

# SAMPLE GRADING RUBRICS

## Sample Rubric for Written Assignments:

### **A = Excellent. Your essay will:**

- Have a strong thesis (main point) that is clearly supported by an organized essay/letter/speech where appropriate.
- Provide excellent examples to support your thesis.
- Show thorough comprehension of the ideas presented in class and in the reading.
- Demonstrate innovative ideas and approaches.
- Have strong analyses of material and arguments found in lecture, reading, and research.
- Contextualize ideas and arguments to the overall historical period.
- Have proper citations as per syllabus.
- Be written clearly, with few errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation or usage.

### **B = Good. Your essay will:**

- Have a valid thesis that is supported by a mostly well-organized essay/letter/speech where appropriate.
- Provide appropriate examples to support your thesis.
- Demonstrate comprehension of the ideas presented in class and in the reading.
- Analyze material and arguments found in lecture, reading, and research.
- Connect ideas and arguments to the overall historical period.
- Have proper citations with few mistakes as per syllabus.
- Be written clearly, with minor errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation or usage.

### **C = Satisfactory/Average. Your essay will:**

- Have a thesis, perhaps flawed, or one that is incompletely supported by the essay/letter/speech where appropriate.
- Organized.
- Provide examples to support your thesis.
- Demonstrate basic comprehension of the ideas presented in class and in the reading.
- Reveal some incompleteness in the research.
- Incompletely analyze material and arguments found in lecture, reading, and research.
- Incompletely connect ideas and arguments to the overall historical period.
- Improper use of citations, or incorrect format as per syllabus.
- Be written clearly, with some errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation or usage.

### **D = Below Average/Barely passing. Your essay will have one or more major problems:**

- A weak thesis; or one that is incompletely supported by the essay/letter/speech where appropriate.
- Incomplete or weak organization.
- Weak examples or neglect to include textual examples.
- Show minimal comprehension of the ideas presented in class and in the reading.
- Show incomplete research.
- Partially analyze material and arguments found in lecture, reading, and research.
- Missing, or use incorrect citation format as per syllabus.
- Show lack of coherence, or many errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation or usage.

### **F = Failing. Your essay will receive an “F” if it meets ANY of the criteria below:**

- Does not meet the minimum requirements for a D.
- Does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.
- Contains unacceptable number of compositional errors.
- Written in stream of consciousness or incoherent argumentation (babbling).

**Sample Rubric for Exams:**

**If you use quotations you must cite your evidence using Turabian format. Check the Course Weblinks for information about this citation style.**

<b>SHORT ANSWER</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>
Historical content (What or Who Evidence) – 4 points	Includes no specific facts (names, dates) (0-2 points)	Includes a few facts from the text or tutorials but often without context. Little use of source book readings. Most evidence is opinion. (2 points)	Includes some facts (3-4) but not most key events or names. Does not fully utilize source book materials. Includes interpretation and opinion rather than facts. (3 points)	Includes most key facts from readings, texts and lectures especially those needed to analyze the topic. Relates these to historical context. (3.5 points)	Facts from text, sourcebook and tutorials are integrated into a response that recognizes historical context. Proper perspective of time and place. (4 points)
Historical thinking (Why and How) – 4 points	No demonstration of chronological thinking, comprehension of interpretation or historical perspective, multiple causation, historical thinking – cause and effect, comparison, or proper context for the discussion. (0-2 points)	May indicate one or two examples of historical thinking such as a cause or an impact or mention a historical debate. (2 points)	Provides proper chronological perspective. Includes at least one or two aspects of historical analysis such cause and effect, comparison, competing narratives and multiple perspectives. (3 points)	Relates events in the proper historical context and includes some depth of understanding such as differing interpretations, multiple causation, and presentation of informed hypotheses related to evidence. (3.5 points)	Relates evidence directly to informed hypotheses and addresses multiple perspectives, comparisons across eras or regions, historical agency including individuals, social groups or ideas. Identifies enduring issues. (4 points)
Mechanics - 2 points	Does not meet minimum requirements for grammar and style at the university level. (0 points)	Major problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Frequent major errors in punctuation and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices; abundant use of the passive voice. (0 points)	Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction (usually not major). Errors in punctuation and spelling. May have several run-on sentences or fragments; more than a couple of sentences are in the passive voice. (1 points)	Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation often used correctly. Some (minor) spelling errors; may have a couple of run-on sentences, sentence fragments, or other awkward constructions; a couple of sentences in the passive voice. (1.5 points)	Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of punctuation; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or awkward constructions; limited or no use of the passive voice. (2 points)

<b>ESSAYS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A -</b>
<b>Thesis – 5 Points</b>	Has no identifiable thesis or the thesis is incompetent. (0-2 points)	Difficult to identify at all, may be bland restatement of obvious point. (3 points)	May be unclear (contain many vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer relatively little that is new; provides little around which to	Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking in insight or originality. (4 points)	Easily identifiable, original, sophisticated, insightful, and clear. Provides a clear structure for the paper. (5 points)

			structure the paper. (3.5 points)		
<b>Structure – 3 points</b>	Lacks proper paragraph structure. Argument is impossible to follow. (0-1 points)	Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Transitions confusing and unclear. Few topic sentences. (1.5 points)	Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. Few or weak transitions, many paragraphs without topic sentences. (2 points)	Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences. (2.5 points)	Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences. (3 points)
<b>Use of Evidence – 5 Points</b>	No analysis of source book readings. Secondary evidence not integrated. General failure to support statements. (0-2 points)	Very few or very weak examples. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no statement. Quotes not integrated into sentences; "plopped in" in improper manner. (3 points)	Examples from primary sources used to support some points. Points often lack supporting evidence, or evidence used where inappropriate (often because there may be no clear point). Quotes may be poorly integrated into sentences. Weak integration of secondary sources (3.5 points)	Examples from primary sources used to support most points. Some evidence does not support point, or may appear where inappropriate. Quotations well integrated into sentences. Above average integration of secondary sources. (4 points)	Primary source information used to buttress every point with at least one example. Examples support thesis and fit within paragraph. Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences. Excellent integration of secondary sources. (5 points)
<b>Analysis – 10 points</b>	No evidence provided to support a thesis or thesis is not identifiable. (0-5 points)	Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to argument; may be no identifiable argument, or no evidence to relate it to. Little or no use of secondary sources. (6 points)	Quotes appear often without analysis relating them to thesis (or there is a weak thesis to support), or analysis offers nothing beyond the quote. (7 points)	Evidence usually related to thesis, though links perhaps not very clear. (8 points)	Author clearly and consistently relates primary and secondary evidence to thesis; analysis is fresh and exciting, posing new ways to think of the material. (9-10) points)
<b>Logic and Argumentation – 5 points</b>	Impossible to understand. (0-2 points)	Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. Simplistic view of topic; no effort to grasp possible alternative views. Many logical contradictions, or simply too incoherent to determine. (3 points)	Logic may often fail, or argument may often be unclear. May not address counter-arguments. May contain logical contradictions. (3.5 points)	Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. Some evidence that counter-arguments acknowledged, though perhaps not addressed. (4 points)	All ideas in the paper flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound historically. Counterarguments in the historiography are acknowledged and where possible refuted. (5 points)
<b>Mechanics – 2 points</b>	Does not meet minimum requirements	Major problems in sentence structure, grammar, and	Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and	Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong	Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of

	for grammar and style at the university level. (0-5 points)	diction. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices; abundant use of the passive voice. (6 points)	diction (usually not major). Errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have several run-on sentences or fragments; more than a couple of sentences are in the passive voice. (7 points)	despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some (minor) spelling errors; may have a couple of run-on sentences, sentence fragments, or other awkward constructions; a couple of sentences in the passive voice. (8 points)	punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or awkward constructions; limited or no use of the passive voice. (9-10 points)
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Adapted from a rubric by Dr. J. Rodriguez, San Francisco State University at <http://bss.sfsu.edu/jrodriguez/courses/300/rubric.htm> accessed 5 April 2012.

