

## HUMA 3457 Essay-Writing Checklist

### Form

- ❑ Keep it simple (i.e. no folders, no funky fonts, no colours); just white paper, clear plain script, and a single staple or clip.
- ❑ The essay should have a title page containing your name, the course number, the name of the professor and the date submitted.
- ❑ The essay itself should be typed and in 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1 1/4 inch margins on both sides, top and bottom.
- ❑ Number the pages, always stay within the page limit, and do not misspell names of authors or titles (or profs/TAs).

### Organization

- ❑ Begin with a short (one paragraph) introduction outlining the issue your paper addresses with a clearly formulated thesis statement presenting your understanding of the best solution.
- ❑ Each subsequent paragraph will systematically present your argument point-by-point. Essays are not merely summaries of information.
- ❑ Link paragraphs or ideas with transition statements that move the reader from one thought to another (typically these are the first sentence in the paragraph; do not introduce the second paragraph in the last sentence of the first).
- ❑ The final paragraph gives you an opportunity to synthesize your arguments (if there are loose ends) or simply to summarize what you have demonstrated.

### Style

- ❑ Essays are formal; do not use colloquial expressions or humour.
- ❑ Do not use contractions (e.g. don't, it's, etc.).
- ❑ "Its" is the singular form of the possessive (similar to his and her); "it's" is a contraction of "it is" and should not occur in your paper.
- ❑ If nothing else, make sure the paper is free of spelling errors and as many grammatical errors as possible (but do not just run a spell-checker; carefully proof-read also).

### Documentation.

- ❑ Make sure quotations are free of spelling mistakes, separately "block" quotations over three lines (single-space, no quotation marks, with additional margins of 1/2 inch each side), and include a reference for each quotation used. But do not quote too often (you do not want an essay that is little more than one long quotation after another).
- ❑ Do not appeal to secondary sources if the essay does not require them. When citing primary resources place the name of the text and the chapter and verse number in brackets. For example: Paul writes concerning idols that "all of us possess knowledge" (1 Cor 8:1), or Paul writes in 1 Corinthians that "all of us possess knowledge" (8:1). Sources from Nag Hammadi are typically cited by page and line number—e.g., *Apoc. Adam* 49, 1-22. Titles of biblical texts are not underlined or italicized but all other primary sources are.
- ❑ For the two papers, attach a separate sheet of paper entitled "Bibliography." Provide a full and accurate citation for the book/articles (hint: all of this information is on the syllabus).