

# Introduction to Philosophy Essay Contest

Dr. Hicks

## On the Essay

**Topic:** What is independence, and is it a good thing?

**Context:** A theme running through the works we have read is independence:

- In *Apology*, one issue is whether Socrates' method of educating the young to question independently is corrupting.
- In *The Fountainhead*, Roark is presented as a radically independent creator while Keating is a dependent second-hander.
- Galileo's *Letter* argues that science should be able to proceed independently and without fear of persecution from religious authorities.
- Descartes's *Meditations* focus on cognitive independence: What do I really know for myself?
- Lewis's *Mere Christianity*, by contrast, argues that prideful independence is a sin and that we should feel humble and dependent upon God.

**General instructions:** Choose one or more of our course readings, and discuss the theme of independence. Use about half of the allotted word-length to discuss independence as presented in the reading(s) you have chosen, and the other half to discuss your thoughts on independence

**Length:** 1,500 words

**Due:** Monday, April 14, 9:30 a.m.

**Note:** Center for Ethics and Entrepreneurship prizes for the best essays in Philosophy 103: \$300 for First Place. \$100 each for two Honorable Mentions.

