

## PHR-520 - Existentialism

### Essay #2: The Existential Condition

Discussions about existentialism can sometimes be amorphous and abstract, yet the reality is that this philosophical tradition is **very** much about humans living their lives, making choices, and grappling with the consequences of those decisions. In order to help bridge this gap, the second essay in this course is going to ask you to turn some of our thinking back on your own life by asking you to give something up (!).

I'm going to give you a couple of options here. You can:

1. Turn in your phone (to me) for the next 48 hours. Yes, that's two whole days (don't worry - it will be safely locked in my office during that time).
2. If you can't bear the thought of parting with your phone, commit to giving up all social media use for the next 48 hours. Log out, delete the apps, etc. This includes Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, WeChat, KakaoTalk, Finsta, and whatever other social media that you currently use.
3. If neither of the above options seem particularly appealing, then give up the **one** social media platform that you use *the most*.

Then, for our second essay, I will ask that you reflect on these experiences using **two** of the thinkers we have read in the course thus far, each of which will be assessed individually with respect to Standard 1. These include the following individuals:

- 1. A - Fyodor Dostoyevsky
- 1. B - Søren Kierkegaard
- 1. C - Jean-Paul Sartre
- 1. D - David Abram

The essay itself should be between 3 and 4 pages in length (12-point font, 1.0-inch margins, 2.0-line spacing) and should include a works cited at the end. You may find it helpful to keep track of key moments during this tech fast, which will make it easier to draw from them later. Note that class time will be set aside on both Monday, February 10th and Tuesday, February 11th to work on these essays.

**The final draft will be due on Thursday, February 13th.**

Finally, I would add that this assignment is ultimately what you make of it. I am not going to be monitoring your accounts or checking to see whether you are using iMessage on your computer. The goal here is not so much to "win" at your social media fast as it is to use the language we are developing in our class to reflect on your own life. Indeed, any failures to commit to the above challenges are worth reflecting on in their own right.

**Standard 1 Rubric**

**(Each of the two philosophers you select will be assessed individually according to the rubric below)**

<b>(6) Advanced Understanding</b>	<b>(5) Proficient Understanding</b>	<b>(4) Developing Understanding</b>	<b>(3) Emerging Understanding</b>	<b>(2 or Lower) Insufficient Evidence</b>
In addition to 3, 4, and 5-level understandings, I can compile component ideas into a new whole or propose alternative solutions	In addition to 3 and 4-level understandings, I can analyze effectiveness, limitations, and new insights that result from the application of concepts to new contexts	In addition to 3-level understandings, I can accurately apply concepts to new contexts.	I can consistently recall and demonstrate an understanding of previously learned concepts.	I cannot recall previously learned concepts.