

Dialogue Assignment

This assignment marks the first step towards completing your final paper. To complete this assignment, you will write a dialogue (trialogue?) between three different figures—each one representing a different position on your chosen topic.

Choose one of our four substantive topics (immigration, policing, health care, inequality) for this assignment. The topic of your dialogue should be the same as the one for your final paper. One of the figures in the dialogue should represent your own views on the topic while the other two should adopt normative perspectives which you do not share or which lead to different conclusions on the issue. These can be broad normative perspectives (e.g., Utilitarian, Rawlsian, Kantian) or different value concerns (e.g., loyalty, fairness, care).

At the beginning of your paper, introduce the reader to the figures in your dialogue and the positions that they represent. Be clear as to which normative perspective each character is meant to capture. You then have substantial freedom to take the dialogue in whichever direction makes sense to you (within the broad contours of your chosen topic). Feel free to be creative in setting the scene—or, alternatively, you are welcome to keep things simple. The paper itself may be written in the following format:

Person A: In my view, immigration should not be restricted because we have to consider the suffering that immigrants have faced in order to arrive in the US.

Person B: Of course we want to prevent suffering, but are we certain that allowing open immigration will create less and not more suffering?

Person C: It might depend on what kind of suffering you're talking about. There is a good argument to be made that allowing for the free movement of people will produce economic benefits for everyone.

Person B: It may create net benefits, but certainly some people will be harmed. And those harmed tend to be those who are least educated and least well-off. We shouldn't adopt a policy that benefits the rich if it harms the poor.

Person A: Compared to those trying to immigrate, the 'poor' in the U.S. are the rich!

Your paper should include general references to arguments and texts that we have encountered in the course. You may even have your characters refer to readings you have done outside of the course—while making sure to include citations. Empirical claims may be relevant, but the *disagreements* should be normative. The characters may disagree about the (normative) importance of the evidence, but they shouldn't disagree about the facts of the matter.

The goal of this dialogue is to explore different sides of a policy issue, not to persuade or convince the characters to change their mind to your position. Of course, your characters may still try to persuade the others (e.g., if you care about harm, you should consider X), but there doesn't need to be a 'winner' at the end of the dialogue. Do your best to fully depict the strongest

versions of the different normative positions. This should help you as you complete your final paper assignment, as you will have explored your chosen topic from different normative perspectives. In total, the paper should be four pages or 750 words, whichever one you hit first.