

Essay Grading Scale

A	B	C	D	F
100 – 94 = A	89 – 87 = B+	79 – 77 = C+	69 – 67 = D+	59 or < = F
93 – 90 = A-	86 – 83 = B	76 – 73 = C	66 – 63 = D	
	82 – 80 = B-	72 – 70 = C-	62 – 60 = D-	

ESSAY RUBRIC

(A) Papers: Fulfills all assignment requirements and does so in a fresh and mature manner, representing a superior, well-polished level of writing and using purposeful language that lead to knowledge making.

- Meets the needs of the rhetorical situation in terms of establishing the writer’s stance, attention to audience, purpose for writing, and sensitivity for context.
- Presents an interesting and appropriate title that introduces the essay.
- Clearly defines and supports the topic, presenting a considerably clear thesis that is thoughtful, insightful and is skillfully supported with specific and appropriate evidence, examples and details. The writer demonstrates good judgment and an awareness of the topic’s complexities.
- Any outside sources of information are used carefully and cited appropriately.
- Paragraphs are extremely well-developed, organized effectively with a strong focus, and represent clear, connected units of thought. The introduction establishes a context, purpose, and audience for writing and contains a focused thesis. The following paragraphs are controlled by topic sentences and are well-developed, using well-chosen transitions that highlight the logical progression of the information. The conclusion moves beyond a mere restatement of the introduction, offering implications for or the significance of the topic.
- Sentences are free of surface errors (grammatical and typographical), careless mistakes and exhibit noticeable variety. Sentences are consistently gracefully written, using sophisticated vocabulary and varied sentence structures and punctuation patterns.
- Essay is rich in detail, demonstrating stylistic fluency and a wealth of critical thinking.

(B) Papers: Represent a commendable level of writing that satisfies all assignment requirements.

- Establishes the writer’s stance and demonstrates a clear sense of audience, purpose and context.
- Presents an appropriate title that introduces the essay.
- Fairly defines and supports the topic, presenting an adequate thesis that is thoughtful and well-supported by thorough and more than adequate evidence, examples and details. The writer demonstrates a thoughtful awareness of complexity and other points of view.
- Any outside sources of information are cited appropriately.
- Paragraphs are well developed, organized effectively, clearly focused, and represent clear, connected units of thought. Essay has an effective introduction and conclusion. Paragraph divisions are logical which is evidenced by the use of transitions and topic sentences.
- Sentences are clear and readable, free of major surface errors (grammatical and typographical), careless mistakes, exhibit sufficient variety.
- Essay contains noticeable detail, sufficient rhetorical control, and substantial evidence of critical thinking.

(C) Papers: Represent an adequate level of writing that satisfies basic assignment requirements only.

- Demonstrates some sense of audience and purpose.
- Presents an adequate title that introduces the essay.
- The topic is defined only generally. Thesis is present but is also general and is possibly inadequate and/or ill-conceived. Support is often obvious and easily accessible, demonstrating little awareness of the topic's complexity or other points of view.
- There is an attempt to cite outside sources of information.
- Paragraphs are adequately organized, but contain only modest levels of focus and support necessary to effectively illustrate assertions or represent clear, connected units of thought. Paragraphs occasionally lack topic sentences and the use of transitions may be mechanical but foster coherence.
- Sentences demonstrate lapses in proofreading/editing with enough careless mistakes to significantly catch a reader's attention in a negative manner and affect readability. Sentence structure is relatively simple, exhibiting little or no variety.
- Essay contains a minimally acceptable level of detail, rhetorical control, and critical thinking.

(D) Papers: Represent an inadequate level of writing that ineffectively and/or inappropriately satisfy basic assignment requirements.

- Demonstrates little awareness of the rhetorical situation in terms of the writer's stance, audience, purpose and context.
- Presents an inadequate or no title to introduce the essay.
- Thesis is poorly conceived, ineffective or absent. Obvious evidence may be missing, and irrelevant evidence may be present. Or writer relies too heavily on evidence from published sources without adding original analysis.
- Paragraphs are inadequately organized, and lack sufficient coherence, support and focus. Introductions or conclusions are not clearly marked or functional; topic sentences are consistently missing, unclear, or inappropriate; transitions are missing or flawed.
- Sentences demonstrate significant lapses in proofreading/editing, insufficient variety and several careless surface errors that significantly diminish readability.
- Essay contains insufficient levels of detail, rhetorical control, and little or no evidence of critical thinking.

(F) Papers: Represent an unacceptable level of writing that fails to satisfy core assignment requirements.

- Is inappropriate in terms of purpose of the assignment and the rhetorical situation.
- Presents no title to introduce the essay.
- Thesis is absent, erroneous, or completely unacceptable. Essay falls seriously short of the minimum length requirements and therefore, is insufficiently developed and supported.
- Paragraphs are not organized, and lack any coherence, support, and focus.
- Sentences demonstrate severe lapses in proofreading/editing, lack variety or appropriateness, and contain an abundance of surface errors (grammatical or typographical) that significantly diminishes readability.
- It may be plagiarized: Either it is someone else's essay, or this essay has used sources improperly and/or without documentation.
- Essay contains little or no detail, and exhibits a complete absence of rhetorical control and critical thinking.