

Writing Assignment - Encomium of Eros

Aristodemus doesn't remember all the speeches at the party, but more speeches were given than he relates. If you had been at the party what encomium of eros would you have given for your turn? You may refute or agree with other speakers or invent your own arguments. How do you define eros? What are its good points and why should it be praised? Like the other speakers at the symposium, you should make specific reference to other speeches that support or contradict your own account.

Your speech may be in any kind of style, just as the styles of the speeches in the text are varied, but give some reasoning for your style (as the speakers do – think of Eryximachus and Aristophanes in particular). Of course, some styles are more difficult to write in than others, and content is more important than form, at least to an academic audience. Likewise, you should, for your academic audience, footnote the references you make to the other speeches. Try to restrain the length of your discourse to the length of the other speeches in the symposium (around 5 pages, not counting the footnotes). After all, everyone must have a turn at praising Eros!

This paper is due before class on **Friday, September 26**. While the symposiasts' speeches are all (supposedly!) spur of the moment, off the cuff deliveries, Plato clearly worked carefully in crafting these speeches. Your speech too will undergo revision, and a revised version will be due before class on **Friday, October 31**.

Basic Guidelines and Recommendations:

1. The essays are due before the start of class; they will be considered late if handed in after class starts. If you need an extension, you must contact me more than 24 hours before it is due. As a general rule, the further in advance you contact me, the longer the extension I might be willing to give.
2. The papers should be type-written, double-spaced, with reasonable fonts and margins (e.g., my default font and margin settings are Garamond 12 point with 1 inch margins). Please number the pages and ensure that your name is on at least the first page, if not in a header on every page. Also on the first page should be my name, the course title, and the date. I am happy to accept papers electronically as .doc or .docx files, but please make sure that I have received the paper, since emails do sometimes go astray. I will send a confirmation of receipt as soon as I can after opening your file. Until I have sent a confirming email, you should not consider the paper turned in.
3. Make sure you read the question carefully. Your ideas should be clearly stated and well supported with citations from the texts. Be sure to cite the sources for your information carefully and accurately so that a reader could quickly and easily check your reference. For ancient primary texts, you should cite the book and chapter numbers or the poem or fragment numbers for your quotations, rather than the page numbers from the modern editions. You should, however, give the modern edition from which you drew your translation in your bibliography. For modern secondary sources, you should provide page references for the source in the notes and then give full bibliographic information in the bibliography. You may use any of the standard bibliographic formats as long as you are consistent, but Chicago style is preferred.
4. Please ensure that your paper is free from errors of spelling and grammar. I find such errors terribly distracting. The spell-checker in most word processors is useful, but you should proofread the paper yourself as well. You might try exchanging papers with a classmate and proofreading each other's papers. Another person can often catch the errors you have missed.
5. Not only are late papers anti-social, but they will be penalized unless you have obtained an extension from me before the day on which the paper is due. For each 24 hour period the paper is late (including weekend days!), the grade will be lowered by one step (e.g., from 3.7 to 3.3).