THE WRITING IN MAJORS PROFILE PROJECT
CFP

Up to five departments/programs will be selected to participate in a project to strengthen student writing within their majors. Participating departments/programs will represent a variety of academic programs (business, fine arts, humanities, social sciences, sciences, etc.) The project will be completed by January 2008. Additional departments will have the opportunity to participate in future iterations of this project.

Goal

The goal of this project is to create a profile of student writing experiences and practices within specific majors. One aspect of this goal is to portray current teaching practices related to writing. The project will be a report to the department, shared and discussed in a meeting or workshop; the report will offer a rich portrait of what's happening and may offer specific recommendations for consideration by the department.

Project Teams

Doug Hesse, Writing Program Director, will coordinate a project team, comprised of

- Two faculty from the participating department, each of whom will receive an honorarium of $700. At least one of the participating faculty members should be tenured.
- Two writing program lecturers who will assist with data gathering and analysis and writing the final report.
- Two students majoring in the department (preferably undergraduates), who will help with data gathering and with developing interview and survey questions. (Student researchers will receive a stipend for their efforts, generally about $300.)

Possible Data to be Gathered

- Faculty surveys, syllabi, or writing assignments focusing on current uses of writing in courses
- Surveys or, perhaps better, interviews with a juniors and seniors about their writing experiences in major courses and in the department's general education requirements
- Samples of student writing from major courses
- Interviews with faculty about student writing and working with student writers
- Literature review: writing in major X
- Interviews with selected recent graduates about the kinds of writing they currently do

Timeline

August 2007: Invitations sent to chairs and directors
September 14: Proposals (one paragraph) due
By September 28: Student team members chosen and project Teams have first meeting
By October 19: 10 minute presentation about project during a faculty meeting
October and November: Data gathering and analysis
November and December: Draft report
January 2008: Sharing and discussion of results with faculty (Writing Program could host a lunchtime gathering)

For More Information
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University Writing Program
dhesse@du.edu 303.871. 7448
http://www.du.edu/writing

Further Information for Writing in the Majors Project Participants in Fall 2007

Participating Departments

Political Science, Chemistry and Biochemistry, History, Economics, Mass Communication and Journalism

Goals

The goal of this action research project is to profile student writing experiences within specific majors at DU, by asking students and faculty about the features of writing assignments in the department and by looking at samples of student writing. The project will also profile student and faculty beliefs, attitudes, and practices regarding writing. The outcome will be a brief report (5-10 pages) to the sponsoring department, shared and discussed in a meeting or workshop; the report will provide information for consideration by the department.

Distribution of the Final Report

The final report will be addressed to faculty members in the participating department, with a copy going to the writing program, as information to its faculty. Any wider distribution is at the discretion of the participating department.

Possible Sections of the Final Report

1. Description of the **amounts** of writing that X majors do, perhaps broken down by the levels or types of courses in which they do this writing.
2. Description of the **types** of writing that X majors actually do, perhaps also broken down by course levels or types.
3. Description of the writing **features, practices,** and **types** that **faculty** find important for students majoring in X.
4. Description of the writing **features, practices,** and **types** that X **students** find important.
5. Description of the **faculty perceptions** of student writing strengths and needs, of faculty attitudes and beliefs toward writing.
6. Description of **student perceptions** of their strengths and needs in writing, of their writing practices, and of their attitudes and beliefs toward writing.
7. Description of **ways that writing is taught** to X majors.
8. **Implications** of these findings: for further research? For curricula? For pedagogy?
9. Selected list of **resources** for X.

Key Junctures

1. Formation of the project team.
2. Meeting of team to plan information gathering and analysis. What artifacts? How? Who?
3. Information gathering.
4. Meeting to discuss emerging themes or categories.
5. Drafting.
6. Meeting to discuss a draft.
7. Presentation and discussion of draft with the department.

WIMPP Projects in Fall 2007

Political Science
Susan Sterett
David Ciepley
Alba Newmann
Matt Hill
Amanda Glenn
Jeffrey Graves

Chemistry and Biochemistry
Lawrence Berliner
Balasingam Murugaverl
Keith Miller
Richard Colby
Linda Tate
Don Dressen
Laura Wiley

Economics
Tracy Mott
Robert Urquhart
Yavuz Yasar
Jennifer Novak
Jeff Ludwig
Betsy Hanson
Michael Sajovetz

Mass Communication and Journalism
Renee Botta
Rod Buxton
Elizabeth Henry
Jennifer Novak
Blake Sanz
Shea Scott
Raquel Villanueva

History
Ingrid Tague
Carol Helstosky
Jennifer Campbell
Blake Sanz
Christine Hartlaub
Eric Lauerman

DRAFT

Writing in Philosophy

A Report Describing and Analyzing Practices at the University of Denver

November 2008

Study Authors

Naomi Reshotko, Department of Philosophy
Candace Upton, Department of Philosophy
Ara Ogle, Undergraduate Philosophy Major
Cameron Stone, Undergraduate Philosophy Major
Doug Hesse, University Writing Program

Contents

1. Introduction and Methods

In early 2008, philosophy department chair Naomi Reshotko met with Doug Hesse, director of the university writing program, to discuss the capstone essays that undergraduate majors in the department complete. During that conversation, they decided it might be useful to create a thorough profile of the amount and kinds of writing that those students were producing during their course of study, the kinds of writing guidance they were receiving, and the attitudes and beliefs of both faculty and students in regard to that writing. The university writing program had begun offering help with this kind of study through its Writing in the Majors Project (WIMP). (The departments of Chemistry, Political Science, History, Economics, and Human Communication completed WIMP studies in early 2008.) Hesse met with the philosophy faculty during one of its meetings, and the department agreed to participate in a study.

The purpose of this project was (and is) primarily descriptive. The goal was to produce as complete a portrait as possible of writing in philosophy courses, culminating in a set of issues and topics for further exploration. The purpose was not to judge individual courses or faculty members. The philosophy department "owns" the study and may circulate its findings as the department finds useful.

A research team consisting of Reshotko, Hesse, Candace Upton, and undergraduate majors Ara Ogle and Cameron Stone convened. The group decided to gather information from two main sources: analysis of syllabi and interviews of both students and professors. We drafted sets of questions for all three purposes, apportioned responsibilities among ourselves, discussed early results, and collated findings. The appendices to this report collect the raw responses. Committee members individually noted themes and patterns in the information, and this report comes out of that work.

We collected syllabi from thirteen professors (tenure line as well as adjunct), for some 26 different courses. We interviewed sixteen undergraduate majors, over half of the department's cohort. (Some students declined interviewing because they had completed only a course or two in the major and felt that they had little to contribute; we believed otherwise but could not convince them.) We also interviewed ten faculty members, although one withdrew. (Persistent scheduling complications made it impossible to conduct the other interviews during the project's time frame.)

2. Amount of writing in philosophy classes

Philosophy professors assign quite a bit of writing, although the amounts vary among courses and professors. No course requires fewer than 8 to 10 pages. A little more than half require 11 to 20 pages, while 7 and 5 courses require 21-30 or 31-40 pages, respectively. It's probably reasonable to say that a philosophy student should expect to write 15-20 pages in each course. We note that courses requiring 20 or more pages of writing generally include many relatively less formal or "writing to learn" assignments, such as course journals, reading summaries or responses, course notebooks, and the like.

The number of writing opportunities vary from course to course. A very few courses require only a single paper, usually a substantial seminar paper completed at the end of the course. Far more common are combinations of 1-3 relatively short essays (shorter than 5 or so pages) and a one relatively longer essay (7 or more pages), with about half the philosophy courses having one or more essay exams. It is reasonable to say that about half the philosophy courses provide 3 to 5 separate writing opportunities for students, with the most of rest requiring 6 or more , and at least four courses asking for more than 9 separate student writings.

Not surprisingly, grades in philosophy courses are based very heavily on writing, with 20 of the 26 courses studied basing 61% or more of finally grades on writing, usually at the higher end of the scale. Given the relative scarcity of multiple-choice exams in philosophy course, this number is probably even higher. In most courses, the percentage of grades from sources other than writing came from class discussion or presentations, which matches the character of the discipline.

- Student perceptions of amount of writing

- Faculty perceptions of amount of writing

3. Types of writing in philosophy courses

By far, the dominant form of writing in philosophy courses, present in every course, is the essay, either in short (1-3 pages), medium (4-6), or long forms, with essay exams or written quizzes being the second most common, in about half the sections. Research papers (involving students gathering and synthesizing multiple sources) were fairly uncommon, present in only four courses. Relatively few courses assigned other genres, formal or informal, such as reading or lecture summaries, notebooks or journals, proposals, annotated bibliographies, Blackboard discussion postings, and the like. While students in 9 courses made oral presentations that might have included PowerPoint, students produced no other writing that used digital, audio, or visual media.

- Student perceptions of types of writing
- Faculty perceptions of types of writing

4. Teaching practices

Generally, philosophy faculty provide relatively little direct instruction in how to write the papers they assign, though the interviews reveal more activity in this regard than does the analysis of syllabi alone. The most common teaching practice is meeting with individual students outside of class to discuss paper topics or strategies, reported in about half the courses. In about a quarter of the classes students have the invitation (or obligation) to submit early drafts for professor comments before revising the papers for grades. In at least three courses, students may revise a paper after receiving a grade, and one professor notes an "infinite rewrite policy," in which students may multiply revise papers. Other practices, such as spending class time generating ideas or talking about strategies, occur in a few courses, and in some few of these, the professor will have students outline and analyze other philosopher's writing, with the aim of their learning some qualities of the form and structure of philosophical writing.

More common (and practiced by a majority of faculty, it seems) is providing students some written advice for writing generally or for completing certain projects specifically. Such information appears in about half the syllabi we analyzed, though it most frequently is fairly short, concentrates on general qualities of writing, and emphasizes format concerns. In several instances, however, professors give students handouts with more elaborated advice, sometimes not only with "characteristics of good work" but also process suggestions on how to get from blank page to final draft. In one case, the professor refers students to websites at Dartmouth and Princeton that contain specific advice for writing in philosophy.

A couple of professors explicitly mention how, after they've graded a set of papers, they prepare comments for the entire class on typical kinds of performances they saw and what went well. With the exception of one faculty, sharing examples of successful student papers does not seem to be a common teaching practice.

Much teaching comes through response on student writing. Faculty generally report a mixture of comments on both the content of student papers (the accuracy and quality of arguments and support) and their presentation (organization, grammar, and so on). As we noted above, in several cases, students may revise their papers after receiving feedback.

- Student perceptions on teaching (incorporate some of the bulleted ideas from part 6)

5. Additional faculty perspectives

- The ability to make good arguments is fundamental to writing philosophy.

- Faculty recognize writing as integral to philosophy. Almost all discuss the act of writing as intertwined with thinking, leading students to recognize where their understanding or arguments are lacking.

- Faculty are divided in their level of satisfaction with student writing abilities.

- Faculty cite a number of challenges that students face in philosophical writing, but they generally agree that formulating a good thesis and providing good supporting arguments is a common problem.

- They generally expect textual evidence, usually from primary readings.

- Faculty are mixed in their perceptions of how well philosophy students write in comparison to other undergraduates, although several of them believed they lacked a solid basis for judgment.

6. Additional student perspectives

- About 1/3 chose philosophy before coming to DU, with the rest being generally interested by an initial course or professor.

- To a person, all students believe writing is vital to the study of philosophy, although the offer different reasons.

- Students perceive a mixture of being asked to write about others' ideas and writing about their own. Several students see writing about their own ideas as a means to understanding and clarifying those of others.

- Students recognize that they must regularly explain others' philosophical positions, and most of them seem to recognize a difference between summarizing and interpreting.

- Most (but not all) students believe their writing has changed as a result of being a philosophy major, although the nature of that change varies.

- Students cite various processes in writing philosophy; few, however, seem confident in their approach.

- Students perceive having to write differently for different philosophy courses, though this does not necessarily trouble them.

- With some exceptions, philosophy students perceive themselves as writing differently in their philosophy courses than in their other ones.

- About half the students are satisfied with the kinds of feedback they receive, although others would value more elaborated feedback, including even students who received good grades.

- Students generally believe they are being graded fairly and that they are doing an appropriate amount of writing. Several students actually would be happier with more writing.

7. Issues for consideration

Appendix A:
Writing as Represented in Philosophy Course Syllabi
Compilation of All Data

26 courses from 13 different professors.

1000 level 4
2000 level 17
3000 level 5

4. How many **formal writing assignments** were in the class?

	0	1 – 2	3 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 8	9 or more
Short Essay (1 – 3 pages)**)**		**1**	**7**	**1**	**2**	**2**
Medium Essay (4-6 pages)		**6**	**3**			
Longer Essay (7 or more pages)		**15**	**1**			
Short Research Paper (1 – 5 pages) **)**		**1**				
Mid-Length Research Paper (6 – 10 pages)**)**		**2**				
Longer Research Paper (11 or more pages)		**1**				
Creative work (short stories, poems, plays, etc.)						
Other:***)**						

5. How many of the following writing tasks to test or report knowledge were in the class?

	0	1 – 2	3 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 8	9 or more
Essay Exams		**10**				**1**
Short-answer quizzes		**1**				
Reading or lecture summaries		**2**	**1**			**1**
Lab reports or Case studies						
Letters, memos, etc.						
Other:*						

6. How many times were students assigned the following writing tasks to facilitate learning, exploration, or discussion?

	0	1 – 2	3 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 8	9 or more
Journal or notebook; reading responses or reactions			**1**		**1**	**4**
Informal in-class writing			**1**			
Class forum posts (discussion board, listserv)					**1**	
Other:*				**1***		

***Intellectual biographies**

7. How many times were students assigned the following writing tasks to **support research** or projects?

	0	1 – 2	3 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 8	9 or more
Outline						
Proposal or prospectus		**1**				
Abstract or précis						
Annotated Bibliography		**2**				
Other:*						

8. How many times did students have multi-media projects that involved writing?

	0	1 – 2	3 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 8	9 or more
Oral presentation/PowerPoint		**8**	**1**			
Website or page						
Audio or Visual project (e.g., podcast, slideshow, video, photo/image essay)						
Poster						
Other:*						

9. What was the *total number of pages* of writing (formal and informal) assigned in the course? (Circle)

0	
1 – 10	2
11 – 20	15
21 – 30	7
31 – 40	5
41 or more	

10. Approximately what *percentage of the final course grade* was based on writing assignments? (Circle)

0	
1 – 20	
21 – 40	2
41 – 60	2
61 – 80	13
81 – 100	7
Unknown	2

11. Were students explicitly asked/invited, on the syllabus, to complete the following activities?

	Yes	No
Spend class time generating topics, developing ideas, or talking about writing strategies	**3**	
Participate in workshops or discussions with other students about their work in progress	**1**	
Meet with professor individually outside	**11**	

of class to discuss their writing		
Revise their work based on professor feedback *before* they receive a grade	**6**	
Revise based on professor feedback *after* they receive a grade**)**	**3**	
Meet with a consultant in the Writing Center	**1**	
Share final drafts with the class (reading work in class, posting them on Blackboard, distributing copies, etc.)	**3**	

12. Did the syllabus or assignments include specific advice on the "content" of course writings (i.e. strategies to use, ways of developing arguments, rhetorical features, ways to use evidence and reasoning)? If yes, describe.

Yes: 13

1) recommended readings on how to write a paper
2) advice on quotations and citation
3) few sentences of advice on form (3)
4) grading rubric
5) take class notes to be used in paper
6) extended advice and grading guidelines
7) extensive handouts
8) two-page handout on paper qualities and grading
9) qualities valued in take home exam include 25% each of accuracy; clarity; thoroughness; order

13. Did the syllabus or assignments include specific advice on the form of course writings (margins, citation style, page layout, etc.)? If yes, describe.

Yes: 10

Mostly short advice on layout and format, length, fonts, etc.

14. Please characterize any other features in the syllabus (or its assignments) that are related to writing.

1) Professor will approve topics in advance
2) Syllabus has detailed list of paper topics
3) Most of the writing is "writing to learn;" many short writings; writings after class discussion
4) 30 or more pages of writing, all of them short pices
5) In addition to short answers, students produce logic diagrams
6) There seem to be short writings that aren't in the syllabus
7) Only one paper determines entire grade of the course (2)
8) Extremely detailed writing advice
9) After each paper, professor provides overview of how the class did, characterizing class strengths and weaknesses

Appendix B:
Interviews with Sixteen Philosophy Undergraduates
Complete Responses

1. ***What year are you in school?***

a. Junior
b. Junior
c. Senior
d. Sophomore
e. Freshman
f. Sophomore
g. Junior
h. Senior
i. Sophomore
j. Senior
k. Senior
l. Sophomore
m. Sophomore
n. Sophomore
o. Junior, 4th year
p. Freshman

2. ***How many philosophy classes have you taken?***

a. 11 (includes 3 this quarter)
b. 10 (includes 2 this quarter)
c. 10 or so
d. 4
e. 0
f. 6
g. 3 at DU; transferred in 7 classes
h. 6 (9 including UREQS)
i. 6
j. 10 (some at Blackfriars)
k. 4 at DU (6 elsewhere)
l. 2 at DU, as I just transferred here this year (1 class per quarter). In all, I've probably taken about 5 or 6.
m. 6
n. 3 at DU, 1 at Arapahoe CC
o. 3 at DU, 4 at Metro State
p. Practical logic plus 2 more. [Didn't seem to count Practical Logic as a philosophy course.]

3. ***Do you have another major?***

a. No
b. French
c. English
d. English
e. No
f. Psychology
g. Political Science
h. INTS
i. Economics
j. Economics
k. Psychology
l. No

m. Economics
n. No
o. Economics
p. No

4. ***What made you decide to major in philosophy?***

a. Wanted to major coming into college; took philosophy in high school
b. I took philosophy in high school; I took one philosophy of religion class.
c. During orientation, I saw the philosophy table and talked to Naomi, who told me about her Ancient Greek class. I decided to take it and loved it. Some philosophy classes I've taken, I knew if that was my first class, I'm not as sure I'd want to major in philosophy. Naomi really made me think (as did her class). Other philosophy classes definitely haven't been like that; I was super-excited about Naomi's class. The way of thinking struck me as just awesome. Most people think Plato and Aristotle are dry and boring, but I found that their mental processes and ways of reasoning very cool.
d. Roscoe Hill: his honors AHUM was more challenging and interesting than any of my English courses.
e. I've been interested in philosophy since 8th grade. I gained and lost other interest, but always retained my interest in philosophy.
f. It was the thing that interested me the most
g. really like it, decided to get Associates Degree in it, when she transferred in she only needed one more class to get the major
h. First 1/4 UDCC, there's a student leader for Discoveries week. Put 1/2 of class into Nancy Matchett's AHUM class. Like the class. Winter took Poli Sci AHUM (thought it would be a minor), it was too similar to INTS, looked for a different minor. Spring quarter took another AHUM with Matchett. Switched minor to Phil. end of last year, realized could do Phil as a second major more easily than Theater *minor* (the theater minor takes a lot of time).
i. I started out in business and didn't like it so I chose the two things that interested me most in High School.
j. I was always interested. Surber's Phenomenology hooked me—I picked it up as I minor first.
k. The Nature of philosophy, I found right away I had a love and passion for it. Intro. to Phil. blew me away, spoke to me.
l. out of all the subjects I've taken throughout my life, writing was always my best and favorite subject. When I took my first philosophy class my senior year in high school, I found that it was the first class in which I appreciated all the material and really enjoyed the work, which is not usually something I would use "enjoy" to describe how I feel about it. As I took more philosophy courses in college, it became apparent that it was really the only subject I could enjoy working on at all, so my philosophy is if you enjoy doing something, keep doing it and it will most likely bring you somewhere you want to be.
m. I had always thought about it, and decided to switch after an AHUM Introducing philosophy class
n. Is pre-law and found philosophy a good alternative to English and history. Likes the "knowledge how" aspect of the major (as opposed to "knowledge that.")
o. Took a course at Metro State and really liked it. Got him interested in school and made him think it was possible.
p. "In my junior year of high school [in Maine], I started reading philosophy. One of the first books I read was Sophie's World. It was really interesting, so I thought I'd like to major in it."

5. ***Who was your first philosophy professor at DU (in a philosophy class or other class)? What was your first departmental philosophy class?***

a. Seeburger. Discovering Philosophy
b. Hill, I took two classes during the same quarter. Asian philosophy, Human Knowledge.
c. Naomi. Naomi's Ancient Greek Philosophy.
d. Roscoe Hill—Honors AHUM What was your first departmental philosophy class? Philosophy of Logic (Anderson)
e. Upton*;* I haven't had one yet.
f. Jere Surber, Kant
g. Pinson, Symbolic Logic
h. Nancy Matchett (AHUM) What was your first departmental philosophy class? 20th Century (Evgeni Pavlov).
i. Brian Keady What was your first departmental philosophy class? Greek Philosophy
j. Surber (Phenomenology)What was your first departmental philosophy class? Same.
k. Andy Carlson, Descartes and his influence.

l. My first class departmental class was the logic class, I think the professor was Ron Pearson or something. You know, you took it.
m. I don't remember her name right now, but I was in your class. First class was Philosophy of Logic with Bill Anderson
n. Ron someone (no longer at DU). Practical logic.
o. Bill Anderson, Philosophy of Mind.
p. Practical Logic, with Ronald Pinson; Asian philosophy.

6. ***Is it important to write in philosophy classes? Why?***

a. Yes, writing is important. It forces you to explain what you've learned in your own words, to reiterate ideas, develop new ideas, and see your thoughts.
b. An assignment makes you think about what you read or have been discussing, makes you put things in your own words. It helps to clarify. Many papers require you only to analyze text, so writing doesn't always help to defend your own views.
c. Philosophy is really in-depth material, and writing provides a really good way to engage it. It's a good way to explore the material and the ideas. As I'm writing, I'm thinking, and that causes me to see things in a new light. As opposed to someone telling you about a topic and how things are (a lot of people in Europe told me that that's how they teach philosophy); here, they teach you that this is what philosopher x said, then you go home and write about it, which makes you think more about it.
d. Yes, very important. Why? Writing helps you further understand what is being discussed. Allows for the receipt of concrete feedback. Without writing we would have less understanding of the material.
e. Yes. You need to be able to articulate your thoughts so others can understand them. The history of philosophy is in written form; the writing is the substance that counts, not the writer or the rhetoric of the presenter, but the quality of what the writer is saying.
f. More so than any other. That's the medium through which philosophy most clearly expresses itself, and it is different writing in philosophy than any other. The question of language is most adamant in philosophy than any other discipline, so it is very important to use language as a medium.
g. Very much: because you have to explain what you think, most of the questions asked are questions that don't have answers, so if you can't explain what you think, it's pointless.
h. Yes Why? Writing in philosophy identifies weak points in your thinking, you can't skip over the weakness the way you can when you're thinking/talking.
i. Yes Why? Philosophy teaches you a way to talk about an issue. You need to be able to talk about your own philosophical ideas this way. Writing is a good way to demonstrate that you know what you're thinking about and to practice thinking in a philosophical way.
j. Yes. Why? That's how one does philosophy, it's a test of whether you've figured stuff out.
k. Yes. Set up and scope of philosophy requires the ability to be articulate. Structure thoughts and express motivations behind ones thoughts. It really helps with the exploration part of philosophy. It helps you to see what you think (you explore yourself and the subject matter at the same time.
l. It is definitely necessary to write in philosophy class in order to properly and thoroughly discuss and understand the subject matter. It would take much longer to cover all the material as well as all of the student's understanding of the material in class orally. Writing is the best and most efficient way to demonstrate understanding of philosophical subjects.
m. Absolutely, it's the best way to work out ideas and concepts.
n. Yes. Writing shows that you comprehending information and ideas, and it helps me understand complicated material.
o. Certainly. Philosophy is about thinking. Learning reasoning through writing skills is vital to the discipline.
p. It's very important. Standardized testing doesn't get at thinking, and it doesn't allow you to provide your own voice and interpretation. "Standardized testing" means multiple choice, fill in blank, etc.

7. Are you regularly asked to form and defend your own philosophical positions? Have you become better at doing this? How useful is it for you to do this?

a. Occasionally. It varies from teacher to teacher, class to class.Yeah, I guess. It's never hard for me to form my own opinions about things. It's useful because it helps you to further your thoughts and see what it is you're thinking on paper, which can be very different from what you're thinking in your mind.

b. Yes, with a good deal of regularity. Only a few classes don't have a strong related requirement.

Yes. Presentations about writing projects particularly help because you want to perform well in front of others. Heated debates help to develop arguments.

The use lies in actually developing a philosophy of one's own.

c. Yes. "Isn't that how you guys are taught to teach us?"

Definitely. It's given me more techniques to defend my views, my techniques of logical reasoning, fallacies to avoid, etc.

Not very, because everyone says I'm very argumentative, and I pick things to death. If I'm in a philosophy class, then it's well-received, but if I'm defending a view with a non-philosopher, then it gets annoying.

d. Around 1/2 of each paper us explicating and 1/2 is defending an idea or a reaction to what has been explicated.

Yes, even explication makes me become better at forming and defending my own viewpoint.

It is useful, not only academically but in my life more generally.

e. N/A. In my CORE class, we need to take the thesis an author presents, then agree or disagree and provide reasons why.

I think so. It's ultimately due to discussion in class, though.

It's probably the only useful thing there is in philosophy. If you can't defend your viewpoint, then you don't really have one.

f. Being able to refine questions more so than constructing and defending. Yes on both counts at least when you're forced to defined something you recognize the holes in your thinking.

g. Usually that's paper topics, yes. Every paper topic I've gotten requires an original position. Yes, but I think I was always very good at that – but I've become better at explaining said position. Very useful.

h. Yes, always in final assignment, sometimes earlier. (I always do more than assignment requires)

Yes.

Very. I am opinionated, I too often just talk wo/ backing myself up, now I keep a rein on it and make sure I can back up my opinions before I just spout off.

i. Not in every class, but regularly. Have you become better at doing this? Yes. How useful is it for you to do this? Everything becomes more interesting if I know what my view is and can see how it conforms or contrasts with what I'm reading.

j. 70% of time, usually closer to end of quarter.

Yes.

Very useful, that's what philosophy really is.

k. I'm asked to explain my position and interpretation more than I am asked to defend it. I am asked to focus on my own positions regularly.

Yes, philosophy nurtures it.

Yes, learning to think this way is the best thing that's ever happened to me.

l. I am regularly asked to form and defend my own positions, which I would do whether I was asked or not. And it happens in most every class and is very useful. I think it's a useful skill in everyday life, as well. I definitely think the more you use a skill the better you get at it, and so yes, I have become better at defending my positions.

m. Not very often, and I'm not very good at it. I think it would be pretty useful.

n. Not so much in class discussions, but in writing, yes. You learn to identify strengths and weaknesses of positions. "I think I've gotten better at this." The more reading I do shows me how other writers defend their positions.

o. It depends on the teacher, but mostly yes. Naomi's tutorials require this; they're "30 minutes of cold sweat" with another student, as recently with a discussion of Aristotle and prime matter. But he likes them and finds them "key." Has gotten better at doing this. Writing is different when you're expressing your positions than when you're just summarizing other people's.

p. I'm allowed to but not required to. If there's room to include your own position you can, but mostly there's not. Of course, I'm taking lower level courses.

8. ***Are you regularly asked to explain a philosopher's philosophical position? Do you feel you have become better at doing this? How useful is it for you to do this?***

a. Yes, in every class.

Do you feel you have become better at doing this? I hope so. I think so.

How useful is it for you to do this? Very useful. When you read philosophy it's not always cut and dry so it's sometimes hard to see what they're saying and to write a paper about it. If you think a philosopher says x but they're not, it's important to have someone evaluate what you think about the philosopher's view.

b. Yes. Usually the writing assignment runs as follows: articulate this person's position and defend why you agree or disagree. Certain professors focus more on the analysis rather than defending one's own viewpoint. One person who demands analysis makes you learn a lot just from the analysis.

Do you feel you have become better at doing this? Yes. Especially this year. I've become better because you develop basic tools in 2000-level classes, and refine those skills in 3000-level classes.
How useful is it for you to do this? Very useful; if you can do it you've internalized what you've been learning.

c. Yes. In every class that I have I'm asked at some point to have an understanding of what the philosopher is saying. That's different from just regurgitating a philosopher's viewpoint. We learn to clarify certain points, reason about their views, and we read about the view and find problems with it. No one ever just asks me to repeat what I was taught in class. It's never just "repeat what I said in class." Even if you're essentially repeating what was said in class, there's always more to it than that. (That's almost like a "did you read x?" quiz. That's just checking to see if you're there, not to see if you're thinking.) Most teachers here don't want to waste their time with that-they're past that. In one class, a professor expected the material to stretch farther than it did. The class didn't delve into a lot of material, ended up being somewhat repetitive, and so the class was just very, very easy. *Do you feel you have become better at doing this?* Of course. *How useful is it for you to do this?* If I'm actively thinking about a philosopher's philosophical position, I'll get better at it. But if I take time off then I can see myself lag. If I don't talk think or write philosophy for a long time, then I'll be rusty and I won't be able to think or communicate as clearly or as actively. You don't just get better and then stay better.
d. Yes (see Q above), in general the class discussion is more than 50% focused on this. Do you feel you have become better at doing this? Yes. How useful is it for you to do this? Useful in philosophy and outside of philosophy.
e. No. But I haven't taken a philosophy class yet. I would expect that I would be, and that would be normal, even necessary. Reiterating what a philosopher says strengthens what they're trying to say.
f. Not summarize but how to interpret and apply.
g. Definitely, that's what you do in class, as opposed to papers, although you also do it in papers. This is done more in class than defending your own positions. Very useful. What else would I write about?
h. Fairly constantly. Do you feel you have become better at doing this? I'm way better at understanding weightier material (I was always pretty good at explaining what I understood).How useful is it for you to do this? It's very important (esp. if one starts out being bad at it. It is important for academics overall.
i. Yes, most of the writing asks you to do this in response to readings. Do you feel you have become better at doing this? Yes. How useful is it for you to do this? Very useful.
j. Yes 30% of time (closer to beginning of quarter)—there is some overlap between explication and original arguments. Do you feel you have become better at doing this? Yes. How useful is it for you to do this? Very useful. It helps me gain confidence. I used to think you had to understand a whole view at once, now I see you understand by degrees.
k. Yes. Do you feel you have become better at doing this? Yes. How useful is it for you to do this? Very useful.
l. I am regularly asked to explain a philosopher's philosophical position. Like I said, the more you use a skill the better you get at it and so yeah, I have gotten better at it. It's useful and necessary to be able to understand a philosopher's position in order to have a complete comprehension of ideas and points of arguments.
m. Quite regularly, and I have become much better at this through my classes. On a scale from 1 to useful, I was say it is decently useful.
n. Yes, and I think I've gotten better. We do some of this orally and some in writing. In Nature of Human Knowledge, study questions ask you to explain positions.
o. There's probably more of this kind of writing than the kind in #8. A prime example is the writing in exams that calls for explaining positions.
p. Definitely. Being able to articulate someone else's position shows you and others that you understand it. I've gotten better.

8. Has your writing changed over the time you have been a philosophy major? In what ways?

a. I think more about the words I'm using, word choice. I make sure the word I'm using conveys what I want to say. My writing has changed a lot in this way. I'm a lot pickier of a writer; it takes me longer to write an essay. I check a lot more for flow, to make sure the writing is readable.
b. Yes, it's become a lot more dry. It's more dry, my vocabulary is more complex, I use more big words. I don't find any of my assignments boring—that's not what I'm saying. The writing is more detached from mainstream writing—it's becoming more academic. I'm not thrilled but I think this'll help me get into grad school. My friends complain "what does that mean?" about word choice and complex grammatical structure. My writing is more argumentatively dense, more nuanced. I'm better at taking into consideration possible objections.
c. I was probably at my best sophomore year. I traveled abroad during my junior year, and the work was just mindlessly easy. Now I'm back trying to enhance my academic chops. As of right now, I'm probably not as good was I was at the end of my sophomore year.
d. Yes In what ways? English focuses on making your writing chewy and good-sounding, philosophy puts utility and clarity over how it sounds. My writing has become more succinct, clear, direct.

e. No. I haven't taken enough classes for it to change.
f. Yes. Much more sensitive to specific words like knowledge, structure, argument. How they're used, how they're functionally defined.
g. I totally use more semi-colons. The amount of quoting has gone up (compared both to before studying philosophy and to other classes.
h. I declared my major recently, but it has changed over the time I have been taking phil courses. In what ways? I've become a better writer in all respects: vocab, formaulation, understand abstract arguments. I'm less concise (clarity doesn't lend to brevity).
i. Probably, being in college (alone) made it change. In what ways? I think more and critique my own ideas in a more analytic way. I'm more inclined to try to make sense rather than focusing on aesthetics of my writing. I'm better at acknowledging when I don't know something.
j. Yes. In what ways? More clear, concise, direct. As I gained confidence it became more honest and straightforward. I came to share the precept that we are discussing the view not trying to say something "right." The goal is to think more deeply—that conducive to better writing.
k. Yes, for the better, it has had a profound impact on my writing. It's improved my ability to write, think, present arguments. My writing is more analytical and more objective.
l. My writing hasn't changed that much. I have to write a lot more as a philosophy major, and I have definitely gotten better at organizing papers of much longer length than usually required by other classes. Before, all the information necessary to a lengthy argument (7+ pages) would overwhelm me, but I have gotten better at organizing information and thoughts and then more easily putting them down on paper in a coherent manner.
m. My writing has become more systematic and clear. I've been told I write with a very classical tone.
n. My writing has only changed in philosophy classes. I have to explain various positions. This is very different than in other courses, which are more direct and fact-based.
o. Yes, writing has changed. "I'm now able to condense more and not ramble as much. I stay on topic." This contrasts with writing in English.
p. Not really. What I learned in high school has served me well.

*9. **Do you have a process that you use in order to begin writing? How did you develop it? Did you develop it in a philosophy class?***

a. I always use an outline. Other process-related matters vary with class and philosopher. I always use quotes and incorporate them into my outline. It also depends on the teacher and assignment. *How did you develop it?* I had a good English teacher in high school who taught me to use outlines, and I added on to it.
Did you develop it in a philosophy class? No.
b. Usually I think about what I want to write, and then I make an outline. When I write the paper, I don't start with the introduction, but with what's first on the outline after the intro. I do intro and conclusion last. I write the intro first only if I have a clear idea of how the argument is going to go. Sometimes, I have to change a section, but that happens only early in the process.
How did you develop it? I'm not sure. It comes from the writing skills I got in middle and high school.
Did you develop it in a philosophy class? No
c. I procrastinate, procrastinate, and procrastinate. I think about the paper a lot, and I let the paper brew in my head. When I do sit down to write a paper, a lot of it has already been done in my head. I get ideas as I'm thinking about writing a paper, and I just sit down and start writing. A lot of the ideas are already in my head, and they come out as I'm writing. I know my papers would be a lot better if I would take more time, go back over them, and do them better. That would be *very* time-consuming, though. To make every paper absolutely perfect, I'd have to cut out a lot of other important stuff in my life. *How did you develop it?* I've always done this. *Did you develop it in a philosophy class?* No.
d. Nothing intentional or developed, but no matter how long I have to write, I spend 90% of time thinking and then write my first draft all at once, then revise. How did you develop it? NA Did you develop it in a philosophy class? NA
e. No. When I begin writing, I spend countless hours staring at my computer screen. I don't have a process, but I should definitely find one.
f. Reading a lot, so no, not really. Have a series of questions that have arisen over the quarter, and have one specific question that surfaces.
g. Yes. My high school teacher taught me the paper man. I always thesis, then body, then intro and conclusion. (The second part was developed in a philosophy class)

h. Depends on paper: >15 pages, I outline, if less, I just start writing. I try to finish 1st draft a week before due and let it sit before I rework it. How did you develop it? Don't know. Did you develop it in a philosophy class? No, but class that improved my writing the most in H.S. was a phil class.
i. Yes. I just write what I remember from class that is important and I look at what I've highlighted in the reading—those usually turn out to be important. Then I procrastinate. I probably do some thinking while I'm procrastinating. But I don't start writing until close to when it's due. The pressure really helps me—it helps me get it done and the quality is higher. I've read that people like to procrastinate because the reward is higher when you produce something good under pressure—I really resonate with that idea. How did you develop it? I've always been this way. Did you develop it in a philosophy class? No
j. I start with notes and outlining, but I don't have any one strategy. How did you develop it? NA Did you develop it in a philosophy class? NA
k. Yes, classis cone model for each argument, start with broad, move to specific. How did you develop it? I developed it out of the aggressive feedback I received in philosophy classes, as a means of survival. Did you develop it in a philosophy class? Not in one particular one but it is a product of the feedback I get in philosophy.
l. - I definitely have a process, I learned it in 9th grade honors english. I figure out what the question is, what my answer is (thesis statement) and then find things to back up my answer. I write an introduction with the thesis statement and how I plan to back it up, then my paper follows my introduction. My conclusion is a summation of my paper plus a reiteration of my introduction and thesis statement, so basically it sums up my argument and how I backed it up.
m. Yes, I stall until I have just enough time to write it quickly and turn it in. It developed in high school, when I made the switch from writing papers late at to waking up early and writing them. This lets me write papers in the shortest amount of time possible.
n. I refer to the book very frequently. When I read, I take extensive notes, which helps me organize things. I generally have time to write only one draft, and I do minor revising and editing on that draft.
o. I sit down with my book and notes and I throw down ideas, maybe four or five pages worth. Then I print it and go back and cross things out. I choose a few ideas and develop them. Revision is mostly adding quotes and references and refining. My ideas stay about the same, so it's mostly concentrating on presentation.
p. I handwrite basic ideas and structure. I write a rough draft in one go, then compare that draft with the structure. I revise a little but don't make big changes. I might add some ideas.

9. Are you asked to write differently in some philosophy classes than you are in others? Can you describe some of these differences?

a. Yes. I have never been asked to write one way or the other. DU faculty are open to different styles. It really depends on the question.
b. Not entirely. One class required a journal in additional to other writing assignments. I can't think of any anomalies. One class asked me to read a brief section of text and ask what the philosopher thought. We didn't have to defend a thesis. One faculty member wants a 1-page intro written like an abstract. The last word of the abstract starts with "therefore." I found this helpful since I was just beginning college writing.
c. In some classes, the writing is very "soft." The writing I'm expected to do is sometimes very low, like introductory classes. One teacher expected very basic writing, but I delved very deeply into the topic. So I had to dumb myself down to write for that class. Our assignments were incredibly short-2 pages; you just can't say a lot on 2 pages. The whole class was frustrating--it was easy but I got B's on everything. I can tell that, with impermanent faculty, the professorss just aren't "into it." With Naomi, she was just "into what she was doing." She was into the ideas, she liked what she was teaching, it excited her. With another class taught by an adjunct, the teacher just didn't seem super-thrilled. This professor seemed really rusty, like he/she hadn't been doing philosophy enough. In every class, the professor asks me to argue for my own position. That's how the American school systems works. You're taught to bring yourself to the table. I noted a huge difference in Europe in that respect—a lot of times they were just expected to just regurgitate material. *Can you describe some of these differences?* See above.
d. No. Can you describe some of these differences? NA
e. I would expect so, but I haven't yet. Given my expectations, I would expect I'd need to write differently, given that we've got different goals in different classes. In some classes, we try to learn what a philosopher's viewpoint is, and in others we try to defend our own views. This would involve different kinds of writing. The writing and the reasoning might be different.
*Can you describe some of these differences?*N/A
f. Yes, certainly. More subjective and hypothetical writing as opposed to analytical and mathematical writing.
g. No, generally it's the same for all. There are no answers, you put out what you think and explain it, so it's all what I think, so it's similar for all classes.

h. We are asked to write somewhat differently in every class, but the differences don't fall into categories. Some prompts are more specific than others. It's more difficult for me it is more open ended.
i. Yes. Can you describe some of these differences? The main difference is that assignments will vary a lot in length and frequency. Professors seem to have different expectations, but they don't fall into categories.
j. Yes. Can you describe some of these differences? The more topical classes require something different from the more historical. I always did better with historical, it is more structured, less open-ended, the prompts were long and detailed, in the topical the prompts were short and open-ended and the expectations were less clear.
k. Certainly. Can you describe some of these differences? In PreSoc Thought (not at DU) we had to build our own arguments based on our interpretations and they had to be succinct. In Descartes and Plato we were asked to draw upon solid textual evidence and present the evidence. Analytic courses are heavier on the requirement to use logic, Continental asks more about what the implications are. It's not confusing though, it forces you to develop in both ways—the best writing has a nice balance between these two.
l. All professors look for different things in writing. I have a default way of writing and then I tweak it to how the professor responds to my paper.
m. Not really, my writing is usually the same, explaining ideas of philosophers and philosophies.
n. Yes. Practical logic really focused on explaining arguments and on doing analysis. Asian Philosophy and Nature of Human Knowledge put more emphasis on why and defending an opinion.
o. Not really. Writing for exams is different than writing papers, but everything is still in "philosophy mode."
p. Not really. There are similar questions in all of my classes, and they're mostly analytical. I've been successful in all my writing, so I don't need to change.

10. Do you find that writing for philosophy classes differs from writing for other classes? Can you describe some of these differences? Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines?

a.Yes—big time. *Can you describe some of these differences?* English classes (EC)—I've taken lots—the structure for writing in EC is formal and reiterates what you read in a novel; it's not as hard to analyze English texts as philosophical texts. You have to think a lot harder about philosophical readings and what you are writing; that creates a whole different kind of essay. It takes a lot more time to write an essay where the material is difficult to read. I analyze my papers a lot more and cover them more than in English papers. It's important that you're delving into the material and using it in the correct way; in English, you can hand in ten papers that all look the same. English papers don't differ much because of the material, in terms of content. In philosophy, content turned in by students can be very different.
Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines? Yes, in terms of word choice. I analyze what I'm saying a lot more, so that helps with other papers. It helps me to look at literature in different ways as well. (Philosophy and English go hand in hand—I try equally hard in all my classes—I don't just work harder for philosophy when writing a philosophy paper; I work harder, knowing that it's going to analyzed more critically than in the English Department.)
b. Greatly, very greatly. To the extent that I find myself getting philosophical in my other classes where it's not called for in the assignment. In a sociology class, the professor wanted us to interpret quotes, and I used philosophical skills of analysis to finish the assignment. Skills from philosophy definitely make for a better paper. Often, other non-philosophy courses don't want us to defend a thesis, just report on what others say.
Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines? I can distinguish reasoning skills from writing skills in philosophy. It's definitely the reasoning skills I pick up in philosophy that I take to non-philosophy classes. If you have a sound argument, it will write itself—you gain the reasoning skills in philosophy, so it helps improve writing in all areas. I can't think of any way in which philosophical writing is all that different from writing in other classes. The reasoning is definitely different. Other non-philosophy faculty are not opposed to writing in philosophical style (which necessarily involves the reasoning).
c. In the sense that philosophy involves logical reasoning, yes. *Can you describe some of these differences?* See above. *Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines?* I took a creative writing class that was transferable to any other writing that I do. I really don't think that philosophy writing per se really makes my writing in other areas better—it just makes my reasoning better. And, to the extent that other classes require reasoning, the reasoning I pick up in philosophy makes my writing in those classes better. By parity, in English, having very profound psychological skills (reading other people, understanding the nuances of their relationships) is what makes you a better writer. In philosophy, being a good reasoner makes you a better writer.
d. Yes. Can you describe some of these differences? See 9 above. Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines? Yes. In very discipline it is good to have a clear argument be the framework, it makes for a better English paper.

e. Yes.

Can you describe some of these differences? In philosophy, you are going to defend your view, insert some kind of input. In a lot of other classes, it's just a regurgitation of research. There are no notable exceptions I've come across.

Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines? Yes. In a philosophy paper, you want to write with passion; in other classes, you want to write with a controlled passion, but you want to come across as knowledgeable, so that it's not so emotional. Reasoning skills I pick up in philosophy help with writing in other classes. Every time I type something, I look back at what I've written and analyze what I've really said. Philosophy helps make everything a lot clearer.

f. Much less space to move around, must be much more careful with what you're saying and the words you're using. Be much more sensitive to specifics.

Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines? Yes. Reading and writing about science, I'm much better at. I've realized that anything that purports to be conclusive or absolute can't really be, which helps me to be exact in what I'm claiming. Objectivity is problematical.

g. I change my style to be more relevant to the topic, esp. my intro is different with less summarizing.

h. Honestly, for me there is no difference. Can you describe some of these differences? NA Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines? Yes

i. Yes. Can you describe some of these differences? I tend to write in a philosophical voice no matter what. Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines? Econ papers don't ask you to say what you think. English is more similar to philosophy of they care more about aesthetics than ideas.

j. Yes. Can you describe some of these differences? Writing in Philosophy is more direct. What you think always matters, in other classes what you think can be irrelevant. Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines? I write in other classes the way I learned to write in philosophy. The skill you gain is organizing your ideas, so it transfers well.

k. Certainly. Can you describe some of these differences? Skills for philosophy are helpful but you need to tone down the analyzing and interpreting. Psych is philosphical, but you have to present fact and causality without too much logic or interpretation. You stick with what the data says on face value—what is empirical and observable. Are the skills you use to write a good philosophy paper transferable to writing in other disciplines? Yes. It gives you an edge partly because the demands for writing in philosophy are so high. it's daunting to have your writing put under a microscope by phil profs, but it is also cool.

l. Writing for philosophy classes does not differ much from other writing. Papers are a response to something, a way to demonstrate your understanding of something and then you defend your understanding as you would defend a position in philosophy. My "default" writing style is applicable for all first papers.

m. I put a lot more thought in my philosophy papers. They are also much more. Skills are definitely transferable. They've made my writing more clear overall.

n. Absolutely. [See #10.] If I wrote the philosophy way in other classes, it would get confusing and lose focus.

o. Yes. Philosophy is more analytical and intense. You often focus on small things, taking apart sentences. This contrasts with English or CREX, where you're focusing on larger ideas or concepts. Once he starts writing philosophy, it's easier to get out. He had to write a paper in CREX on Nietszche and Kundera that was a real clash of ways of thinking.

p. The biggest contrast is with my WRIT class, which is research-based and focuses on specific structures. Peer review and professor comments shape my language and rhetoric in that class. Philosophy papers are more free, to a good extent. They are expansive but also concise. They must be clear. Those qualities do transfer to other writings I have to do.

11. What kinds of feedback have you received on your philosophy papers? Have you received sufficient feedback? What kind of feedback do you find most helpful?

a, The majority is written feedback; sometimes minimal feedback, sometimes paragraphs of feedback. *Have you received sufficient feedback?* Yes, in most classes. The first paper is usually worse than the second because of feedback, but it varies depending on what the professor is looking for. Feedback between professors varies radically. Some professors are more lenient and don't give as much feedback as you need or even knew you needed at the time. I realize in later philosophy classes that I needed a lot more feedback in some earlier classes, but didn't realize it at the time.

What kind of feedback do you find most helpful? I need lots; I need a paragraph instead of "Good" with an underline. I do like meeting once or twice with professor to see where I could do better. With philosophy, I always know that there's more to know, so I want to ask how I could improve; I'd rather a professor be hard on me than lenient. It's fairly common that I receive "good" with an underline an no explanation of why it was good. Each class has given me a sense of how to be a better philosopher.

b. Usually if feedback is positive, it'll be a quick comment. But if the professor thinks I'm not getting something, they might ask a question in the margins, which is helpful—it helps me think about how I'm interpreting something. If I completely mess something up, faculty will write a statement.

Have you received sufficient feedback? Yes, if there's something they didn't like about the paper, the comments are helpful. Sometimes though the professor's comment doesn't go far enough to explain what exactly I did wrong. If feedback is critical, it needs to be more involved. If a comment really confuses me, then I go ask—that's not the professor being lazy, though it would be helpful to have more feedback when the professor is being critical. If the professor doesn't explain what I did right, I don't know what to replicate in the future.

What kind of feedback do you find most helpful? See above.

c. There's a wide variety. A lot of teachers write very little, a lot of teachers write a whole paragraph (this is less common), some teachers tell me how to improve my writing. Most often, comments deal with parts of what I've said in my writing. A lot of times, a paragraph will give an overview of my writing. *Have you received sufficient feedback?* It's sufficient in terms of quality and quantity in some classes. In one class, the professor gave absolutely no guidance for how I should write. Maybe the teacher didn't actually know what he/she wanted. *What kind of feedback do you find most helpful?* Full paragraphs providing specific feedback.

d. Mostly content (add textual evidence, explain better, you should have said X here), also structure and organization. Some on typos and punctuation, but less than in English. Have you received sufficient feedback? Yes.What kind of feedback do you find most helpful? Addressing content is most helpful, organization is also helpful, I like my feedback to address the big picture. I like both marginalia and summaries.

e.N/A

f. Relatively short, could be developed more…suggestions for developing further Have you received sufficient feedback? Scale of 1-10, satisfaction 6, more feedback would be appreciated

What kind of feedback do you find most helpful? More critical feedback.

g. I notice philosophers write the least amount of useful comments of any teacher I've ever had. Because there are no "right" answers, so doesn't need as many comments. Generally, good insight, great job, no you're right and you're wrong, and all the same for all teachers.

h. Varies widely in quantity and quality. Have you received sufficient feedback? very few professors give me enough. What kind of feedback do you find most helpful? Feedback about where the flaws and gaps are in the argument that I'm making.

i. Highlighting with marginalia and summary. Comments are mostly on content, a lot on word choice. Have you received sufficient feedback? Yes. What kind of feedback do you find most helpful? I like it the most when they argue with you. Word choice is helpful because it helps me learn a philosophical language or vocabulary.

j. You get the most feedback at the end of the quarter, it's hardest to make you of it then. Have you received sufficient feedback? Yes, but not at good times. What kind of feedback do you find most helpful? Content is best during quarter, you can use it in the next assignment, structure is best at end of quarter—it applies to future courses. Most profs do the opposite. Phil profs give feedback that is direct and straightforward, they don't worry about my ego (which is good), it's good to get used to this kind of feedback. I liked it that I was exposed to multiple styles of feedback.

k. Marginalia, summaries. Examine argument structure and implications. The grader reacts to content as you make each point. Have you received sufficient feedback? Yes.What kind of feedback do you find most helpful? The kind that allows me to hone my skills, it walks through the argument and talks about what's happening at each stage, it nurtures my ideas and my ability to create my own philosophy.

l. Feedback varies from professor to professor. Some professors expect you to write more about your position, others expect you to write more about the philosopher's position. Some focus on grammar, some couldn't care less. If I get a good grade, the feedback doesn't matter much because I obviously did well and usually there isn't much said by the teacher. If I get a bad grade, it would obviously be helpful to know where I could have improved, which parts were not sufficient and how I can add to it.

m. Not very much feedback on papers, usually just a few words. More feedback would be nice, the kind of feedback that critiques my ideas and makes me think them through more is the most helpful. Or the feedback that makes me feel really good about myself. I like that too.

n. Comments seem to focus on ideas and thinking rather than other things. In one class, the instructor only writes "OK" or "good" or "explain." It would be more helpful if the comments were more specific, such as "could you bring in another author's perspective and say how she'd respond to that idea?" A personal relationship with the professor is valuable in terms of feedback.

o. He has tutorials with Naomi, which is a good way to engage on paper. Profs generally offer to meet with students. The focus is more on ideas than on grammar, which is fine. Feedback is sufficient; you can always meet if you need more. He generally prefers written comments to oral, because he can go back to review the written comments.

p. There's not my feedback on structure or grammar. Mostly the focus is on how well and completely you address concepts and on whether you're misguided. Feedback has been sufficient. Professor make themselves available if you want more feedback. The most helpful feedback is when my writing is lacking in completeness.

12. Do you generally understand and agree with your professors' evaluations of your work?

a. Yes. I'm very critical of myself and my writing. Sometimes I've gotten A's and thought this wasn't my best work. When I come out of a class with an A and feel I don't really understand it, I feel something's wrong; that's happened twice.
b. Yes. If I get an A and wasn't expecting it, I won't complain. Typically, if I turning a bad paper, I expect a bad grade
c. Generally, yes. There was one notable exception in which this was clearly not the case.
d. Yes, even when very negative as it was the first time I wrote a paper for Roscoe, I saw exactly what he was talking about.
e.N/A
f.Yes.
g. Oh hell yes, esp. when they give me an A – I like it, and I'll be pissed if they change.
h. Yes in philosophy, less true in other areas.
i. Yes, but there have been times when I felt I was given a bad grade because the professor disagreed with me, not because there was a problem with the way I supported my position—that is a pet-peeve of mine. Other than that the grading is fair.
j. Yes. If there's a disagreement it is usually about clarity and I assume they're right.
k.Yes.
l. I work hard and like anyone I think it's bullshit when I get a bad grade because I wouldn't have turned in a paper that I didn't feel kicked ass. Mostly feedback is good, though, so yeah I guess I generally agree with feedback.
m. I don't understand how I do as well as I do sometimes. But I'm not complaining.
n. Yes, generally, though I'm going to meet to discuss a B.
o. Yes.
p. Yes.

13. Describe a writing assignment in a philosophy class that you found especially engaging, from which you learned, and that you enjoyed doing.

a. If a class is more interesting, I'll take more time to work on the assignments. Really interesting topics make for good writing assignments. A Religious Studies class made Derrida and Kierkegaard my favorite philosophers.
b. There was one writing assignment on moral obligations I liked but only because I was very personally involved with the topic. A good assignment is more a function of the content rather than the style or structure of the assignment.
c. In one class, I had to diagram arguments, which I really liked. The structure of that was drastically different from any other writing assignment. It was an interesting and unique way to engage a text which further illuminated the logical reasoning within the argument.
d. . The final paper in Plato's epistemology; we had done many short very textual and explicating assignments throughout the quarter, then she set us free to write something about what we thought—our own ideas. I felt the small textual assignments really prepared me for the big, free paper and it was fun to get to say what I thought about how it could all fit together.
e. I liked piecing together Descartes' argument for God's existence. I mostly liked the content of the assignment.
f. Responses to specific changes in thought in the Plato class I took. Was a one-sentence question that demanded eight pages of analysis.
g. I haven't taken that many here – There was one ass. I got to compare and contrast Confucianism and Marxism (this wasn't at DU) That was fun, cause they don't normally go together.
h.No Response
i. In Asian Philosophy, Surber gave us a huge list of questions that we could choose from to write the final paper. I got to answer questions about what I found most interesting in Buddhism and research those.
j. There are two and they are opposite: Surber;s phenomenology final was structured, we had to imitate a certain style of thinking and argument ("engage in a phenomenological investigation"). In Frank's 9/11 course it was wide open—choose something and give it a go. "Thinking devoted to the improvement of thinking." That whole class was just the right mix of topical and historical for me.
k. There are lots. I really enjoyed reflecting on the pre-socratic philosophies, the class was set up so that there was a lot of exploring and creating from our own philosophical background, but it was still structured.

l. I honestly haven't enjoyed many philosophy assignments in the past couple of years. It seems like some philosophy professors feel obligated to post a writing assignment, but the writing assignments/prompts/questions haven't been particularly engaging. They felt tedious more than interesting. Perhaps more professors should ask students to decided what they want to write about instead of telling them what to write about. I didn't mind writing about Buddhism too much for the Asian Philosophy final, but only because I think Buddhism is an interesting subject in nearly all facets.
m. I wrote a paper today about a bunch of things, but writing about Aristotle's hylomorphism was pretty fun.
n. In one class, we had a take home exam that was 6 pages to answer 5 questions. In my Asian philosophy class, I liked the chance to answer one question in depth, telling all I knew about Buddhism. It was sort of like taking a role.
o. The last tutorial on Aristotle and prime matter was interesting. He did four 2-page writings, each with a slightly different focus and learned a lot as a result.
p. I liked when we had four essay questions and had to choose one. I wrote on Nietszche and the transvaluation of values. I looked at both personal and social aspects. N. was maybe the most provocative philosopher. Was he whacko or was he serious?

14. Is the writing you are doing in the philosophy department contributing to your overall development as a writer?

a. Yes, I have already answered that question.
b. Yes. see above
c. Sure. See above.
d. Yes, see answers above. Also, the degree to which we discuss German and Greek, really helps me with grammar and to see how it helps to be able to analyze a sentence grammatically. Also it allows me to see how important word choice is.
e. Yes. I guess. You do more writing, it's a different style of writing. You need to be able to write an opinionated argument that's not too subjective. You need to let others acknowledge your argument, so you don't come across as too narrow-minded.
f. Emphatic yes. I'm studying a lot of things, so have written a lot of different kinds of papers, philosophy has helped me the most.
g. I'm really conceited and I think that I'm a good writer anyway, but I think that the PHIL dept helps me to develop my opinions which is helpful when I'm writing opinionated papers.
h.No Response
i. Yes, I have better criteria for what makes writing good and I've acquires a language that helps me form coherent thoughts and clarify them.
j. Yes. Organization, openness to ideas. Learn that style has to match content.
k.Certainly
l. So far, only in the sense that practice makes perfect.
m. Absolutely
n. Yes, even though it's very different, expressing different perspectives makes you think more complextly.
o. Absolutely. Thinks he almost exclusively learns to write in philosophy. Even though he writes in Econ classes, it's a different kind and not as precise or demanding.
p. I think so. Writing in philosophy is somewhere between the openness of creative writing and the formulas in other fields. You get to write in your own voice but you also have to defend positions.

15. Did any particular professor or course leave an imprint on your style?

a. No one particular has left an imprint. Everyone has contributed.
b. See above
c. Yes. Naomi.
d. No.
e. N/A
f. Yeah, Nietzsche with Raschke and Plato with Reshotko. Naomi's classes because a lot of critical feedback, realized where the holes came b/c of my style of writing . Raschke's classes, because his questions were damn near impossible to answer and required a lot of thinking and how they could be answered with creative freedom in writing, constructing.
g. No, I don't think anybody has left an imprint on my writing style.

h. Nancy Matchett.
i. Not sure.
j. Surber;s phenomenology, because it was early. At Blackfriars, tutors had different expectations. One wanted supercompact. I had to write a 6-7 page paper and then condense it to a 3-4 page one. That was a really helpful exercise, I have carried it over to my writing generally.
k. Yes, Kant, because Kant himself is so systematic, you have to approach writing about him very systematically. I was forced to be cold, hard, logical rather than flitting around in my own creative world. Also my first existentialism course forced me to think outside of the writing style I had learned in high school.
l. Not in college.
m. Naomi's classes have left the biggest imprint on my style.
n. My Nature of Human Knowledge professor is challenging. A lower grade motivates me.
o. Took an ancient Greek philosophy course at DU Denver that really introduced him to philosophical writing.
p. Political philosophy. There was an "insane amount of information." The readings were dense and convoluted. It made me think of my own writing. The professor was Ryan Hellmer.

16. Do you think that the writing demands of your philosophy classes are appropriate?

a. Yes, generally. There could be more of an emphasis on trying to understand the material. No one has actually said this is a good way to write, or this is a good way to understand this using writing—this could have been emphasized. Length is usually appropriate. No assignments have ever been too long.
b. In terms of quality, yes; in terms of quantity, sometimes too much depending on the class. Last quarter, one class had overly heavy (but not overbearing) length requirements—it was manageable, but I felt strained. There is a difference in rigor of requirements between 2000- and 3000-level classes.
c. Yes. In one notable case, the assignments were too short and very easy (but who really wants to say "give me more work"?) To be honest, it could have been more rigorous.
d. Yes. I would be happy to have more writing, however. I would prefer to have assignments throughout the quarter in addition to a final writing assignment (some classes have only one paper at the end).
e.N/A
f. I've been asked to do a lot of writing, on the whole it's been sufficient, but I always want to do more writing.
g. I had to write a lot more when I was at Red Rocks, but I had to read less. Here, it's 1000 pages = 10 pages, and there it's 350=50 pages. I think the latter is better, because you evaluate the reading a lot more, and concentrate a lot more on a small amount of reading, so you understand it a lot better, you can ask more questions on less reading.
h. Not enough writing is assigned.
i. Yes, there is a lot of writing, but I like to write and I think it's good to do a lot of writing.
j. Make them harder, i.e., more frequent shorter papers—that's better than less frequent longer. If anything I found them less demanding than they could be.
k.Yes.
l. I think that writing is important to discussion and understanding of philosophical material, but I think that the assignments could be a little more engaging as opposed to a regurgitation of material learned. I guess they're appropriate.
m. Yes, there is a very fair amount of writing. A little more wouldn't kill, but again, I won't complain.
n. Yes. They aren't too extensive. In the take home exam where we had to write 6 pages, I'd have written six anyway.
o. Yes. He'd be "disappointed" if they didn't write as much, because writing is instrumental. He prefers writing papers to writing exams. Time to think is vital.
p. Yes. It's not coddling but it's not too much. Philosophy courses are almost completely writing based.

17. Are you asked to make textual references and use secondary sources in your philosophy papers? Provide original arguments? Provide citations?

a. Yes, you usually make references from book(s) you're reading. No professors frown upon using secondary sources.
Provide original arguments? At least once per class. The majority of classes ask to write a paper explaining x's point of view and compare with y's point of view and give your own argument.
Provide citations? Yes. We have to avoid plagiarism, and professors recognize this.
b. Textual references: always. Secondary sources: sometimes. Sometimes a professor will say use at least 3 secondary sources and then don't give good points of where to look. *Provide original arguments?* Yes. *Provide citations?* "Duh."
c. Yes. *Provide original arguments?* Of course. I live in America.

Provide citations? "Duh."
d. Yes (with citations) and use secondary sources, No, in your philosophy papers? Provide original arguments? yes, but usually in reaction to a philosopher's view. Provide citations?
e.N/A
f. Varied, but 80-70% textual references. 20-30% Secondary, 10-15% original. Original arguments are much more prevalent in class discussions.
g. OA: 55%, Textual References: 40-45%, Secondary, 5% or less. Never had a paper without citations
h. Are you asked to make textual references (50%) and use secondary sources (5%) in your philosophy papers? Provide original arguments? (50%) Provide citations? (yes)
i. (yes) and use secondary sources (rarely) in your philosophy papers? Provide original arguments? (usually) Provide citations? Yes, from primary sources.
j. YES and use secondary sources in your philosophy papers? Never required (I would like more guidance in finding secondary sources, even if I'm not supposed to use them). Provide original arguments? Often. Provide citations? Yes, but varying expectations about how.
k. (8/10) and use secondary sources (rarely) in your philosophy papers? Provide original arguments (always)? Provide citations (Yes)?
l. Yes, I am asked to do all of those things in any writing assignment in college.
m. I'm usually asked not to use secondary sources, which I like. Textual references and citations are asked of me a lot. Hardly ever am I asked for original arguments.
n. Not very often. In my Asian philosophy paper we did, but in the others we just focus on one text. It's hard to be original when the readings lay out all the arguments. You could be original, but it's not easy.
o. It depends on the teacher, but rarely does he use secondary sources. Most focus on primary sources. He does make references in the text but almost never has—or needs to have—a works cited or references page. In the Quine and Wittgenstein class, there are lots of readings about the philosophers; he'll generally use a few sources in answering questions.
p. We're encouraged to make references. I use quotes and citations and works cited. However, the emphasis is on primary sources, not secondary sources.

18. How much writing are you assigned in your philosophy courses?

a. Most ask for 2-3 papers, with a page limit of 5-7 pages usually.
b. Sufficient amount usually. In one class, the only assignment is the final paper, but the content of the course (being and time) helps that make sense. It's still a little troubling, though. Troubling, but justified.
c. In most classes, about the right amount. In one class, there was definitely too little.
d. Average 20 pages. Range 10-40 pages.
e.N/A
f. Varies. Higher than any other classes. Between 15-50 pages for the quarter.
g. Usually it's a midterm and final, both papers, midterm is shorter. Ranges from no and 10 page final, to 4-6 page midterm and 10-12 page final. But in philosophy it's more about whether you express your ideas than the amount of pages. About the same as other classes.
h. avg. 15 pages
i. average 12 pages, range 6-20 pages.
j. Almost always around 25 pages over quarter, but always divided differently in different classes.
k. avg. 35-40, range 15-70.

l. I am assigned writing and reading in philosophy classes. For every reading I do, I probably end up writing at least a page by the end of the quarter. So I don't know an exact figure, but usually a lot of writing.
m. I would say on average 20-25 pages per class.
n. Two 6-page papers; about 1 page of in-class writing per week; An 8-page final and short answer mid-term; Homework for almost every class that involved logical analysis
o. In Bill's class, a mid-term and a final, each about 7 pages. In Naomi's, 2 tutorials (each 5-8 pages) and a final about 10 pages.
p. Generally about 2 major papers each class—about 6 to 10 pages each. Rough drafts are option. Sometimes I also write short essays in class.

Appendix C
Faculty Interviews: Compiled Responses

1. How much "teaching of writing" do you do in your courses? What does it consist in? What kind of guidance do you provide on writing assignments? How much guidance occurs in class? In handouts?

a. None. I anticipate that people come in with writing skills; if they show in their first paper they don't have them, then I try to give them guidelines, give pointers, or such. That's not really part of what I'm supposed to do.

I give them guidance like: this paper should be x no. of pages, double-spaced, include proper citations, etc. I'm not picky about style students use. I give them a paragraph with questions to argue around or some sort of leading question around which to frame the paper. If students prefer another topic, I'll meet with them and come up w/our own strategy.

It occurs in class with handouts.

b. I don't directly teach writing. I've assigned 3 short papers, and given students a prompt for the papers. As far as teaching writing explicitly, I don't devote a certain portion of the class, and I don't address it on the syllabus.

I hand out general paper guidelines; this includes references to constructing an argument, evidence, grammar, relevance; I give general guidelines to help students improve their papers. There should be an introduction, students should pay attention to structure of paper and argument, keep argument specific, stay on the topic, make sure paper follows logical sequence. The paper should also include transitions from paragraph to paragraph. Students should give evidence—good writing doesn't deal with stream of consciousness. Don't plagiarize. Follow a style consistently for citations. Give a conclusion. Revise paper.

c. I focus on teaching arguments and I spend maybe 5% of classtime, maybe more, working on that. Instead of working on their own writing, we also work on outlining and evaluating other philosophers' writing, which helps them write their own arguments. I ask them to consult the writing center (which I don't think they do). It consists in learning the difference between writing that makes an argument as opposed to creative writing, clarity of thought and expression, in thinking through one's position to see how others might contest it and being able to respond to the weaknesses of one's own argument. I provide a very detailed written description of the assignment and what a successful essay will include. I provide grading guidelines that include specific elements of student writing. For more complicated assignments, I provide a series of questions asking students to evaluate their own writing, and I provide worksheets with general outlines on writing strong argumentative passages. All of it occurs in the syllabus or in handouts, but we review more than 90% in class and talk about it as it applies to their assignment.

d. Over the last three years, half time. All my teaching has been at the seminar level, in which my standard thing is to assign one term paper due at the end, so no real teaching of writing. More in foundations and CORE, 2000 classes, which I will teach next quarter. Sometimes in large classes I minimize writing, but want to do less at that. Three short papers, focus on how do you read and write something like philosophy. Which I used to do.

e. In the tutorials I teach, Comments on Structure are made. Rarely in class is writing directly addressed except in my writing intensive core class.

Most classes have 2-4 assignments with specific questions that are textually based. Final papers are often flexible.

f. I cover, in class, precisely what I'm looking for in a paper, essay, or other writing assignment (intro + thesis, background material, student's own argument, O&R section, conclusion—for a paper). At least once before a paper is due, I ask every student to voice their thoughts on the topic/thesis they're considering writing on. Also, I meet individually with students to discuss the specific argument they're working on, with the aim of defining the thesis, refining the argument(s), and identifying objections. I'm tired of reading poorly-written papers with weak arguments and find that my strategy for dealing with student writing is a benefit to all parties involved.

g. Quite a bit, mostly in handouts. In supplements, I give guide to understanding the content of the course and how best to communicate about them. A lot of times I ask students to go back to the texts to find the places that they are having trouble making sense of. Students are then asked to explain the confusion in class.

h. I give detailed instructions on my syllabus and then I discuss each student's writing project with them on an individual basis. During this meeting, we address the overall direction of the paper, specific arguments, and research sources.

i. . In the graduate level of courses I have taught recently, I do not do as much "teaching of writing" as I might in a lower level course. I generally tell students they need to hand in a paper at the end of the term, and then invite them either to go off on their own and write or to seek further guidance from me on a one-on-one basis, as is their preference. I always tell students I have an "infinite rewrite policy," meaning that if they hand in their paper early enough, I will return it with comments and allow them to resubmit it if they want to try for a higher grade. I generally find that students think this is a great policy when I announce it at the beginning of the term, but very few students get their papers written early enough to take advantage of it.

j. My job isn't to teach students how to write. My job is to teach philosophy: to teach students how to think critically about ideas. It would be better both for your study and the longevity of my job if we didn't do an interview." **Respondent j answers only question 1**

2. Are there forms, structures or basic strategies that you think all philosophical writing should involve?

a. A lot of students complain about philosophical writers as being much too verbose, that they're hard to follow, or the language doesn't correspond with modern English. That, I think, confounds students, since they don't know which style to mimic. I don't encourage them to write like that. I expect students to come in knowing, for example, about different sections of a paper that have different purposes.
b. I think that a paper should be argumentative, and you should provide objections and replies. A student should provide a unique creative argument, something that I haven't thought about, so there's an element of creativity involved. A good paper should also make connections, involving comparative work.
c. It all centers around what makes a good argument, what it means to defend an argument and dialogue with other philosophers.
d. In a way, this would cover other disciplines, but an abstract at the beginning, distill the passage they are addressing down to the gist. It's important to be able to distill a large text down to the basic arguments, overall gist. Distinguish between the philosophical argument and the fluff/other things. Then, come up with a response.
e. Philosophers would be in trouble if they were without arguments. Most philosophers should also have a thesis.
f. All philosophical writing should advance a novel argument; the more sophisticated the reasons in its support, the better, and the more warded-off objections, the better.
g. A brief introduction (informing the reader where you are going), a summary of what findings have been achieved, then the conclusions reached in the investigation.
h. I refer my students to two websites. The first is from Dartmouth:
http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/humanities/philosophy.shtml. It not only categorizes the different kinds of theses put forward in a philosophy paper, but it also offers a concise outline of the structure of philosophical argumentation. The second is from Princeton philosophy professor, James Pryor:
http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html. Pryor goes into more detail about what it means to philosophically engage an argument and to defend a claim. He also offers a helpful discussion on grading and issues of clarity.
i. I think the form of a philosophical paper can vary, depending on its intent. If it is intended to be a "scholarship" paper, then it should probably follow the form modeled in the various philosophical journals fairly closely. If a paper is instead intended to be a work of "original philosophy," then it can take any number of forms, depending on its content. I encourage students to write whatever type of paper they want, although I do try to provide some real-world guidance, warning them that the more free-form a paper is, the less chance it has of ever getting published somewhere. But I also warn them that if they never take the opportunity to develop their own philosophical thought, the work they do may be technically proficient, but rather uninteresting.

3. What is your philosophy of how to give feedback?

a. I find it important to give some kind of positive feedback initially, so students don't feel destroyed after reading comments. I think all criticism needs to be constructive, so I try to explain: this sentence is incoherent because of , and here's another way you might have said this. I try to give instructive ideas of how to correct the problem. I like to engage students about their argument. Their content is just as important as their writing skills; I'm concerned with what kinds of issues they're raising, and I try to steer them towards other relevant interesting material, and new questions to be asking about topic. My ultimate goal is to build critical thinking skills. It's probably one of the most important goals of all academic work. If students can learn to give credence to both sides of a position, that is very important.
b. I'm concerned that the feedback I give students will help them write better in the future. I make comments if a student's claim is unclear, if there are gaps in the reasoning. A primary challenge is to make sure they're not making grammatical errors, which can make a paper terribly difficult to understand. Most students are still working on basic grammatical matters. *I* want to help students become better writers and express their ideas clearly. A student can have brilliant ideas but if I can't understand them, it just doesn't work as well. I'm not one to overlook clarity and grammar.
c. I've struggled with that part the most. I try to find a balance between offering helpful feedback that enables them to improve while also respecting my own time by providing a certain level of detailed feedback. I try to provide more extensive feedback on early assignments to give students ideas of how to improve and learn what students' challenges and strengths are, and focus my energy there in later assignments. To help students understand how I perceive their strengths and weaknesses on a given assignment, how the essay could be improved or they could improve their general skills, and to interpret for them how I think of their grade.

d. In accord with the focus of the last question. Underline something and connect to text, point out inconsistencies or gaps. Students always bring in their own assessment. This should not be in part one, have to distinguish between the different sections of the paper. Generally, highlight not only where things have gone wring, but to recognize what is good so as to be encouraging. Try to be clear where points of downgrading come from. Differentiate between feedback and grade. An 'A' paper requires much more feedback because the student's thought requires more from you.
e. I sit, read, and engage the text philosophically. My first comments are whatever come to mind as I'm reading, my second is to point out what I don't understand, my third is grammar, world choice and structure and my fourth round of comments are to point out what the writer did well.
f. First, I aim at giving students positive feedback by identifying good features of their writing (interesting thesis, well-structured, clearly-written, insightful, etc.). Next, I identify problems/questions with students' arguments. Finally, I identify for the student overt grammatical or spelling problems that detract from the students' ability to clearly convey their point. In philosophy classes, I always write a full paragraph for each student. This is a great way to communicate with students individually.
g. Comments on exams, attending to both strengths and weaknesses. I want to encourage students to continue exploring the material. I'm always pushing the line of reasoning further, to see where it goes.
h. I offer feedback in two forms. First, after grading a set of papers, I categorize the general mistakes that I have seen students make across the board, and during the next class, I discuss these mistakes. Second, I offer written feedback on their papers. My feedback highlights the paper's strengths as well as its shortcomings. As it pertains to the former, I call attention to a clearly articulated thesis, demonstrations of critical engagements with claims, and well defended arguments. As it pertains to the latter, I point out inconsistencies and weak or unclear arguments, grammatical and structural problems, and claims or details that the student failed to address. My basic goal in offering feedback is to call attention to the ways in which they can strengthen their argumentation. This includes feedback on basic writing skills (mechanics) and on their abilities to philosophically engage an idea (content). I want them to be able to think clearly about an issue and to exhibit this clarity in their writing.
i. I generally assign an in-class presentation as well as the final paper, and encourage students to use the presentation as a dry run for the paper. This allows them to get some initial feedback both from me and from their classmate. I think this form of feedback is probably best at helping students with a very broad topic narrow in on something more specific. I then offer written comments on the paper, whether that is handed in early or on the last day of class. I try to focus my comments more on the philosophical content of the paper than on its written style unless there are real problems with the style—enough so that they get in the way of the philosophical content.

4. Why is it important to write in philosophy classes?

a. Writing is the only way you can express and struggle with some of the really complex issues in philosophy. Trying to engage issues verbally doesn't give enough space or time to really grapple with some of the issues. For this reason, I really don't like giving midterm exams (midterms that don't involve writing). You want to know students have a good sense of the material you've covered, but you don't want it to be black and white, since this misrepresents the material.
b. It's important for the learning process. When you're processing information, writing helps you to organize it, so you're clear and you learning specific things, not just a vague group of ideas.
c. It's important to write in order to clarify one's position and to engage in careful dialogue with other philosophers. Verbal discussion provides time to more loosely explore the strengths and weaknesses of a philosopher's view and begin to express one's own view. Writing helps take it to the next level and be more careful about how their claims advance their own philosophical thinking or the way they might be offering lazy opinions. Learning this skill helps in other aspects of their lives, whether or not they take other philosophy courses. The discipline of careful thinking that goes into careful philosophical writing can be a useful tool in other arenas.
d. If you can't think clearly, you can't write clearly, but vice versa. Therefore, it is important to write to figure out where you thinking has gaps and cloudiness. Secret to writing is rewriting. Rethinking the project, tearing what you have apart. You have to go through struggling with a text before you can be clear.
e. What we do in philosophy is to carefully figure out how a certain idea/issue works. Writing clarifies the answer to the writer.
f. Writing in philosophy serves at least two functions: first, it enables the writer to construct a clear, well-defended argument; second, it enables the reader to determine exactly how acute the writer's reasoning skills are. There's often a huge gap between a philosopher's writing skills and their verbal skills.
g. Because I think you learn what your thoughts are by writing them down.
h. Writing is important for two reasons. First, it enables students to concretize very abstract ideas. I often have students tell me that they think they understand the material when it's discussed in class, but when they leave class, they realize they don't understand it. Writing enables students to concretize the material because it necessitates that they carefully work through an argument and then put it in their own words.

Second, writing allows students to find their voice: it provides the format for students to offer sustained engagements and critiques, which enable them to form their own educated opinions about the topic at hand.

i. I think writing forces to give some clarity and precision to our thinking. Thus, in addition to serving as a key means of communicating our ideas to others, it gives us a crucial test for our ideas. Many philosophical thoughts appear to be very profound when they are first rumbling around in our heads, but I find that if you cannot clearly formulate an idea in written form, it probably was not that profound to begin with.

5. What are the different kinds of writing that you assign?

a. Papers, short reflections (2-3 page), taking a position on a particular argument, keeping a journal that tracks your own response to material (argumentative, emotional, etc.—if they do it well, they'll get a good grade). I don't have a problem with students engaging in writing at different levels.

b. Short essays, finals, which are interesting. A take-home final gives students time to write something more formal, but not as formal as a research paper. The short essays are more formal, but the arguments aren't terribly involved. In answering short answers, your writing is important. I try to encourage students to work an idea or concept in an essay.

c. Essays of increasing length over the course of the quarter. Early assignments are 2 pages, later assignments are 3-4, and then 6-7 pages. All essays require students to dialogue with assigned readings from philosophical texts. All essays require philosophical arguments from students. The earlier essays are more reflective so that students have space to give different kinds of writing.

d. Read sections of writing, distill to an abstract, then respond critically.

e. Tutorials are usually from 5-6 pages long. Other essays are usually 3-4 pages long.

f. In philosophy classes, I always assign one paper asking for the student to defend their own novel argument. I also assign a final consisting of four or so short essays (2 pages).

g. Typically short assignments that extend the issues discussed in class. Then papers presenting arguments pro and con for certain issues.

h. In the class I'm currently teaching, the students have to write reflection papers on primary readings, a comparison/contrast paper on two theorists studied in class, and a final research project.

i. Again, for graduate level courses, I simply assign a term paper. When I have taught lower level classes, I have assigned more papers of shorter length, thus giving more opportunity for feedback and allowing for students to develop their writing skills over the course of the term. These shorter papers are usually a mix of one-page response papers to a particular reading or lecture and three or four-pages philosophical essays.

6. *Do you think that the writing demands of our philosophy classes are appropriate? How many pages of writing do you assign? Are you able to assign as much writing as you want? For the overall grade, how much weight is given to writing assignments? Compare writing demands of your philosophy classes to those of non-philosophy classes.*

a. I was never given any guidance about what to expect, or that there were any criteria set up by the department. All I can base my answer on is that I think that young students today are not as prepared for reading or writing as people were even a decade ago. So, I think that there's a lot of remedial work that a lot of students don't seem to have. So, based on that, I think that one becomes a better writer by reading more difficult texts. Hence, the demands have to vary, and they have shifted over time. There's a tendency to grade easier, to lower the professor's standards.

10-15, depending on the class.

For students to digest material, their major writing assignment has to be near the end of the term. So, the hardest thing is having enough time to review the papers well at the end. That, I find most difficult. A week isn't really enough time to grade papers that students have taken so long to produce.

At least 50%, if not more. Probably closer to 70%.

I don't think I make them any different. I have a standard and writing is imperative.

b. I really don't know what undergraduate writing requirements in the department are. In taking graduate-level classes, my sense is that the demands are appropriate.

9-12 pages worth of essays, 3-4 pages for the final.

Yes. I have so few students that I don't feel like I'm overburdened with grading.

65% or so. If I taught another philosophy course at DU, I'd place more weight on writing to ensure that students are learning all the material. Though it would depend on the size of the class and level of class.

Given my experience in teaching with women's studies, I'd say that I'm asking for more writing in philosophy classes. It depends on the class. I would hope that English classes have more rigorous requirements, but I probably have more rigor than psychology or sociology classes. It's essential for students to cover basics in writing; if they don't have that, it's

difficult to understand their reasoning. I weight reasoning more highly, but you need to be able to do writing well enough.

c. I really don't know…I've only taught one course in the department. The students in my course had varied levels of experience in philosophy. My familiarity with writing in the department involves having Naomi share some of her assignments with me.
Four 2-page assignments, one 3-4 page essay, and one 6-7 page final, which students revised. Also, students prepared short handwritten journal entries twice a week.
I assigned the maximum I would ever assign for students at that level, both for their sake and for mine. The advantage to having that many assignments was that it gave students multiple opportunities to learn and improve, which they did. The downside, of course, is that it was a lot of work for them and for me. I'm confident they did much more careful reading in order to write those essays, however. In the future, I will try to still use that increasing page limit in order to build their skills. I might omit the journal entries in the future and come up with some means of requiring them to consult the writing center for their own improvement, or have in-person sessions to discuss writing.
80%
I was a TA twice at DU, and we did more writing in my class than those classes did. They were both CORE classes, and they did some writing, but they used a lot more quizzes than anything else. Writing skills are the ones I want to see students develop.

d. Yes. However, in the past, when teaching FOUND and CORE, I was assigning too little because of the size of the classes.
Seminar, 15 page term paper. Students often go over and have to learn to be concise.
FOUND CORE no, but in other classes yes. Limits of class size sometimes limits how much you can assign.
Seminar, formally everything is based on the term paper., but realistically, some weight given to participation, in FOUND/CORE, there are some exams

e. Yes, the writing demands are appropriate. 2000 level courses should total 20 pages, 3000 level courses should total 20-40 pages. Ideally, students should get assigned one paper a week. Philosophy grades are weighted more towards writing.

f. I guess so. What's appropriate can vary from teacher to teacher, depending on whether they're satisfied with lots of "explanatory padding" or whether they're looking for the student to have developed a solid argumentative core of their own in their writing.
Typically, I assign between 10 and 12 pages of writing per philosophy class. That might not sound like much, but I let students know that I'm looking for a dense, thoroughly-developed argument for each writing.
I would be overwhelmed with grading, which I find exhausting, if I assigned as much writing as I'd like to.
Typically, performance on writing assignments accounts for about 75-80% of the final grade.

g. More often than not, but I'm sure there is always room for improvement. For short assignments a couple of pages, for take home exams 5-6 pages. Two take homes usually worth 40% and for the short assignments 20%. 100% based on writing. I think I require fewer pages overall compared to history or English classes. Ideally, I focus on better quality, and a deeper understanding of the issues rather than on quantity.

h. Students write 23-26 pages. This is comparable to what I assigned in other sophomore level courses while at other universities, but I cannot compare it with non-philosophy classes at DU because I don't have access to that information (though this information would be beneficial). Their whole grade is based on writing, though the research projects are given more weight, and the grading standards are more stringent for the final project than the mid-term project.

i. When I assign a term paper, I tell the undergrads in the class to make it 8-12 pages and the grad students to make it 12-15 pages. I think this is both fairly standard and appropriate. For highly motivated students, the real challenge lies in compressing their thoughts into such a limited space. In graduate level courses, I don't have a strict formula for how much weight I give to the paper, the class presentation, and general class presentation, but in rough terms I try to make the paper worth about half the final grade.

7. ***Are you generally satisfied with the level at which students write in your classes? Do you see students' writing change over the course of a quarter? Over the course of several quarters? Are students who have taken more philosophy classes more adept at writing?***

a. No. A lot of them need work on very simple things—grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, organization.

If they have a longer assignment, they tend to put more work into it. If it's just a couple of pages, they don't really seem to be as engaged. Hence, I can't determine whether their work is really improving (or getting worse). Student populations change a lot, too. There's a distinct notion of student engagement with technology that changes their writing ability, so that it's less complex—short sentences, incomplete thoughts, moving too quickly from one topic to another.

I can't say that from DU. I don't think I'm qualified to answer that.

In terms of basic skills, and also in terms of argumentative skills.

b. No. At CU, I can get a feel for where the students' level is. But at DU, I can't quite get a sense. Which students I see depends on who would choose to take a certain class. It seems that their writing really is pretty poor. I wonder if a part of it is they're testing the waters. Maybe they've been able to get by writing sloppy papers, but then get a sense of what I want from their writing, and then change. It seems like laziness to some extent, for example, not to proofread.

This is only my first quarter to teach philosophy at DU, but I am optimistic about my students' ability to improve their writing.

Not applicable, as this is my first quarter to teach philosophy at DU.

I have only one philosophy major in my class; this student didn't write as well. The student claimed to me that he was testing the waters, and he is very busy. A lot of his education is tied up with extracurricular matters.

c. No. I've had students with problems as basic as writing complete sentences and coherent paragraphs, which is why I provide so much guidance in writing; I want to help them strengthen those skills without taking a whole class in writing. I thought college students, especially juniors and seniors would be better writers. About 1/3 of the class expressed themselves very well in writing.

Yes, I did see students writing (most students) improve as they learned what I was specifically looking for in terms of philosophical writing and their ability to dialogue with other philosophers.

N/A

Some were, and some were not. Those who had taken other philosophy classes were highly engaged in the material and discussion but their writing was not uniformly improved by having taken other classes.

d. Overall, yes. Been here since '72, and gradually the admission standards have gone up, and the difficulties that were present before have vanished. However, I do continue to be surprised at the trouble students have with writing concisely and objectively to distill an argument, and to separate what the author is saying and what you feel about it. Similar skill to active listening.

Rarely over the course of a quarter, unless it is a CORE or AHUM, although even then minor in ten weeks.

Yes, you see improvement over the longer time.

No. Development over time, but the students who show improvement are those who are invested in it, and not necessarily just in philosophy.

e. Yes, I'm relatively satisfied. Writing isn't an issue most of the time. Most students write well enough that it isn't an issue or I can work with them. Sometimes writing changes with feedback, it for sure changes after several quarters. Writing philosophically means to be driven by ideas and arguments. The more philosophy one is exposed to, the more adept at philosophical writing that person will become.

f. Absolutely. In my first year of teaching at DU, I wasn't happy with the writing I was seeing. In particular, I was seeing a lot of hastily-constructed arguments put forth in writing assignments. A few years later, however, I rarely see serious writing problems. (To which causal factor this change owes, I do not know.) When I do see serious problems, I usually find that the student was handing in an unrevised, hastily-written (but not hastily-thought-out) draft.

I have seen some, but not all, students improve steadily over the course of a quarter, and over the course of several quarters.

Some philosophy majors are much better writers, and some just aren't that great. Sometimes the majors whose writing isn't that great strike me as not having very highly-developed reasoning skills—that often makes for a lousy philosophy paper. I have had a number of non-philosophy majors in my classes whose reasoning and writing skills were just phenomenal. They come from art history and even finance.

g. In the upper lever classes, I'm satisfied, in CORE, no. Writing changes in many cases in a quarter when I give students the opportunity to rewrite essays. I think defiantly over several quarters. In some cases philosophy students are more adept but certainly not always. It depends on how persistent the students are at learning good writing.

h. I am fairly satisfied with the overall quality of the students' writing, though there is room for improvement. I have noticed a marked difference between those who have had philosophy classes and those who have not. While both struggle somewhat with mechanics/structure (i.e., difficulty constructing a clear thesis statement and the structuring of argumentation in support of it), the students who have philosophy classes are more adept at this than those who have not.

Further, the students who have not had a philosophy class (as would be expected) have greater difficulty handling philosophical arguments, and it's clear from their writings that they struggle to grasp central elements of the primary readings. I cannot yet say whether student writing improves over the quarter yet because I don't have enough data.

i. I have found that most students in my upper levels courses are fairly good writers, although there is a good deal of variation. Those who have taken several philosophy courses often seem to be the better writers, although this is not always true. I have had a few student majoring in science or engineering who have written very well-structured papers.

8. What are common challenges that students encounter in philosophical writing?

a. In many philosophical texts, readers encounter difficulty in following the text, sometimes including a linguistic style that no longer exists, a verbosity that isn't necessarily good writing; students sometimes think they're supposed to write like this. This makes it more difficult for them to understand the gist of the argument, so they can't position themselves, since they don't get a true underpinning of what the discussion is framed around. Sentence structure, organization of paper, these are often problems.
b. To get a clear thesis statement, to narrow it down. When I have students come up with their own topics, they can have great difficulty. They can feel uncomfortable engaging the material. They seem to treat philosophy as if it belongs to another realm. They have difficulty reading material, and coming up with an analysis or critical understanding of the material. Students love to talk about philosophy, but they're intimidated by philosophy, especially in the face of a difficult reading.
c. The biggest challenge I saw was the reticence to take one's own position. It would be easier if I had asked students to tell me what the philosopher's argument was. But when I asked students to defend their own position, I found this took a lot of coaching. Some student struggle to understand the philosopher's argument themselves, which made the taking their own position that much more difficult. I made sure we had opportunities to talk about philosophers' positions in class before students had to write about them, but still that was a challenge.
d. See above
e. Many students are too concerned with the aesthetics of writing. They are too poetic and too afraid of repetition. Ideas shouldn't be that refined.
f. Students often have problems writing in philosophy largely because they have difficulty sorting out all the inter-related abstract conceptual material. This makes it difficult for students to write out their ideas clearly. Students sometimes have difficulty identifying exceptions to generalizations, which can make for careless writing and arguments. Identifying which conceptual material needs to be explained, and where, can also be difficult.
g. Discerning arguments and evaluating the arguments are the most challenging aspects of writing in a philosophy course. They are also the most important.
h. The most common challenges I see: the lack of a clear thesis, the inability to structure arguments in support of a thesis, the lack of critical engagement with claims made in the readings, and a deficient defense of their own claims. These mistakes result in an inability on the part of students to put forward their own voice in their papers.
i. I find the biggest challenge most students have is in organizing their thoughts, and then writing them out in such a way that one idea follows from the last. (Of course, the post-modernists don't WANT to write this way, but that is another story!) When students ask me for guidance and this is a problem I identify, I encourage them to jot down all of the interesting philosophical points they want to make in their paper, and then to start drawing some lines or otherwise indicating how these ideas fit in with one another. For those ideas that may be interesting in their own right, but do not fit in with the others, I always tell students to save them for another paper—there will always be opportunities to do more writing!

9. What are the important features of high-quality philosophical writing?

a. Engaging timeless questions, contextualizing them in a variety of circumstances. I don't put philosophical writing in a category by itself completely different from any other different academic writing. The other kinds of academic matters I engage in are similar in terms of writing style. Being able to succinctly explain concepts, to learn how to use quotes minimally, being able to use the vocabulary of the discipline. Also important are clarity of being able to follow the argument or narrative, and being able to see how you arrived at the conclusion you did are important.
b. Being able to make and support an argument, originality of thought, this takes a **lot** of effort. Well-presented argument, clarity.
c. Taking a clear position, making a valid assessment of other philosophers' positions, indicating others' strengths and weaknesses, focusing on clarity of writing that advances one's argument, taking potential objections to one's argument into account (as space allows), and being able to express one's thought creatively and concisely.

d. Clarity. Brevity. Acuity.
e. Philosophical engagement with the texts is very important. Objections, refined well structured ideas. Analytically based statements that don't play into biases.
f. Having a novel argument (an idea of one's own), expressing it clearly, and having thoroughly thought out the reasons in support of the argument's conclusion and responses to potential objections.
g. I would say using fairly common language (as opposed to technical terms), a clear presentation of arguments, and the ability to correctly appraise the arguments that you are discussing.
h. High quality writing exhibits the features mentioned in #2. For me, it means that they can a structure a sustained argument in favor of a thesis, thereby enabling their own opinion (voice) on the matter to come through in an informed way.
i. The two most important features I look for in a paper are saying something of philosophical interest and communicating such ideas in a lucid fashion. In some cases, making one's argument may require the frequent citation of original or secondary sources, and in such cases the citations should be relevant and informative, not just pro forma. In works that are more "original philosophy," such citations may be lacking, but in this case it is even more important that the key ideas be communicated clearly.

10. What do you think students expect from you with respect to writing assignments and evaluation of them? Do you think students are generally satisfied with the way you handle them?

a. I wish I knew. I think they want me to pass them and give them an A and say "that was great", and "you should keep writing so you can win a prize." That's my tongue-in-cheek response. My more serious response is this: I don't think students know what to expect. I think they would like to know why they got the grade they did, and they'd like it to be articulated that these were the points in which you fell short in terms of the criteria for grading. I think students are far too concerned about their grade as opposed to the content of their learning. I find this holds for all students across the board with all undergrad programs. There are exceptional students who are not like that, of course. About 20% of students really are engaged, really want to understand the material, want to know other modes of thinking that they might pursue, how things complement and contrast w/one another; those students are looking for some kind of depth of engagement.
Yes, I think so. I really haven't had any complaints except from students who didn't want to do the assignment in the first place.

b. That we're getting to know each other; they expect me to be really reading their papers critically, writing comments, and giving feedback. They can count on my catching something obvious, so they can feel secure with their argument if I haven't called them on something. I would give them feedback if I found a serious problem. Some philosophy professors don't give any comments at all. A student will expect something different; they can't count on their making an argument if they're not getting feedback. It's very different depending on whether a class is graduate or sophomore-level.
So far, yes. I've just had one set of papers thus far. The students seem to be very earnest.

*c. C*lear direction, clear expectations of how I will evaluate their work, fair grade, feedback that enables them to see what they did well and what needs improvement.
*A*ll but one, I think. I'm not clear how happy this student was with my feedback, but he/she was not happy with his/her grade. By and large, the students saw that I was consistent and hopefully fair with respect to how their writing compared with what I asked them to do.

d. I probably expect, given the student grapevine, they know what to expect. Many of my classes have repeat students. So, expect fair grading, that if you put in effort you will get a fairly good grade. Invested students will always get at least a B.
Except that students are intimidated by the term paper.

e. It is important that teachers grade assignments quickly with feedback. Opportunities to rewrite work is important as well. Comments on the content of the paper are important. Disagreements should not be seen as weaknesses while grading. Grades should be justified and should be followed up by advise.

f. Students expect a clear pronouncement of my expectations in advance. They also expect for me to grade consistently with those expectations, which I specifically cover in class in detail. I think students are very satisfied with my evaluation of their work.

g. Generally students are satisfied with my evaluation of their papers because I let them correct their shortcomings for a better grade.

h. Students expect a reasonable turn-around time (for me, that means no more than a week), and written feedback on their papers. They also need clear guidelines on how they will be evaluated, which I provide on the syllabus and in class discussions.

i. I have not gotten much feedback from my students with respect to their expectations of me, and whether those expectations are fulfilled with respect to written assignments, in particular. I think the fact that I offer students the chance to re-write papers as often as they like (providing they hand them in early—the real kicker) makes it hard for them to complain that I haven't given them a chance to receive feedback and improve their writing.

11. How do the writing skills of philosophy majors in your courses compare to the writing skills of other majors?

a. think that in general, people drawn to study philosophy are interested in writing. The philosophy majors tend to have a better command of the language. They don't, however, always come in with better writing skills.
b. I don't think I have a representative base on which to give a response. But, generally, not quite as good.
c. I didn't see a marked diff between the two groups. There were strong writers and struggling writers in all of the majors who were in my class.
d. In general, the philosophy majors are superior, b/c if they are the majors, they are invested.
e. The writing skills are usually equal. You can tell often when someone has experience with philosophy. The potential for both is the same.
f. There are several philosophy majors whose writing skills are top-notch. In my experience, this group **almost** wholly overlaps with the group of philosophy majors whose reasoning skills are solid, but there are some interesting exceptions. I've also encountered a great number of non-philosophy majors whose writing (and reasoning) skills are very good (and some whose skills are not so good).
g. I'm not sure, I don't have the information in order to give a fair answer to the question. My response wouldn't be backed by anything substantive.
h. The philosophy majors in my class are definitely more advanced in their writing skills. They are better at both mechanics and content.
i. See #7 above. I probably have not worked with enough students recently to have a good answer to this question.

12. To what extent do you expect your students to give textual evidence? Use secondary sources? Provide citations? Provide novel arguments?

a. To a great extent. 75%? Without textual evidence, how do I even know they've engaged the material?
That depends on the assignment. For a final long paper, I do—not a huge number, but one or two at least, to indicate some depth in the discussion, so it's not just engaging with just one perspective.
All the time. "It's really okay to take someone else's words and use them as your own." (sarcasm)
I'd be happy if half the students could do that. I don't expect ¼ of the students to do this (to do it at all, as opposed to doing it well). I have very high expectations, but I tend to err on the side of the students' actual capabilities.

b. I do to a great extent. I do need to see the connection w/the actual primary text, so I expect students to make that connection, and not just write a paper on a vague idea that students think is associated with a philosophical idea.
Sometimes it's most helpful to read the text and process it. Sometimes it's really helpful to just look at some secondary sources, so you're not reinventing the wheel or just completely off. Dealing with primary sources is quite a lot.
In a paper, I want formal citations. In short assignments, students can just put the information in parentheses.
Always.

c. Providing textual evidence is essential for even an adequate essay. In shorter assignments, I gave guidelines to how many summaries of others' thought they should provide (2-3 for a 2-page paper). In longer papers, students are in constant dialogue with philosophical texts.
I ask them not to use secondary sources at all. I want them to focus solely on the texts of the course and wasn't confident in their ability to assess the adequacy of secondary sources.
I expect students to provide citations for all quotes and paraphrases.
I didn't particularly expect novel [interviewee understands 'novel' to mean 'heretofore unarticulated'] arguments—just genuine arguments that are arguable. I expect students to take a position of substance. I didn't want to set the bar that high.

d. 60% Text,, >10% Secondary, 30% Original. Always citations. Very rarely, students will ask to do creative writing piece, try to discourage without "raining on their creativity"

e. It is very rare not to have textual evidence in a philosophy paper. I usually forbid secondary sources (except for grad students), novel arguments aren't as high a priority. Clarity is better than originality.

f. I don't think this is relevant to the material I typically teach. Unless the question is asking about citing quotations or paraphrases.
I never want students to use secondary sources, as they are often poorly chosen and misleading.
If a student quotes or paraphrases, she must cite the text. Of course.
Every piece of writing I assign asks students to defend their own argument. "Regurgitation," as students call it, just robs philosophy of all its joy.

g. Having students give textual evidence shouldn't be the focus, what I ask them to focus on is textual accuracy. The same applies to secondary sources but I don't rule them out like other teachers, sometimes secondary sources more clearly get across the ideas of the original source. I request very few quote because it is an avoidance tactic for expressing your own ideas. I stress that students provide their own novel arguments.

h. It is of central importance that students address primary readings and give evidence of having addressed that material by citing it in papers. Both my mid-term and my final writing have specific primary and secondary source requirements. In this course, I have not emphasized making novel arguments per se because the philosophical skill level is very varied in this course. I have talked with the majors about their final project, and they are more focused on making novel arguments.

i. As noted above, I think the degree of citation required depends on the type of paper written, and on whether or not the student has any hopes for getting the paper published

Extra comments:

Attendance is highly problematic; also, it's noticeable since the class is small. If a student isn't present in class, it's very difficult to write a paper well.

I do want to ask a question: what are the means by which students are instructed in writing in their first years at DU, so that they are confident and able to write throughout the college career? I place a high value on the ability to communicate in writing, and as a philosophy instructor I'm more than happy to instruct students in ways of writing specific to philosophy and see it as part of my task, but I struggled with how much time to spend on remedial kinds of writing instruction having to do with composition of sentences, paragraphs, grammar, and those kinds of things.
About 1/3 to ½ of the students seemed to just not be doing the good work they were capable of. It also seemed like students had a lot of work to juggle, so they didn't put as much time/effort into my assignments as I would have liked them to.