

GRADING RUBRIC FOR PLAN B EXAMS

The grading rubric used by faculty assessing the Plan B exams is presented to the students for their further information.

	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Content	The essay contains almost no errors of historical fact. The essay demonstrates that the student has mastered the chronology and data of the period in question. The essay is of good length, i.e., an hour's worth of writing.	The essay has numerous small errors of facts, dates and chronology or it has glaring errors of fact that a student of the field simply should not make. While there is no mandatory length, the essay does not contain enough information to answer the question sufficiently or show mastery.
Focus	The essay answers the question completely and uses all of the content of the essay to address the question without getting side tracked.	The essay does not address the question or answers only part of the question. Or the essay answers the question but only briefly and then launches into another related subject or question in the field.
Literature	The essay cites the critical literature in the field having to do with this question. The essay includes all the appropriate literature from the book list central to the question.	The essay has little or no citation of literature from the book list. Or the essay cites several pieces of literature but fails to cite a book or article that is regarded as central to the question or subject, especially those related to discussions in graduate courses.
Interpretation	The essay is primarily the student's analysis of the literature and arguments or the history, without focusing too heavily on a particular historian, a particular school of thought or a particular book.	The essay is descriptive rather than analytical, i.e., merely a tour through the literature or the history without the student's evaluation, commentary, insights, priorities or reflections.
Writing	Understanding that the student's writing is pressured by time-constraints, the essay is,	The essay lacks coherence and has weak flow and poor analytical organization of the various

	nevertheless, organized (as if from an outline), has an introduction, body and conclusion and is generally free of grammatical and mechanical errors.	paragraphs, suggesting that the student has not done either mental or actual pre-writing. The essay is not reasonably (predominantly) clean in terms of grammar and mechanics.
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