

## Rubric to Evaluate MA Comprehensive Exam Essays (Part 2)

12-11=HP, 10-7=P, >7=F

	3: High Pass	2: Pass	1: Fail
I. Argumentation	A thoughtful, well-constructed argument that responds to the prompt and is supported by evidence gleaned from thorough consideration of the texts on the reading list. The essay contains a clear thesis and is grounded in careful analysis of the texts.	Presents a significant argument about the texts on the reading list that addresses all aspects of the prompt. One or more areas might need additional explanation or clarification.	Fails to make an argument altogether or presents an insignificant argument that does not address the prompt adequately, illuminate anything significant or offer any original insights.
II. Evidence	Uses the text as evidence well and includes insightful close reading and analysis. Integrates quotations well and includes correct citations.	Uses the text as evidence sufficiently but might occasionally provide inadequate close reading and analysis. A 3 paper might also struggle with integration of the quotes and or citation.	Fails to present any textual evidence or includes minimal textual evidence with little or no analysis. Struggles with integrating quotations or contains incorrect citations.
III. Content and Organization	In addition to meeting the requirements for a "3," excels in the organization and representation of ideas related to the topic. Raises important issues or ideas that may not have been represented in the literature cited. Would serve as a good basis for further research on the topic	Follows all requirements for the essay. Topic is carefully focused. Clearly outlines the major claims related to the topic; ideas are logically arranged to present a sound scholarly argument. The essay is interesting and holds the reader's attention. Shows credible knowledge of relevant works used from the reading list. General ideas are elaborated upon in a logical manner thereby extending the significance of the evidence from the works cited from the reading list.	The essay is logically or thematically incoherent and lacking in substance. Ideas presented are cliched and conventional with little elaboration or development of new directions. The content is poorly focused, with insufficient examples from the reading list, muddled details, vague claims, and weak organization. Lacks smooth transitions. Overall, the content and organization needs significant revision to represent a critical analysis of the topic.
IV. Mechanics	In addition to meeting the requirements for a "3," the essay is essentially error-free in terms of mechanics. Writing flows smoothly from one idea to another. Transitions effectively establish a sound scholarly argument and aid the reader in following the writer's logic.	While there may be minor errors, the essay follows normal conventions of spelling and grammar throughout. Errors do not significantly interfere with topic comprehensibility. Transitions and organizational structures, such as subheadings, are effectively used which help the reader move from one point to another.	Grammatical conventions are used inconsistently or erroneously. Frequent mistakes in spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and/or other writing conventions interfere with comprehension. There is confusion in the proper use of discipline-specific terms, resulting in weak connections between topics and in the logical formulation of the argument. There is poor elaboration of claims and/or lack of rhetorical coherence to keep the reader on track.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Apply this rubric to each essay and assign a value to each of the 4 areas. The grade will be determined based on the sum of the values.