

Paper 2: Galileo, Aristotle, and Copernicus

DUE DATE

This paper is due by midnight on Friday, February 10th, 2017. Please submit your paper on the Canvas website in .doc or .docx format if possible. Other acceptable formats include .pdf and .odt.

WRITING A PHILOSOPHY PAPER

All philosophers begin by expanding upon or critiquing the theories of past great thinkers. In order to respond to the work of another philosopher, one must follow three principal steps: (1) reconstruct his or her argument with charity, (2) raise objections to the argument, either about its validity or the truth of its premises, and (3) consider potential objections to one's own position. During class discussions, you undertook the first of these three steps when you reconstructed one of Leibniz's and Kant's arguments. In this paper, you will complete the first two steps.

TOPIC

Please choose one of the following two topics:

- Galileo argues that his telescopic observations of sunspots provides evidence against Aristotle's theory of matter. Reconstruct Galileo's argument and raise one central objection. Make sure to summarize Aristotle's theory of matter, to state Galileo's conclusion explicitly, and to identify the premise and/or inference in Galileo's argument that the objection addresses.
- Galileo argues that the observation of Jupiter's moons undermines one of the central objections to heliocentrism. Reconstruct the relevant objection to heliocentrism and then identify the premise and/or inference that Galileo's criticism targets.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Please include only your student number at the top of your paper. *Do not include your name.* I will grade your papers without knowing your identity. Your paper may be short, as long as your reconstruction of Galileo's argument is complete and charitable. As a rough guideline, most students need about 1,000 to 1,250 words to accomplish this task. Your paper should not exceed 1,300 words, however. Please include a complete bibliography with any other sources that you have consulted.