

Second Paper Topic
Philosophy 168
Fall, 2016

Length should be approximately 5 pages. Please use a line spacing of 3 lines per inch (double-spaced) and a left margin of 1½ inches, 1 inch elsewhere. Point size may be no less than 12.* Papers will be evaluated on the basis of both content and quality of writing. **Please be sure to use citations from the text to back up your interpretation of Descartes.** You may cite the assigned readings in the text and the material on the course Web site.

Due: November 21, in class.

Descartes informs us that he is unable to doubt the truth of what he clearly and distinctly perceives. Explain, if possible, why he cannot doubt what he clearly and distinctly perceives. Also, explain why he thinks that it is impossible for him to go wrong if he only accepts as true what he clearly and distinctly perceives. Show how a problem of circular reasoning might arise in his argument for the claim that whatever is clearly and distinctly perceived is true. Then show how Descartes responds to this problem. Finally, evaluate the persuasiveness of his response.

*This assignment uses 12-point type.