

The Scoring Rubric for the Department of Political Science

This rubric is developed for you to know, ahead of time, what will be expected. Before you turn in any essay for this class, you should spend a few minutes here.

‘A’: The A-range essay implies a strong argument and provides convincing specific support from the various readings. The writer demonstrates mature command of language through a variety of sentence structures, word choices, quotes or paraphrases from the readings (consistently cited correctly). Control of usage and mechanics, despite occasional flaws, contributes to the writer’s ability to communicate the purpose of the paper. The writer thoroughly understands the concepts/theories involved and through the essay can convince others of their viewpoints or help make the reader aware of something completely new or original. These essays are occasionally kept and shared with other students. These are powerful due to organization and creativity.

‘B’: The B-range essay shows effort and promise for the writer. It presents a thesis (argument) and often suggests a plan of development that is carried out effectively. Mastery of the readings/theories may not be fully indicated with the use of quotes or paraphrases, but the writer provides enough supporting details, makes competent use of language, and sometimes varies sentence structure. Occasional errors in usage and mechanics do not interfere with the writer’s ability to communicate the purpose of the paper.

‘C’: The C-range essay presents a thesis (argument) and often suggests a plan of development, which is generally carried out. The writer may or may not have completed all of the required readings and utilizes generalizations or list for support. Command of the theories under consideration is weak or shaky. Sentence structure tends to be repetitious, and errors in usage and mechanics sometimes interfere with the writer’s ability to communicate the purpose of the paper.

‘D’: The D-range may present a thesis (argument); however, the plan of development is usually not carried out. This indicates the writer may have spent little time with the readings or thinking about the concepts involved. The writer provides support that tends to be sketchy and/or illogical. Sentence structure is simplistic, repetitious and occasionally awkward. Language is often inappropriate in tone, or style. Errors in usage and mechanics are frequent.

‘F’: The paper presents a thesis that is vaguely worded, weakly asserted or there is no central argument present. Support, if any, tends to be rambling and superficial. Sentence structure is difficult to follow and errors in usage and mechanics interfere with the writer’s ability to communicate the purpose of the paper.