

## Apology

A philosophical ‘apology’ is the opposite of what you think. It is *not* saying sorry, but is rather a reasoned defense of something you believe in. For your final reflection, you’ll complete a philosophical apology (that is, a *defense*) of a belief or practice that you’ve adopted (or rejected or become more/less convinced of) over the course of this semester. The belief or practice can be pretty much anything but should (i) be related to our class this semester and (ii) be as specific as possible. For example, ‘being more thoughtful about climate change’ or ‘being more reflective about religion’ are poor topics. They’re too vague. Your newfound dedication to giving up your smart phone or your newfound acceptance of a belief in God are much better topics. They’re specific, and related to what we discussed this semester.

Your reflection should be divided into three parts.

First, in your introduction, identify WHAT and WHY. Identify what position or practice you will be considering, and why it is an important issue. The options here are legion. You might discuss why you are going to delete social media or why you now believe advanced AI could be conscious. Or one of the examples discussed above. Or a topic we discussed in class. In addition to identifying what issue you are focusing on, you should also explain why you think it is important for your reader to consider—why should your reader care about the topic? Finally, you should make it clear what view you ultimately accept.

Second, articulate the view *of your critics*. Why might someone defend the opposite (or different) view than the one you ultimately accept? While articulating the view of your critics, don’t describe a straw man or caricature. Steel man your critics’ position, making the best possible case for it.

Finally, articulate your own view. Why, even in the face of your critics, do you adopt the position or belief you are defending? Show how your position can overcome that of your critics, and why your reader should ultimately accept your view. An apology should be sincere, well-reasoned, and clear. That’s important in every section of this assignment, but especially in the third.

Length: your apology should be approximately three pages double spaced.

Due: TBD