Checklist for Your Paper

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Substance
☐ Correctly present and charitably interpret the work of others.
☐ Use quotes and references to demonstrate familiarity with the material.
☐ Use your own examples or analogies to demonstrate understanding.

Format
☐ Title your paper.
☐ Divide your paper into sections if necessary.
☐ Indent long quotes and official statements of views or principles.
☐ Provide full references, either in footnotes or in a reference section.
☐ Make the print look good on the page: http://tinyurl.com/q7yy8bm

Spelling and Grammar
☐ Check your use of “their” and “there”.
☐ Check your use of “its” and “it’s”.
☐ Check your use of “lay” and “lie”.
☐ Check your use of “your” and “you’re”.
☐ Check your use of “to”, “too” and “two”.
☐ Check your use of “e.g.” and “i.e.”.
☐ Check your use of “affect” and “effect”.
☐ Check your use of “than” and “then”.
☐ Check your use of “I”, “me”, and “myself”.
☐ Check your use of apostrophes.
☐ Check your spelling of proper names.
☐ Check your punctuation.

Style (General)
☐ Be clear.
☐ Be concise.
☐ Be specific.
☐ Attend to the sound: https://tinyurl.com/pws4jwe

Style (Specific)
- Replace nouns with verbs.
  Example: “Frances provided a justification for her view.” Change to: “Frances justified her view.”
- Replace adjectives with adverbs.
  Example: “Hud ate and it was quick.” Change to: “Hud ate quickly.”
- Avoid the passive voice.
  Example: “The ball was hit by Neal.” Change to: “Neal hit the ball.”
- Avoid nested clauses.
  Example: “The essay of Mill’s which is his most famous is On Liberty.” Change to: “Mill’s most famous essay is On Liberty.”
- Avoid verb-object interruption.
  Example: “Now, such a theory excites in many minds, and among them in some of the most estimable in feeling and purpose, inveterate dislike.” Change to: “Now, such a theory excites inveterate dislike in many minds, even those which are most estimable in feeling and purpose.”
- Avoid subject-verb interruption.
  Example: “Sellars, in an argument that influenced McDowell and Davidson among many others, claimed that foundationalism is false because it relies on the myth of the given.” Change to: “Sellars claimed that foundationalism is false because it relies on the myth of the given. This claim influenced McDowell, Davidson, and many others.”
- Get to the subject.
  Example: “In England, from the peculiar circumstances of our political history, though the yoke of opinion is perhaps heavier, that of law is lighter, than in most other countries of Europe.” Change to: “The yoke of law in England is lighter than in most other European countries, though that of opinion may be heavier. This is due to the peculiar circumstances of our political history.”
- Keep the subject short.
  Example: “The distinction between intuitions and concepts that Kant presents in the Transcendental Aesthetic is crucial to his arguments about the synthetic a priori.” Change to: “Kant distinguishes between intuitions and concepts in the Transcendental Aesthetic. This distinction is crucial to his arguments about the synthetic a priori.”
- Avoid subordinate “that” and “which” clauses.
  Example: “The availability of works in progress online has risen dramatically, which has led to a decline in journal reading.” Change to: “The availability of works in progress online has risen dramatically, and this rise has led to a decline in journal reading.”
- Limit commas.
  Example: “There is, in this, a confusion, with which, however, we need not deal.” Change to: “There is a confusion in this, but we need not deal with it.”
- Limit the use of technical terms, abbreviations, and formalism.