

Tutorial Assignment and Questions
Intensive Seminar - Normative Principles - Q4

For the tutorial in Q3 you must write a paper, with a minimum word count of 1,200 words and a maximum word count of 1,400 words. The deadline for submitting it is **Sunday, Aug 3, 11:55pm PT**.

Please put at the **top of your paper**:

- Your name
- The full text of the question you are answering
- The word count (don't count these two items in the word count)

Please also **number the paragraphs**.

You should select a question that you find interesting and challenging, but which you think you can (mostly) answer.

The main purpose of the tutorial paper is to develop your philosophical thinking and understanding. A lesser purpose, but still important, is to give you the opportunity to develop and practice your writing skills on a philosophical issue.

Included below is a list of questions from which you should choose **one** to answer. If you have already written a tutorial paper on a particular question listed below, choose a different question to answer from the list. Remember to **argue** for the points you make and the conclusions you draw, using as much as possible **your own** concretes, examples, and illustrations. As well, use your own words and formulations as much as possible, as against quoting lengthy passages from Ayn Rand or Leonard Peikoff.

Tutorials normally run about 45 minutes, but sometimes go a full hour. Your paper will form the basis of the discussion, so you should **re-read your paper shortly before the tutorial** and be prepared to discuss it and the issues it raises.

Your grade will reflect both your written paper and your ability to discuss it and the issues it raises. The feedback you receive on the paper will take place during this discussion, which is another reason to have re-read your paper shortly before the tutorial.

If you have any questions about the assignment, of course please ask an instructor or TA.

We will be in touch separately about scheduling your tutorial for a time in August.

Questions:

1. Pick **one** of the six derivative virtues in Objectivism -- independence, integrity, honesty, justice, productiveness, or pride -- and explain in what ways the virtue is difficult or challenging to practice. Use your own examples in the course of your explanation and present how you think one should meet those difficulties and challenges.
2. Ayn Rand held that force negates and paralyzes the mind. Why did she hold this and what types of observations do you think support this claim? Explain, using your own examples.

3. Explain the meaning of Ayn Rand's concept of "objectivity" by comparing and contrasting it with other prominent views of the concept. Select your own example of an everyday practical question or cultural controversy to illustrate how the competing concepts of "objectivity" apply.
4. Judging from the readings assigned in class, in what ways is Rand taking up questions about the foundations of political philosophy that Hobbes raised and offering a different answer from Hobbes'? Explain with reference to specific points in the relevant texts, explaining why Rand answers in a different way from Hobbes..
5. Judging from the readings assigned in class, to what extent do you think Rand's political philosophy is Lockean? Explain with reference to specific points in the text.
6. Explain Rand's concept of individual rights, identifying the major premises in the Objectivist metaphysics, epistemology and ethics on which this concept depends. In explaining your answer, pay particular attention to what it means to call a right an individual right, and how Rand's view of this concept depends on her individualism more generally.
7. Rand claims that "capitalism is the only system based on an objective theory of values." Explain what she means by this. Explain how the point depends on relevant principles in her ethics, epistemology, and metaphysics.
8. Rand claims that "the government is the means of placing the retaliatory use of force under objective control." What does she mean here by the importance of placing force under "objective control"? How does this depend on her view of the meaning of "objectivity" generally? How does it contrast with other views of force?
9. Why does Rand think that a distinction between "socially objective value" and "philosophically objective value" is necessary for a philosophic understanding of capitalism? Explain in detail.
10. What is the relationship between Rand's point that art serves a psycho-epistemological function and her point that a work of art is "an end itself"? Discuss your answer to this question in light of Rand's more general views about the relationship between ends and means.
11. How does Rand's view of the value of art relate to her view of the value of philosophy? How does this relationship help explain her answer to the question of whether she is primarily a novelist or primarily a philosopher?
12. Pick an example of a concept or principle in Objectivism about which you think you used to have only a rationalistic understanding. Explain what you think was deficient about your earlier understanding and how you think you've improved your understanding over the duration of this course.