophy paper is *modest* and makes a *small point*.[2] There's only so much you can do in the pages that have been

[1] This sentence and many of the ideas that follow regarding thesis statements are drawn from Steve Horwitz's "Guide to Writing Formal Academic Papers," http://myslu.stlawu.edu/~shorwitz/Teaching/writingguidef11.doc.
[2] http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html

allotted you. Your goal should be to demonstrate independent thinking, but this does not require groundbreaking originality.

To be debatable, a thesis has to be clear. Your reader has to know what it is that you are claiming. And she (and you) should be able to form a decent idea of what it would be like for your thesis to be *false*. If you can't imagine what conditions would have to be met for your thesis to be false, or if you can't imagine what kind of evidence it would take to demonstrate its falsity, then you don't have a clear enough thesis yet.

But while a good thesis needs to be clear, it doesn't need to be black-and-white. You don't need to argue that one side of a debate is absolutely correct, and the other side completely wrong. A good thesis can be complicated. You just need to be *precise* about the way in which it is complicated. So, for instance, this will not do:

- Proponents of capital punishment and opponents both have good points, and the truth lies somewhere in between.

Well, maybe. But *where* in between? What are the good points on each side? And where does that leave us with respect to what we should ultimately believe about the morality of capital punishment? Here's a better thesis:

- Proponents of capital punishment are right that the death penalty can be theoretically justified on retributivist grounds, but opponents of the death penalty are correct in pointing out that as it is actually applied, the death penalty is manifestly unjust. This means that the death penalty should be abolished, but only on pragmatic grounds.

See the difference? (And yes, it's OK if a thesis is two sentences, as long as the extra sentence is serving some important point!)

The importance of your thesis statement cannot be overemphasized. Try to come up with a solid version of it *before* you start writing your paper. After all, how are you supposed to know what you should be writing about if you don't know what it is you're trying to argue?

Signposting

Once you've told the reader what you're going to argue, the next thing to do is tell them briefly *how* you're going to argue it. Readers like to feel comfortable. And one way to

help them feel comfortable is to let them know what's coming next. So **post some signs.** Let them know what's ahead. Not only does this make them feel comfortable, it also makes it *much* easier for them to evaluate your argument, since they have at least a rough idea in advance how everything is supposed to fit together. It also forces *you* to think clearly and explicitly about the structure of your paper.

You cannot be too explicit about signposting. Don't try to be subtle or clever about it. Just come right out and say it:

- In this paper I will show that Locke's argument for a natural right to property fails because consistent application of the Lockean Proviso would render *any* act of original appropriation illegitimate. I will begin my argument in section 1 by reconstructing Locke's argument for private property and its foundation in self-ownership and the mixing of labor. Section 2 sets out two versions of the Lockean proviso and explains their relation to Locke's underlying theory of natural rights. In section 3, I draw on Judith Thomson's work to show how consistent application of the proviso prohibits *any* act of appropriation. I conclude in section 4 by responding to two objections to this thesis given by David Schmidtz.

And don't stop here. Keep signposting *throughout* your paper. Little phrases like…

- I will begin by...
- Before I say what is wrong with this argument, I want to...
- These passages suggest that...
- I will now defend this claim...
- Further support for this claim comes from...
- For example...

…can do a lot to help your reader understand the logical structure of your paper. Use them liberally![3]

Another tip for clarity: break your paper into sections and use descriptive **section headings,** like "Section 1: A Reconstruction of Locke's Argument for Private Property."

[3] http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html

Reconstructing Arguments

Almost any philosophical paper you write will involve presenting someone else's argument to your reader. You can't fairly criticize someone's view until you've explained to your reader what that view is. And you can't effectively argue for *p* unless you've examined the arguments other philosophers have given for ~*p*.

I describe the process of presenting another philosophers' argument as "reconstruction" rather than "summarization" to emphasize that it is an *active* task, involving *real philosophical work*. You're not just writing a book report.[4] You're not simply telling me what he or she said first, then second, then third. You're peering through the fog of philosophers' dense language to find the *essence* of the argument, to extract from it the key definitions, premises, and conclusions of that argument, and to put it back together again in a way that makes its logical structure clear.

Avoid excessive use of **quotations** when reconstructing an author's argument. "If you need to quote, quote sparingly, and follow your quotes by explaining what the author means in your own words. (There are times when brief direct quotes can be helpful, for example when you want to present and interpret a potential ambiguity in the text of an author's argument.) "When you paraphrase, you must do philosophical work in doing so: explain any ambiguous terms or technical terms in the source, and remember that your task is not to explain the author's sentences in the text but his or her argument: aim to show that you've understood it and aren't merely repeating it in different words."[5]

Three points about the process of reconstruction:

1) **Be choosy** – reconstruction involves good *judgment*. Not everything an author says in his or her paper is important. And even stuff that is important, in some general sense, might not be important for *your* purposes. So be choosy about which elements of his or her argument you discuss. As always, let your thesis be your guide. If it's not relevant to the point you're trying to argue in your paper, leave it out.

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[4] http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~phildept/files/ShortGuidetoPhilosophicalWriting.pdf

[5] I quote this, aware of the irony, from http://philosophy.fas.harvard.edu/files/phildept/files/brief_guide_to_writing_philosophy_paper.pdf

2) **Be accurate** – It's not enough to present your reader with the general idea of the author's argument. You need to get the details exactly right. After all, if you don't *understand* the author's argument accurately, how can you possibly hope to *criticize* it accurately? Messing up your argument reconstruction is like messing up the first step of a long math problem. Once you make that mistake, everything else that follows is doomed.
3) **Be charitable** – Sometimes philosophers say things that sound stupid. But please, remember, if these arguments really were that stupid, I wouldn't be having you read them. So perhaps – just perhaps! - the reason they *sound* stupid to you isn't that they *are* stupid. Perhaps it's that you've misunderstood them? Apply the principle of charity. When something a philosopher says is subject to multiple interpretations, choose the interpretation that makes his or her argument *the best* it can possibly be. This isn't just a point about being nice to the author. Attacking weak versions of arguments is simply a poor way of getting at the *truth*. If you really want to convince your readers (and yourself) of the truth of your hypothesis, you need to attack the *best* possible version of the opposing arguments.

Analyzing Arguments

Once you've reconstructed someone else's argument, you should critically evaluate it. Does the argument give us good reason to believe that the author's conclusion is correct? Note that this is *a different question* from the question of whether you *agree* with the author's conclusion. You can have flawed arguments for true conclusions. Your job as a philosopher is focus on the quality of the argument.

Philosophers use two technical terms to describe the success of arguments – *validity* and *soundness*. An argument is *valid* only if its conclusion is logically entailed by its premises. An argument is *sound* only if it is valid *and* its premises are true. Some examples:

1. All people who have their heads cut off die.
2. Abraham Lincoln did not have his head cut off.

C. Therefore, Abraham Lincoln did not die.

This argument is *invalid,* because even if premises 1 and 2 are true, C does not follow.[6] There are, after all, other ways of dying than having one's head cut off.

Now consider this argument.

1. All people who drink milk are over six feet tall.
2. Bobby drinks milk.

C. Therefore, Bobby is over six feet tall.

This argument is *valid*, but not *sound*. It is valid because its conclusion follows logically from the premises (if the premises are true, the conclusion must be true). But it is not sound because one of the premises (specifically, premise 1) is false.

So one thing you can do to evaluate an argument is to see if it fails by being either invalid or unsound. Here's a less formal way of thinking about the same idea. Think of two ways you might respond, incredulously, to an argument.

"Oh, yeah?"
Jack: Why should we have the death penalty? Because it deters crime!
You: Oh, yeah? *Does* it really deter crime?

Jack has presented a sketch of an argument in favor of the death penalty here. That argument depends on the factual premise that the death penalty deters crime. One way to challenge Jack's argument, then, is to challenge the truth of that factual premise. If it turns out that the death penalty *doesn't* deter crime, then Jack's argument is in trouble. (The death penalty might still be a good policy, but not for the reason suggested by Jack's argument)

"So what?"
Jack: Why should we have the death penalty? Because it deters crime!
You: The death penalty deters crime? Let's suppose it does. So what?

Notice the difference here. With this response, you're not challenging the truth of Jack's factual premise. You're assuming, for the sake of argument, that the premise is correct.

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[6] The argument commits the fallacy of "denying the antecedent," and has the form
$P \rightarrow Q$
$\sim P$
Therefore, $\sim Q$

What you're challenging is the idea that this premise supports Jack's conclusion. Presumably, the next thing you would say in this exchange would be something to specifically challenge this inference, such as "random searches of people's houses and bodies would probably deter crime too, but that doesn't mean that they are policies we should pursue."

That response draws on one of the key resources in the philosopher's argumentative toolkit: **the counterexample.** Jack's argument, like many philosophical arguments, has tacitly assumed a kind of *universal claim*, namely, that *anything* that deters crime is a good public policy. But universal claims are vulnerable, because all that's needed to defeat them is a *single* counterexample. If I say all Xs are P, then you only need to come up with *one* X that is *not* P in order to show that my claim is false. If it is false that we should randomly search people's houses and bodies, then any universal principle that entails that it is *true* must itself be false (A → B, ~B, therefore ~A).

One specific form that a counterexample can take is the ***reductio ad absurdum*** (or just "reductio" for short). When used effectively, reductios can be a very powerful argumentative tool. For what they do is demonstrate that the premises of one's opponent logically entail not merely the conclusion he or she *wants* to draw from them, but also *another* conclusion – one that is *absurd*. The idea is that if a set of premises logically entails a conclusion that is false, one of those premises must necessarily be false too. For example,

1. It is morally wrong to knowingly cause the death of any living creature.
2. Bacteria are living creatures.
3. Therefore it is morally wrong to knowingly cause the death of bacteria.

The conclusion of this argument seems false. Yet the argument is valid. So if the conclusion is false, then one of the premises must be false, too. And since 2 is clearly true, it must be 1 that is false.

Anticipating Objections

Once you've come up with a criticism of an argument, you *could* stop right there. But this isn't a very good way to think, or to engage in philosophical argument. Imagine

that you did this in a non-philosophical context. Suppose you were trying to decide whether to go to law school or to medical school, and you had the following thought:

> "Well, one reason I might want to go to medical school is to impress my parents. But I can't live my life trying to make them happy. So that's not really a good reason after all. Well, then, law school it is!"

The obvious problem with this method of reasoning is that you haven't *finished* evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of your two options. You've only looked at *one* consideration, and it's possible that you haven't even evaluated that one consideration as thoroughly as you should. As a result, you've made an error in reasoning by jumping to a conclusion without sufficient warrant.

To avoid this error in reasoning, one "trick" you can use is to always play the Devil's Advocate to your own arguments. Suppose you've made up your mind to go to law school, after weighing all the different reasons you can think of. Before you send off the application, there's one more step you should take. Put yourself in the position of someone who thinks you ought to go to medical school, and try to think of the *strongest argument* such a person could make to you. What's the *best objection* they might have to your argument that law school is the best choice? Then, once you've come up with something, try to respond to it. Should this objection persuade you to change your mind? Or, if not, then *why* not?

This is a crucially important technique to use in your philosophical writing, and one that you will find modeled for you in the best philosophical papers and books that you read. After you've criticized an argument (or after you've made your own positive argument), try to think of the *best objection* someone could make to what you've said, and then try to think of how you might respond. Doing this serves two purposes: 1) it helps *you* ensure that you're really considering all the best arguments pro- and con-, and so makes it more likely that the conclusion you reach will be true; and 2) it helps your *reader* see that you've considered both sides of the issue, and so makes them more likely to trust your conclusion.

The trick to making this technique effective is to think of the *strongest* objection possible. And this takes a lot of creative, philosophically sophisticated thought. You need to think of something *new* and something that poses a *credible threat* to your argument.

- **Don't** formulate an objection by simply reiterating something the author has already said in the argument you've just presented.
    - i.e. "Jones says that the death penalty is unjust and does not deter crime. I think this argument is flawed because it ignores new empirical evidence. In response, Jones might say that the death doesn't really deter crime").
- **Don't** come up with a weak or implausible objection
    - i.e. "I think Jones' argument against the death penalty is flawed because it entails the moral acceptance of a large number of innocent persons dying. In response, Jones might say that there is no problem with lots of innocent people dying. But this response shows just what a cold-hearted jerk Jones is."
- **Do** feel free to draw on external research to help you in formulating objections.
    - i.e. "One objection to my argument is suggested by some comments by John D. Philosopher in his 2008 article in *Utilitas*. In that article, Philosopher writes that…"
- **Do** try to come up with objections that you have a hard time figuring out how to answer!
    - i.e. "I have argued that current citizens of the United States owe reparations to the descendants of former slaves. One objection to this argument is that many current citizens of the United States are recent immigrants who have received no benefit from U.S. slavery, and who may have themselves been harmed by serious injustices in their home countries."

Remember, we're *philosophers*, not *lawyers*. Our job is to get at the *truth*, not to merely present the most convincing argument we can for "our" side, regardless of its philosophical merit! So thinking of strong objections is good, even when you can't figure out how to answer them! Sometimes, the correct response to a strong objection will be to go back and revise your thesis.[7] Other times, the best you will be able to do is note that the objection raises a valid point, but that the weaknesses of your own philosophical position are no greater than the weaknesses of all alternative positions. In philosophy, hardly anybody ever wins by a knockout; the best you can hope for is usually a victory by decision.

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[7] http://philosophy.fas.harvard.edu/files/phildept/files/brief_guide_to_writing_philosophy_paper.pdf

Making a Positive Argument

It's one thing to poke holes in somebody else's argument. It's quite another, and far more challenging, thing to construct your own positive argument for the view you think is correct.

In some shorter papers, you won't be asked to do this. Sometimes, all a philosophical paper requires you to do is to reconstruct and critically evaluate another philosopher's argument.

But usually, criticizing other philosophers' argument is just a means to the end of developing your own positive philosophical argument. The main reason why you want to argue that *X* is wrong about some issue, in other words, is so that you can explain what the *right* answer is.

The goal of this section of your paper is to provide your audience with *reasons* to believe that your thesis is true. You're tying to convince them of something. But you're trying to convince them *rationally*, not by appealing to their emotions, or bullying them, or appealing to mere authority. You want to convince your audience that your thesis is better supported by logic and evidence than the alternative positions.

A good philosophical argument starts from *premises* that your audience is likely to accept, and tries to lead them from these premises to the *conclusion* you want them to draw. For example, here's a common argument made by proponents of ethical vegetarianism:

1. It is wrong to cause pain unnecessarily.
2. Raising and killing animals for meat causes pain unnecessarily.
3. Therefore, raising and killing animals for meat is wrong.

This argument sets forth the author's opinion about eating meat. But it's not *just* expressing an opinion. It's *defending* that position by giving a *reason* for it. Eating meat is wrong, the argument tells us, because it causes unnecessary pain.

And a good philosophical paper won't stop there. Anticipating possible objections that defenders of meat-eating might raise, the paper will present further arguments in support of premise 2 (the most likely spot for a critic of the argument to make her attack). She might provide factual data about the practice of factory farming to support

her claim that raising animals for meat causes pain. And she will *certainly* want to say more about what criterion she uses to decide whether pain is "necessary" or not, and why she thinks that criterion is the correct one to use.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind in constructing your own positive argument:

- **Define Your Terms** – This is probably the *single* most important thing you need to do in making a philosophical argument. When you use technical or ambiguous terms, you need to tell your reader exactly what you mean. In the argument above, for example, the phrase "unnecessary pain" is crying out for definition. The whole argument hinges on it, and there a lot of different things it *might* mean. So don't leave your reader guessing! It's fine to *stipulate* a definition, or to *borrow* one from another philosopher. But generally avoid relying on dictionary definitions, since dictionaries provide broad, general definitions that typically are not suited to specialized philosophical usage.
- **Give Examples** - Philosophical arguments are often highly conceptual and abstract. So help your reader to understand what you're saying by giving vivid, concrete examples. Real-life examples are fine, if you've got one handy. But you can always create a hypothetical example to focus attention on what you take to be the philosophically relevant features of a situation, without any distractions.
- **Anticipate Objections** – Just like you do when you criticize the arguments of others, you should anticipate and respond to possible objections when formulating your own argument. It's a good exercise to force you to think through your position more carefully. And it will show your reader that you've thought about the issue from more than just one side.

Conclusion

As with your introduction, your conclusion should be brief. The point of a conclusion is not to say anything new. It's not the place to make new arguments or to provide new evidence. Rather, it is to remind your readers of what you've done in your paper and why it matters. Remind them of your thesis, and the main structure of the argument for your thesis. Remind them of why your thesis is important. Then stop. You're done.

In fact, some short papers don't even *need* a conclusion. If you're writing a two-page paper reconstructing and critically analyzing someone else's argument, you don't need to remind me at the end of what you've just done. My memory might be getting worse with age, but I can still remember what I read two pages ago without needing to be reminded of it.

Academic Honesty

It's fine to draw on other people's ideas in constructing your philosophical paper. In fact, it's great! But you have *got to give other people credit for their ideas that you use.* This is not a zero-sum game. Giving credit to others does not mean that there's any *less* credit for you. In fact, just the opposite. Giving credit shows that you have done your homework, and familiarized yourself with the relevant literature on whatever subject you're writing on.

Whenever you get a specific idea from someone else, whether you're **quoting** that idea or merely **paraphrasing** it (i.e. explaining it in your own words), you should provide a citation. Again, there's no penalty for citing *too much*, so when it doubt, provide a citation.

Different professors will have different preferences regarding the precise format you use for providing citations. My own preference is for in-text citations with a bibliography at the end. For instance:

- Robert Nozick argued that end-state principles of justice require "continuous interference with people's lives" (Nozick, 1974, p. 163).

Your citations should **always include a page number.** The point of a citation is to tell your reader how they can find the original source for the idea you're citing. And without a page number, a citation is about as useful as telling someone to meet you at a restaurant "somewhere in San Diego."

The Writing Process

Writing a philosophical paper isn't something you should try to do in one sitting. Philosophical writing is a *process*, and it's a process that takes time.

Start the process by **talking through the ideas** – with your professor, with your roommate, with your mom, or with anyone you can convince to listen. We often fool ourselves into thinking we understand a subject better than we do, and only discover how fuzzy our thinking is when we try to put it into words. So talking through a topic can be a great way for you to learn what you don't quite understand yet and need to study further. It's also, of course, a great way to find out whether your examples are clear, whether your argument is convincing, and so on.

Once you've talked things through a bit, start making an **outline**. Start at the top with your thesis. Then think about the different arguments you're going to reconstruct, how you're going to critically evaluate them, how you're going to support your positive argument, and so on.

Once you've got a rough outline, **start writing , and start early!** The important thing is to get some words on paper. It doesn't have to be perfect at first. You'll go back an edit later. But writing gets you thinking in a way that just sitting back in your chair and scratching your chin can never do. So get that process started as early as possible.

Allocate a day or two to simply **let your paper sit**. I like to do this once I've got a complete draft. Go work on something else. Go lay on the beach. Clear your mind and then come back to the paper with a fresh eye. You'll be amazed at how much more clearly you will see things.

Finally, don't be afraid to **rewrite**! Back in the early days of computing, before everything was immediately backed up to the cloud, I lost several nearly-complete papers due to a failure to save my work. You can imagine how frustrating this was. But the thing is, when I was forced to sit down and rewrite my paper from scratch, it almost *always* turned out better. Often when we start writing a paper, we aren't entirely sure where we're going to end up. We're sort of figuring it out as we go along. But when you rewrite for the second time, you already know how the whole thing fits together! That lets you be much more conscious and thoughtful about how you phrase things, how you order the material, and what you include or cut out.

I'm not suggesting that you rewrite from scratch every paper you produce! But the point is, once you've got a complete draft, you're not done. Go back to it and don't be afraid to delete whole paragraphs, move things around, add a new section, whatever. Writing *is* rewriting.

Sources:

There are lots of good guides out there to help you write better philosophy papers. Here are a few of my favorite.

Harvard College Writing Center's "A Brief Guide to Writing the Philosophy Paper"
http://philosophy.fas.harvard.edu/files/phildept/files/brief_guide_to_writing_philosophy_paper.pdf

Jim Pryor's "Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper"
http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html

Steve Horwitz' "Guide to Writing Academic Papers"
http://myslu.stlawu.edu/~shorwitz/Teaching/writingguidef15.docx

Doug Portmore's "Tips on Writing a Philosophy Paper"
http://www.public.asu.edu/~dportmor/tips.pdf