

The final research paper is the compositional apex of the course. This project will enable you to study in depth a specific topic of your own choosing.

Important Dates

The following milestones will help you start early and make continual progress in your work:

[1] Research Topic	February 14
[2] Bibliography and Outline	March 1
[3] Complete Draft	April 5
[4] Peer Review	April 12
[5] Final Version	April 19

Each stage of your research project will be evaluated, checked, and counted, but only the final version of your project will be graded.

From *Topic and Research Question to Thesis and Supporting Arguments*

You are free to explore any topic of moral inquiry that is integrally related to the course, encompassing the *full scope of engineering practice* (from pencils and paper clips to the farthest reaches of astronomical exploration) and the *entire spectrum of philosophical reflection* (from the epistemological and metaphysical grounding of moral theory to the social and political concerns of applied ethics). First, find a research topic in which you are genuinely interested, and focus on a specific question that will guide your work. Below are some *example subjects* that may serve as a catalyst for you, but *find your own topic* and develop your own research question. After delimiting the focus of your project, begin to study your primary sources, formulating your thesis and developing your supporting argumentation.

Law and Professionalism in Engineering Practice

What role can engineers play in strengthening and increasing the *esprit de Corps* and moral fiber of their profession and their corresponding moral obligations to society?
Do current intellectual property laws inhibit innovation in technology?
Should all engineers be licensed?

Moral Issues in Bioengineering and the Environment

What can be done to decrease our dependence on fossil fuel as a primary source of energy in society? Are alternative forms of energy viable in the near future?
Should we drill for oil on some of the last areas of protected land on our continent in order to meet current energy demands and facilitate economic stability?
Should we develop genetically engineered foods? Are immediate economic gains sufficient to warrant the potential long-term risks?

Technology and Society

How have cellular telephones altered the social fabric of society? What can be done to increase the safety and social etiquette of cellular telephone usage?
 How can we establish security, safety, and moral integrity on the Internet?
 Is it morally responsible for large corporations to transfer low skill jobs to developing countries whose labor costs are lower than in the United States for immediate financial gain at the risk of weakening the infrastructure of our own society?

Bibliography

Your bibliography should include key books and published journal articles related to your topic. Professional journals and university presses have the highest standards of research, scholarship, and editorial review. Consider your project as part of the ongoing discussion of your topic in the larger intellectual community. Evaluate all sources critically.

Format of the Research Paper

The text of your paper should be at least nine pages or more in length, double-spaced, in 12-point type, with one-inch margins. All references are to be in *Chicago Manual of Style* citation format, using *footnotes* and *bibliography*. See the source citation guidelines in Turabain, *A Manual for Writers*, 133–215.*

Checklist for Review of Research Paper Draft

Thesis and Argument Structure

Is the thesis statement clear?
 Are terms and concepts defined precisely?
 Are the arguments in support of the thesis sound?
 Is there sufficient factual evidence in support of the thesis?
 Have possible counter-arguments been considered and addressed?
 Do all arguments focus on the thesis?

Organization

Is the structure of the paper evident?
 Are the transitions between sections and paragraphs well-crafted?
 Is each paragraph coherent with a central idea integrally related to your thesis?
 Does each sentence have a clear purpose with cohesion between sentences?

Style and Mechanics

Do the sentences flow gracefully, with a variety of sentence structures?
 Are the grammar and syntax cohesive?
 Are words chosen carefully?

- Are there any superfluous words?
- Are the spelling and punctuation correct?
- Are references cited properly?

You are your own best editor. Carefully read and revise your work, applying the principles of effective writing studied throughout the semester. Think through and strengthen the fundamental argument structure of your paper. [Use *The Craft of Research* as a guide* (see part III, “Making a Claim and Supporting it,” 111–78)].

Final Research Paper Grading Criteria

[1]

Thesis and Structure

Thesis Statement and Outline

- 3: Strong introduction, with a clear thesis statement and a well-crafted outline.
- 2: Thesis stated, with a basic outline to guide the reader.
- 1: Inadequate statement of thesis and outline.

Clarity and Organization

- 3: Overall organization is clear with appropriate transitions. Paragraph structure is integrally related to the thesis statement and outline. Paragraphs are coherent and ideas are clear. Conclusion is strong and summarizes key points.
- 2: Most paragraphs have a clear purpose. Topic sentences sometimes misplaced.
- 1: Lack of organizational structure interferes with the clarity of the paper.

[2]

Arguments, Counter-Arguments, Analysis, and Application

Arguments for Thesis

- 3: Provides persuasive arguments for the thesis statement. Uses appropriate teleological and deontological tools of moral analysis, line-drawing, analogies, and other principles of moral reasoning. Uses objective facts and specific examples. Evaluates all sources critically.
- 2: Offers strong arguments for the thesis statement with substantive justification
- 1: Inadequate argumentation in support of the thesis statement.

Counter-Arguments

- 3: Identifies and critically engages counter-arguments with understanding and precision. Exemplification of genuine dialogue. Sympathetic and rigorous discussion.
- 2: Identifies some of the important counter-arguments, listening to other viewpoints and responding with partial success.
- 1: Inadequate understanding of counter-arguments.

Moral and Contextual Analysis

- 3: Analyzes moral issues thoroughly from multiple perspectives. Makes careful moral distinctions. Thoroughly identifies and explains relevant factual and conceptual issues. Lists social and legal constraints. Understands the essential issues at stake.
- 2: Identifies some of the important moral issues and constraints
- 1: Inadequate moral and contextual analysis

Creativity, Insight, and Application

- 3: Demonstrates strong creativity and insight into fundamental issues, with specific application.
- 2: Creativity, insight, and application present, but need further development.
- 1: Inadequate grasp of the issues, with insufficient application.

[3]

Grammar and Composition*Sentence Structure and Writing Style*

- 3: Graceful sentences with appropriate variety of structures. Words are chosen precisely. Writing is vigorous and engaging.
- 2: Occasionally awkward or vague. Active verbs are used, with few superfluous or poorly chosen words. Some pronouns without clear referents.
- 1: Several cumbersome and unclear sentences. Wordy, excessive nominalizations, weak verbs.

Mechanics and Grammar

- 3: No significant errors of spelling, grammar, punctuation, or usage.
- 2: Minor errors of mechanics and grammar.
- 1: Numerous errors in grammar and substandard usage.

Source Citation:

- 3: Accurate citation of sources, using *Chicago Manual of Style* citation format for all references, including footnotes and bibliography, as outlined in Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*.*
- 2: Minor errors in the correct citation of sources.
- 1: Numerous errors in source citation.

Format:

- 3: Nine pages minimum in length. Double-spaced, in 12-point type, with one-inch margins. Title page with name, submission date, and descriptive title. Complete draft submitted electronically and a printed copy of the evaluated draft included with final version.
- 2: Failure to meet one of the format criteria indicated above.
- 1: Failure to meet two or more of the format criteria.

30 Points Total