

## FIRST COURSE SCORING GUIDE/RANGE OF SCORES

### Upper Half

- 6 **OUTSTANDING:** A "6" essay will be well organized and well developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively and to construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such an essay will be generally free of grammatical and mechanical errors. Essentially a rough draft, however, it will not be perfect. "6" essays are few in number.
- 5 **IMPRESSIVE:** A "5" essay, in general, will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the "6" essay. The chief difference is that the "5" essay will show some descriptably slight weakness in one of those categories, but not in understanding the topic. It may show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical or mechanical flaws. However, it will demonstrate overall competence.
- 4 **ADEQUATE:** A "4" essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weakness in fundamentals, usually development: it may provide a barely satisfactory explanation of the quoted selection or reveal a minor, slight misreading of the topic. The sentence construction might be less mature, and the use of language less effective than in the "5" essay. Although the "4" essay may contain writing errors, they will not be serious or frequent enough to distract or confuse the reader.

### Lower Half

- 3 **BORDERLINE:** A "3" essay will probably neglect one of the assigned tasks or be noticeably superficial or simplistic in explaining the selection. It might reveal some serious misreading of part(s) of the topic. It might quote extensively without explanation or be poorly organized or developed. This essay, too, will contain writing errors, but not serious or frequent enough to distract or confuse the reader. The sentences will not show syntactic complexity or interesting variety.
- 2 **POOR:** A "2" essay might reveal a combination of the following weaknesses: a) misreading of the assignment; b) problems in organization or focus; c) insufficient explanation of the quoted selection; d) seriously flawed development; e) problems in sentence construction; and f) writing errors serious or frequent enough to distract or confuse the reader.
- 1 **UNACCEPTABLE:** A "1" essay demonstrated striking underdevelopment of ideas, misunderstanding of the topic, and insufficient or flawed organization. Writing errors are persistent, perhaps serious; they may make some sentences incomprehensible.
- 0 This score should be used only for non-response essays, or those which argue with the exam itself, or those which completely avoid the topic. Give all such papers to your table leader.

N.B. An especially well-written essay may be scored a point higher than it would otherwise be scored on the basis of content alone. A very poorly written essay may be scored a point lower.

May, 2000