

Grading Criteria for In-Class Essays:

All essays must demonstrate understanding of the topic and fulfillment of the assignment. Grading will address mechanics and content. Remember you are graded on the quality of your ideas as well as the proficiency of your grammar.

The “A” Essay

- is well-developed and well-organized.
- contains details to support a thesis.
- intelligently responds to both passages.
- demonstrates an awareness of the implications of language usage in the prompt.
- demonstrates a high level of syntactic variety.
- is relatively free of errors.
- uses quotations effectively and correctly.

The “B” Essay

- is well-developed and well-organized, though may offer fewer details.
- intelligently understands the topic.
- addresses both passages and parts of the topic.
- demonstrates facility in using language with some syntactic variety/range of diction.
- may have a few errors.

The “C” Essay

- will be somewhat developed, perhaps with some lack of detail.
- will be organized, but may lack balance in treating part of the prompt.
- may lack syntactic variety, or write in simple sentences.
- contains easily corrected errors that do not impair meaning.

The “D” Essay

- may lack development.
- may lack details or specifics.
- may be poorly organized.
- demonstrates a misunderstanding of the topic.
- has large patterns of sentence errors (agreement, tense, diction, spelling, mechanics, etc).

The “F” Essay

- may have only superficial development
- suggests significant misunderstanding of the prompt.
- has obvious problems of organization or coherence has serious/frequent errors in sentence construction, grammar, or mechanics.

Grading Criteria for Out-of-Class Essays:

The “A” Essay

- is fluent, well-organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding of the assignment.
- uses language effectively with some sophistication demonstrated by word choices.
- has sentences that have syntactic complexity and variety.
- has a title, introduction, clear thesis, topic sentences, body paragraphs, transitions and conclusion that convey the essay’s message in an intelligent and organized manner.
- has content that conveys ideas that have a degree of excellence.
- meets the requirements of length (word count), topic, and follows the MLA standards of presentation.
- is submitted on time with appropriate pre-writing materials.
- is neat and pleasing to the eye.
- is free of grammatical, mechanical and usage errors.
- fluently and accurately analyzes and evaluates supporting materials obtained from the library demonstrating the ability to synthesize ideas with a degree of excellence and intelligently approaches the topic as indicated by research that adds, refines, or supports the thesis. It does not overuse sources.
- has sources that indicate a conceptual knowledge of what is a good source for an academic paper.
- uses sophisticated examples.
- with a degree of fluency and sophistication, synthesizes ideas (combines to a new whole) with proper documentation of all sources.
- illustrates proficiency in using quotations effectively.
- has a works cited page with accurate documentation and follows the MLA style.
- has accurate parenthetical documentation and follows MLA style.

The “B” Essay

- is well organized and well developed, demonstrating a clear understanding of the assignment.
- uses language less effectively with less sophistication demonstrated by word choices.
- has sentences have limited syntactic complexity and variety.
- has a title, thesis statement, introduction, topic sentences, body paragraphs, transitions, and a conclusion that convey the essay’s message in an organized manner.
- has content will convey ideas that adequately meet the assignment but may be weak in one of the assigned tasks.
- meets the requirements of length (word count), topic, and follows the MLA standards of presentation.
- is submitted on time with appropriate pre-writing materials.

- is neat and pleasing to the eye.
- contains a rare grammatical, mechanical and usage errors.
- accurately analyzes and evaluates supporting materials obtained from the library demonstrating the ability to synthesize ideas intelligently as indicated by research that adds, refines, or supports the thesis. It does not overuse sources.
- has sources that indicate a conceptual knowledge of what is a good source for an academic paper.
- illustrates proficiency in using quotations effectively.
- with a degree of sophistication, synthesizes ideas (combines to a new whole) with proper documentation of all sources.
- has a works cited page with accurate documentation and follows the MLA style though may contain a few errors.
- has accurate parenthetical documentation and follows MLA style though may contain a few errors.

The “C” Essay

- is adequately organized and developed, but only meets the requirements of the assignment.
- uses language less effectively demonstrated by only adequate word choices.
- has sentences that have very limited syntactic complexity and variety and are indicative of less mature writing.
- has a title, thesis statement, introduction, topic sentences, body paragraphs, transitions, and a conclusion that convey the essay’s message in an organized manner.
- has content that conveys ideas that only meet the requirements of the assignment .
- meets the requirements of length (word count) & topic, and it follows the MLA standard of presentation.
- is submitted on time with appropriate pre-writing materials.
- is neat and pleasing to the eye.
- contains a few grammatical, mechanical and usage errors.
- accurately analyzes and evaluates supporting materials obtained from the library demonstrating an average ability to synthesize ideas intelligently as indicated by research that adds, refines, or supports the thesis. It may slightly overuse sources.
- has sources that indicate a conceptual knowledge of what is a good source for an academic paper.
- illustrates an average ability to synthesizes ideas (combines to a new whole) with proper documentation of all sources though may have some errors.
- illustrates proficiency in using quotations effectively.
- has a works cited page with documentation and follows the MLA style though may contain some errors.
- has accurate parenthetical documentation and follows MLA style though may contain some errors.

The “D” Essay

- is not organized and/or developed, missing the requirements of the assignment by lacking organization and/or inadequately (superficially) developing the ideas.
- uses language less effectively with inadequate word choices.
- has only one two types of sentences, lacking any syntactic variety or complexity.

- may or may not have a title, thesis statement, introduction, topic sentences, body paragraphs, transitions, and a conclusion that convey the essay's message in an organized manner, slighting or ignoring one aspect of this.
- has content that conveys ideas that did not meet the assignment because they were incorrectly written on the wrong topic or inadequately developed by limited discussion or adequately developed but because of frequent grammar errors, the message was not conveyed.
- does not meet essay the requirements of length (word count), topic, and follow the MLA standard of presentation.
- is not submitted on time with appropriate pre-writing materials.
- is not neat and pleasing to the eye.
- contains a frequent grammatical, mechanical and usage errors .
- lacks accuracy in analyzing and evaluating supporting materials obtained from the library demonstrating difficulty in synthesizing ideas intelligently as indicated by inadequate research that does not add, refine, or support the thesis adequately or accurately. It may overuse sources.
- has sources that indicate a lack of conceptual knowledge of what is a good source for an academic paper.
- illustrates a below average ability to synthesize ideas (combines to a new whole) and lacks proper documentation of all or some sources.
- illustrates difficulty using quotations.
- has a works cited page with inaccurate documentation and follows the MLA style though may contain many errors.
- has inaccurate parenthetical documentation and does not follow MLA style containing many errors.
- does not meet the requirements.

The "F" Essay

- demonstrates a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization.
- uses language without a clear effect as indicated by word choices.
- has sentences that are basically all one or two types of sentences, lacking any syntactic variety or complexity.
- may or may not have a title, thesis statement, introduction, topic sentences, body paragraphs, transitions, and a conclusion that convey the essay's message in an organized manner, ignoring one or more aspects of the basic essay components.
- has content that conveys markedly underdeveloped ideas that did not meet the assignment because they were incorrectly written on the wrong topic or inadequately developed by limited discussion or adequately developed but because of frequent grammar errors, the message was not conveyed.
- does not meet essay the requirements of length (word count), topic, and follow the MLA standard of presentation.
- is not submitted on time with appropriate pre-writing materials.
- is not neat and pleasing to the eye.
- contains a serious amount of grammatical, mechanical and usage errors.
- lacks accuracy in analyzing and evaluating supporting materials obtained from the library demonstrating difficulty in synthesizing ideas intelligently as indicated by inadequate

research that does not add, refine, or support the thesis adequately or accurately. It may overuse sources, not use enough sources, or use inappropriate sources.

- uses sources that indicate a lack of conceptual knowledge of what is a good source for an academic paper.
- illustrates a below average ability to synthesize ideas (combines to a new whole) and lacks proper documentation of all or some sources.
- has quotations that are ineffective, absent, or inadequate.
- has a works cited page with inaccurate documentation and follows the MLA style though may contain many errors.
- has inaccurate parenthetical documentation and does not follow MLA style containing many errors.
- is marred by many errors on almost every level such as content, grammar, and research so that it does not meet minimal requirements.