

Esssay Rubric

(Adapted from the Rubric Used by the UCI Humanities Core Course)

Grade	Conceptual	Thesis	Development and Support	Structuring	Language
A	has cogent analysis, shows command of interpretive and conceptual tasks required by assignment and course materials: ideas original, often insightful, going beyond ideas discussed in class (or found in online resources), clear evidence of having carefully read, re-read, and understood the material	essay controlled by clear, precise, well-defined thesis: is sophisticated in both statement and insight	well-chosen examples; persuasive reasoning used to develop and support thesis consistently: uses quotations and citations effectively; causal connections between ideas are evident	appropriate, clear and smooth transitions; arrangement of paragraphs seems particularly apt	uses sophisticated sentences effectively; usually chooses words aptly; observes conventions of written English and manuscript format; makes few minor or technical errors
B	shows a good understanding of the texts, ideas and methods of the assignment; goes beyond the obvious; may have one minor factual or conceptual inconsistency, but clear evidence of having carefully read and understood the material	clear, specific, argumentative thesis central to the essay; may have left minor terms undefined	pursues thesis consistently: develops a main argument with clear major points and appropriate textual evidence and supporting detail; makes an effort to organize paragraphs topically	distinct units of thought in paragraphs controlled by specific and detailed topic sentences; clear transitions between developed, cohering, and logically arranged paragraphs that are internally cohesive	some mechanical difficulties or stylistic problems; may make occasional problematic word choices or awkward syntax errors; a few spelling or punctuation errors or cliché; usually presents quotations effectively
C	shows an understanding of the basic ideas and information involved in the assignment; may have some factual, interpretive, or conceptual errors, clear evidence of having carefully read the material	general thesis or controlling idea; may not define several central terms	only partially develops the argument; shallow analysis; some ideas and generalizations undeveloped or unsupported; makes limited use of textual evidence; fails to integrate quotations appropriately	some awkward transitions; some brief, weakly unified or undeveloped paragraphs; arrangement may not appear entirely natural; contains extraneous information	more frequent wordiness; several unclear or awkward sentences; imprecise use of words or over-reliance on passive voice; one or two major grammatical errors (subject-verb agreement, comma splice, etc.); effort to present quotations accurately
D	shows inadequate command of course materials or has significant factual and conceptual errors; does not respond directly to the demands of the assignment; confuses some significant ideas, grasp of material seems superficial	thesis vague or not central to argument; central terms not defined	frequently only narrates; digresses from one topic to another without developing ideas or terms; makes insufficient or awkward use of textual evidence	simplistic, tends to narrate or merely summarize; wanders from one topic to another; illogical arrangement of ideas	some major grammatical or proofreading errors (subject-verb agreement; sentence fragments); language marred by clichés, colloquialisms, repeated inexact word choices; inappropriate quotations or citations format
F	writer has not understood lectures, readings, discussion, or assignment, no evidence of having read the material	no discernible thesis	little or no development; may list facts or misinformation; uses no quotations or fails to cite sources or plagiarizes	no transitions; incoherent paragraphs; suggests poor planning or no serious revision	numerous grammatical errors and stylistic problems seriously distract from the argument