**ESSAY GRADING RUBRIC**

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| **Criteria** | **Achievement Level** |
|  | **Level 1** | **Level 2** | **Level 3** | **Level 4** | **Level 5** |
| **Introduction(20 points)** | 0 - 11  Presents little to no coherent information on the topic to engage the reader in the paper. Components of the thesis and/or summary of main points may be missing. The point of view may be unclear or too general. Provides no road map for the paper or provides one that does not accurately reflect the paper’s content. | 12 - 13  Fails to provide enough background to truly engage the reader in the topic. Presents the essay’s thesis and a summary of main points so that the writer’s point of view or interpretation is fairly clear, but several components may be missing. Provides a road map for the paper that may require a lot of work. | 14 - 15  Somewhat engages the reader with background information on the paper topic. Presents the essay’s thesis and a summary of main points so that the writer’s point of view or interpretation is somewhat clear, but a few components may be missing. Provides a road map for the paper that may need some work. | 16 - 17  Mostly engages the reader with some form of creative “hook” and basic background information on the paper topic. Presents the essay’s thesis and a summary of the main points, mostly clarifying the writer’s point of view or interpretation, but a component may be lacking or need work. Provides a fairly clear road map for the paper either in the thesis statement or body of the introduction. | 18 - 20  Engages the reader in the topic with some form of creative “hook” (such as a story, quote, example, etc.) and provides a clear background for the topic so that readers can gain an understanding of the purpose of the paper. Clearly presents the essay’s thesis and a summary of the main points that clarify the writer’s point of view. Provides a clear road map for the paper either in the thesis statement or body of introduction. |
| **Quality of Discussion**  **(45 points)** | 0 - 26  Unclear, often because thesis is weak or nonexistent. Few to no topic sentences. Little or no evidence of critical thinking. Transitions are weak and often confusing. | 27 - 31  Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. Little critical thinking is evident. Some transitions may be missing or weak. Several paragraphs may lack strong topic sentences. | 32 - 35  Fairly clear and appropriate, although may wander occasionally. Shows an effort to think critically. Some transitions may be weak. A few paragraphs may lack strong topic sentences. | 36 - 40  Mostly clear and appropriate, although may wander occasionally. Provides evidence of critical thinking. Transitions are adequate. One or two paragraphs may lack strong topic sentences. | 41 - 45  Clear and appropriate. Provides strong evidence of critical thinking. Makes use of excellent transitions. Paragraphs contain strong topic sentences. |
| **Organization**  **(15 points)** | 0 - 8  The organization is hard to follow; ideas are not linked together and/or may be fragmented. Lacking any logical grouping of ideas or transitions from one idea to the next. | 9 - 10  The organization is mostly unclear and could be arranged in a more logical way. Some ideas are linked together, but some ideas are fragmented. There is little to no grouping of ideas or use of transitions. | 11 - 11  The organization is fairly clear, but it could be arranged more logically to better support the proposed solution. Ideas are somewhat grouped together with a few transitions between groups. | 12 - 13  The organization results in clarity and presents mostly logically arranged points to support the proposed solution. Ideas are grouped fairly well, and there are transitions throughout the document. | 14 - 15  The organization results in clarity and presents logically arranged points to support the proposed solution. Related ideas are well grouped, and transitions between ideas flow smoothly. |
| **Writing Mechanics**  **(10 points)** | 0 - 5  Writing lacks clarity and conciseness. Serious problems with sentence structure and grammar. Numerous major or minor errors in punctuation and/or spelling. General requirements are not met at all. | 6 - 6  Writing lacks clarity or conciseness. Minor problems with sentence structure and some grammatical errors. Several minor errors in punctuation and/or spelling. General requirements of the assignment are slightly met. | 7 - 7  Writing is somewhat clear and concise. Sentence structure and grammar are strong and mostly correct. Few minor errors in punctuation and/or spelling. General requirements of the assignment are somewhat met. | 8 - 8  Writing is mostly clear and concise. Sentence structure and grammar are strong and mostly correct. Few minor errors in punctuation and/or spelling. General requirements of the assignment are mostly met. | 9 - 10  Writing is clear and concise. Sentence structure and grammar are excellent. Correct use of punctuation. No spelling errors. General requirements of the assignment are met. |
| **Citations and Formatting**  **(10 points)** | 0 - 5  APA guidelines are barely followed if at all. The majority of sources used are not academically reliable. Reference entries and in-text citations follow APA formatting guidelines, but many errors are present. Several in-text citations do not have references and vice versa. | 6 - 6  APA guidelines are loosely followed. Some peer-reviewed papers are used along with non-academically reliable sources. Reference entries may somewhat follow APA formatting guidelines; several major errors in in-text citations or references may be present. Some in-text citations do not have references and vice-versa. | 7 - 7  APA guidelines are somewhat followed. Most sources used are peer-reviewed papers, though two or more sources are not academically reliable. Reference entries and in-text citations show effort to follow APA formatting guidelines; several errors in in-text citations or references may be present. Most in-text citations are referenced and vice versa. | 8 - 8  APA guidelines are mostly followed correctly. The number of sources meets any expressed assignment requirements, and all but one source is a peer-reviewed paper. Reference entries and in-text citations follow APA formatting guidelines fairly well and are usually correct. All in-text citations are referenced and vice versa. | 9 - 10  APA guidelines are correctly followed. The number of sources meets or exceeds any expressed assignment requirements. Every source used is peer-reviewed or academic in nature. Reference entries and in-text citations follow APA formatting guidelines and are free of errors. All in-text citations are referenced and vice versa. |