

	Fails	Needs improvement	Satisfactory	Good
Mechanics (20%)	Very difficult to understand because of significant problems with sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	While there are many mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling, the meaning of the text is mostly clear.	Grammar, punctuation, and spelling are strong, despite occasional lapses.	Correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
Essay structure (10%)	The paper as a whole is disorganized, with no obvious structure	Some structure is apparent, but often wanders or jumps around. Is unaware of the reader's need for information, explanation, and context.	Structure generally clear, though may wander occasionally. Is mostly aware of the reader's need for information, explanation, and context.	The paper has a clear structure. Excellent transitions between points. Anticipates reader's need for information, explanation, and context.
Writing style (10%)	The writing style is very poor, due to being (for example) vague, convoluted, wordy, or repetitive. Important technical terms are not used, or used incorrectly. Paragraph breaks are missing or arbitrary.	The writing style is weak. There is some vagueness, or convoluted terms, or paragraphs that lack a common theme. Some technical terms are used correctly.	The writing style is generally clear, using paragraphs, but may be wordy, somewhat imprecise, or use unnecessary "fancy" words. Technical terms are used appropriately.	The writing style is clear, precise, efficient, and easy to understand, as well as lively, and engaging. Technical terms are used appropriately.
Thesis (10%)	There is no identifiable thesis, or the thesis shows a significant lack of understanding.	The thesis is difficult to identify, appears late, or seems to vary through the paper.	The thesis is somewhat clearly stated in the first paragraph.	The thesis is very clearly stated in the first paragraph.
Exposition (20%)	Citations missing or incorrect. Confusion between primary and secondary sources. Substantial misrepresentation of an author's view.	Citations mostly present and correct. Attribution of views mostly correct, with some mistakes.	All quotations are correctly referenced. Attribution of views are correct, though lacking detail, and based on the lectures only.	All quotations are correctly referenced. Attribution of views are correct, and also detailed, using the primary text.
Arguments (20%)	There are no arguments to support the thesis. It is simply the student's opinion.	Arguments are given for the thesis, but they are hard to follow, or rather unconvincing.	Clear and cogent arguments are provided to support the thesis, but they were given in class.	Clear and cogent arguments are provided to support the thesis, and they were developed by the student, or found in the course texts or additional sources.
Anticipate Objections (10%)	The paper fails to consider obvious objections to the arguments, or considers irrelevant objections.	Some objections to the paper's arguments are considered, but they are not responded to.	The most important objections to the paper's arguments are considered, but the responses are not too convincing.	The most important objections to the paper's arguments are considered and adequately responded to.