

Grading Criteria

	Conceptual	Thesis	Organization	Development and Support	Voice	Language	Conventions
A	Displays command of interpretive and conceptual tasks required by assignment and course materials; ideas original, often insightful, going beyond ideas discussed in lecture and class	Clear and focused throughout; sophisticated in both statement and insight	Satisfying, well-crafted transitions; arrangement of paragraphs seem particularly apt	Well-chosen examples; persuasive reasoning used to consistently develop and support thesis	As individual as fingerprints; passionate and compelling; uses tone as a tool to enhance meaning	Uses everyday language in original ways; sentences provide variety and emphasis	Only the pickiest of editors will spot errors; observes the conventions of written English and manuscript format
B	Shows a good understanding of texts, ideas, and methods of the assignment beyond the obvious	Clear and focused; strong main idea and thesis expanded, well supported by detail, evidence	Strong, thoughtful transitions; distinct units of thought in paragraph units	Pursues thesis consistently; develops a main argument with major points and supporting detail	Enthusiastic and engaging; tone suited to the topic, audience, and purpose	Functional, clear language; some mechanical phrasing; occasional problematic word choice	Minor errors and stylistic problems; a few spelling or punctuation errors
C	Shows an understanding of the basic ideas and information involved in the assignment	Clear and focused more often than not; identifiable main topic, thesis; quality detail outweighs generalities	Order functional; transitions unclear or formulaic	Partially develops the argument; some undeveloped or unsupported ideas; makes limited use of textual evidence	Shows some sparks; tone acceptable for topic, audience, and purpose	Some awkward or unclear moments; imprecise use of words; an over-reliance on passive voice; some variety in length and structure	One or two major grammatical (subject-verb agreement, comma splice, etc.), spelling, and punctuation errors
D	Shows inadequate command of course materials; does not respond directly to the demands of the assignment; confuses some significant facts	Clear moments overshadowed by underdeveloped text; vague thesis can be inferred; generalities outweigh detail	Some out-of-place information; digresses from one topic to another;	Transitions often unclear or missing; wanders from one topic to another; illogical arrangement of ideas	Functional; occasionally questionable tone for topic, purpose, and audience	Vague or flat language outweighs clarity;	Noticeable, distracting errors on basics: periods, spelling, capitalization;
F	Writer has not understood lectures, readings, discussions, or assignments	No discernible thesis	No recognizable structure	Little or no development; may list facts or misinformation	Either too formal or too informal; little concern for audience; little involvement in topic	Flat, dry, dull language; words used incorrectly; uncovering meaning requires great effort	Serious, frequent errors make reading all but impossible; errors obscure meaning