

Essay Grading Standards

- A Paper** An excellent essay that not only meets all the requirements of a particular assignment and of overall effective composition, but also shows an original and interesting flair for the subject matter. The A paper has a clear pattern appropriate to the audience. Clear and creative thought is also obvious; the wording is concise and precise; the paragraphs are well developed and specific; the sentences vary in beginnings and length; and major errors in grammar, mechanics, and punctuation are virtually nonexistent.
- B Paper** A good paper that successfully addresses the subject matter. While this paper may lack the originality of the A paper, it is still well above average and possesses a consistent and careful manner. With few exceptions, this paper also includes coherent organization, well developed sentences and paragraphs, clear transitions, unity of thought, and a tone appropriate to the audience. Grammar, mechanics, punctuation, diction, and spelling follow generally accepted conventions, except for a few minor errors.
- C Paper** A generic paper that clearly states its purpose (thesis) and makes at least some response to that purpose. The C paper often has over-generalized ideas and an abundance of repetition in its sentence patterns. The organization of this paper may be disjointed and not easy to decipher. At times, this paper may also neglect to appropriately address its audience, and its transitions may be inadequate. This paper may also include one or two major errors in grammar, mechanics, punctuation, diction, and spelling, as well as frequent minor ones.
- D Paper** A weak paper that relates to the assignment but fails to provide any real focus or insight. The organization is inconsistent and rudimentary. Paragraphs show no development or specificity. Often, sentences have no relation to the paragraph they are in. Phrasing and sentence structure are awkward and sometimes confusing. Transitions are often nonexistent. Many errors in grammar, mechanics, punctuation, diction, and spelling are present.
- F Paper** An unacceptable paper that shows no apparent purpose or plan. An F paper shows very little thought or treats its topic in a highly ineffective way. This paper may also have a definite purpose (thesis), but that purpose is far outside the requirements of the assignment. Paragraphs are unrelated, sentences are unconnected, and transitions are absent. Errors in grammar, mechanics, punctuation, diction, and spelling are excessive and make the paper's message difficult to understand.