

Grading Rubric Argumentative Paper

The grading rubric below is by no means comprehensive. It is meant to provide you with some idea of what I will be looking for when reading your essays. Please see me if you have any questions about how grading works in this course.

CONTENT (ideas & development of the essay)

An essay that develops content effectively develops the complexities of the subject; it is appropriate to the paper's length (not too broad or too narrow an argument); it makes clear connections between the details and larger meaning/thesis statement; it shows insight (it appears the writer has discovered something through the act of writing); it demonstrates creative thinking rather than reliance on a formulaic style.

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ORGANIZATION (structure of the essay)

A well-organized essay gives careful consideration to structure, including (but not limited to) the introduction paragraph, thesis statement, support paragraphs, counterargument with refutation, logical paragraph breaks and transitions, conclusion paragraph, and a title that entices the reader.

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LANGUAGE (word choice & sentence fluency)

An essay using effective diction has a strong writing voice and tone that exhibits a formality appropriate to the material; effective diction demonstrates confidence, variety, and creativity; it avoids surplus words and filler; it meets the audience expectations of an academic essay. The well-written essay also uses meticulously crafted sentences; it does not overuse syntactical patterns and is aware of sentence variety (both in terms of length and sentence type: simple, compound, and complex); it uses active verbs and does not overuse the "to be" verb.

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MECHANICS (standard writing conventions)

A mechanically effective essay has very few errors and is consistent in mechanics and usage; it correctly employs the grammar and formatting conventions of academic written English (unless there is cause to deviate) and follows MLA formatting guidelines to the "T".

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RESEARCH (academic literature & citations)

A well-researched paper incorporates scholarly articles from reputable journals accessed through the library databases; the research is current, varied, and unbiased; it includes a properly formatted Works Cited page and in-text citations that follow up-to-date MLA guidelines.

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The paper is worth 10% of your final grade

