

Based on the conversation at our department meeting, I've revised Option E and also thrown in a new option based on a quote sent to me by Randy. I've also deleted the "use of the text" criteria on a draft of this scoring guide:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yYonVaK2isgDLHtg4m8ZL8Qdg3UlcJpkAp4D16IMcSw/edit?usp=sharing>

SAMOHI BASELINE ESSAY 2022

"Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do."
– Potter Stewart, U.S. Supreme Court Justice

Directions: You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say.

Your essay should be as well organized and as carefully written as you can make it.

"You must always remember that the products of your mind can be used by other people either for good or for evil, and that you have a responsibility that they be used for good."

— Dean Llewellyn M. K. Boelter

Dean Llewellyn M.K. Boelter describes the duality of the human mind as the capability to produce both good and bad, however, he makes it a point to emphasize that we carry the weight of ensuring that these products be used for good. To a certain extent I agree with Boelter's perspective stemming from the fact that I too believe in the existence of this duality and the importance of acting with good intentions. However, the disagreement lies in the fact that we can not always be responsible for the way our products are used. For this reason, people should choose to act with good intentions and not be penalized for the intentions of others.

To be responsible over the use of our products would mean to be in control of the actions of others and despite even the noblest intentions one can not be expected to bear such power. To control one's use of the product would mean violating one's free will which would stand against the very same point Boelter makes as stripping someone from the power of choice is by no means a good act. In order to uphold Boelter's standards one must play the role of a god. In the Greek Myth of Prometheus, a titan by the name of Prometheus stole away fire from the gods in order to give it to the freezing humans. Prometheus was then punished by this act by the gods from whom he stole. Had the gods exercised complete control and taken away Prometheus's ability to steal this fire then the human race would not have been able to flourish and thrive. Prometheus exercised his freedom to make choices, a choice in the name of good and although these are the kinds of choices Boelter defends it's important to note that

even gods couldn't stop free will. How is it then fair to task lesser beings with the responsibility of doing what not even a god could do? The responsibility for other peoples actions does not lay with us.

The definition of good varies from person to person. Different cultures and experiences produce different values which impact the way individuals seperate bad from good. While the machines designed to keep those in a coma alive may be seen as good to some, others could argue that these machines prolong the suffering of the patient and that it would be more merciful to simply pull the plug. This varying definition of good is exactly were the trouble in Boelters words lays. There is no difinitve good making it impossible to ensure that others uphold the very same standard of good as you and act in accordance to this perspective. For this reason it is impossible to fully comply with Boelters words as one can not be responsible for what someone else deems to be a good use of your product even if you believe it to be the contrary.

Boelters words where made with good intentions, a value he seeks to promote, however, one can only do so much with these intentions. One can not control the actions of others and therefore should not be punished for the choice of another.

Write a multiparagraph essay in which you do the following:

- Explain Boelter's argument above in your own words.
- Discuss the degree to which you agree or disagree.
- Support your position by providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, and reading.

Rubric for Grading

Scoring Criteria	6: Exemplary	5: Exceeds Proficiency	4: Proficient	3: Developing Proficiency	2: Standards Not Met	1: Standards Not Met
Response to the Task (meaning you understand what is being asked of you and follow the directions)	Addresses all aspects of the task clearly and effectively	Addresses the task clearly, but may respond to some aspects of the task more effectively than others.	Addresses the task, but may slight some aspects of the task	Neglects aspects of the task.	Indicates confusion about the task or responds in a tangential way	Demonstrates lack of comprehension of the task and/or doesn't respond to the task

Claim Statement (meaning you have a thesis statement or claim statement)	Effectively states a position on the topic, offering sophisticated insight to the discussion	States a clear position on the topic, offering insight to the discussion	Adequately states a position on the topic	Inadequately states a position on the topic.	Little success in stating a position on the topic, repeating much of what has already been said in the passage.	Does not state a position on the topic
Organization (meaning transitions, flow, sequencing of thought, etc)	Demonstrates a thorough and critical understanding of the subtlety and nuance of the text in developing an insightful response	Demonstrates a complete and critical understanding of the text in developing a well-reasoned response	Demonstrates a generally accurate understanding of the main ideas of the text in developing an adequate response	Demonstrates some understanding of the main ideas of the text, but may misread OR misconstrue parts of it OR make limited use OR neglect parts of it in developing response	Demonstrates little understanding of the main ideas of the text, or does not use the text appropriately in developing a response.	Demonstrates a lack of understanding of the text and/or does not refer to the text at all in developing a response
Development of the Argument & Support of the Claim (meaning you understand how to support your claim and do it effectively)	The essay is effectively organized, including all points listed for score 5. Additionally, the organization intentionally builds to a conclusion	The essay is well organized, including clear topic sentences, coherent paragraphing, and effective transitions	The essay is adequately organized, including topic sentences, coherent paragraphing and transitions	The essay is inadequately organized, lacking one of the key elements listed for score 4	The essay shows little success in organization \, lacking two of the key elements listed for score 4	The essay is disorganized, undeveloped and/or too short to assess
Grammar, Style, & Mechanics (meaning you do not submit without spell checking and proof reading)	Effectively develops and supports position using a variety of relevant and specific evidence with insightful analysis	Develops and supports position using at least two pieces of specific evidence with effective analysis	Adequately develops and supports position using at least two pieces of relevant evidence and adequate analysis	Inadequately develops and supports position using only one piece of specific evidence OR only hypothetical evidence and weak analysis	Little success in developing and supporting position, providing generalizations without specific evidence and little or no analysis.	Serious flaws in developing and supporting position, providing little or no evidence
Response to the Task (meaning you understand what is being asked of you and follow the directions)	Is generally free from errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics (but not flawless); uses sophisticated diction and syntax	May have a few minor errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, but uses less sophisticated diction and syntax	May have some errors that do not interfere with meaning, but demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and mechanics	Has an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.	Is marred by numerous errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that may interfere with meaning	Has serious and persistent errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that frequently interfere with meaning