

Essay Guidelines: Kant's CI1 & CI2

Essay Topic: Are Kant's two versions of the Categorical Imperative, CI1 and CI2, equivalent? Why or why not?

This assignment is relatively simple and straightforward. It is an example of what I call a "regurgitation paper," if you'll excuse the metaphor. That is, all you're required to do is present the material covered in class and in the textbook, but do so in your own words. In grading this assignment, I will be focusing on the precision and clarity with which you present this material.

Before you begin writing this paper, be sure to read pp. 218 – 220 in your textbook. When you write the essay, however, try not to quote directly from the textbook (with the exception of the two versions of the CI – it is appropriate to quote them). I want to see how well you can present this in your own words. That is how I will be able to determine (a) whether you understand this material, and (b) whether you are able to write carefully and precisely.

OUTLINE

- I. The two versions of the Categorical Imperative
 - a. Present CI1 and explain briefly how it is used to determine whether actions are permissible
 - b. Present CI2 and explain briefly how it is used to determine whether actions are permissible.
 - c. Make clear that Kant regards these two formulations of the Categorical Imperative as equivalent
- II. Explain how you will determine whether CI1 and CI2 are equivalent.
- III. Present the action that you will be evaluating. Don't spend too much time presenting the story. I just want to see that you understand the choice the person in the story faces. Yes, you may use the same story presented in the textbook and the lecture; I don't expect you to come up with your own case.
- IV. Apply CI1 to the action described in the story to determine whether that action is permissible.
- V. Apply CI2 to the action described in the story to determine whether that action is permissible.
- VI. Explain the significance of the results you have uncovered here (viz., that CI1 and CI2 cannot be equivalent).