

# RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING WRITING SKILLS

**A** An **A** paper is extraordinary work that more than fulfills the requirements of the assignment. This paper tackles the topic in an innovative way, with a clear sense of the reader and purpose, an insightful thesis, and appropriate and effective organization. The structure is carefully planned; each section of the essay develops the thesis with logical arguments and specific, conclusive evidence which has been interpreted and clearly related to the writer's point. The style is energetic and precise: the sentence structure is varied and the words are carefully chosen. *How* the writer says things is as excellent as *what* the writer says. There is evidence of careful editing since the essay contains few grammatical and/or mechanical errors and is correctly documented using APA or MLA format.

**B** A **B** paper is above-average and more than adequately meets the requirements of the assignment. Like the "A" paper, it has a clear thesis and organizational strategy; and each paragraph provides unified, coherent, and developed support for its thesis and subordinate assertions. It properly documents sources. While the paper takes some "risks," attempts complex strategies of development, and pays attention to the reader, it falls short of the "A" paper in one or more of the following ways: the thesis may not be as interesting or insightful; there may be weaknesses in organizational strategy or its execution; the support may not be uniformly conclusive and convincing; and the style may not be as energetic or the diction as thoughtful. The paper shows evidence of proofreading and editing since there are relatively few grammatical and/or mechanical errors.

**C** A **C** paper is average work that meets the requirements of the assignment. The paper has a thesis and organizational plan that demonstrate thought on the writer's part, a generally clear style, and adequate documentation, if required. Paragraphs contribute unified and coherent support, but the writer may have difficulty with any of the following: the thesis may be too general; the evidence may be predictable, may not be thoroughly interpreted, or may not be clearly related to the writer's point; the paragraphs may be uneven in development and transition. There may be grammatical errors and errors in format, citations, and the like, although not enough to interfere with readability. The student appears to have done only superficial proofreading and editing.

**D** A **D** paper is below average work that demonstrates an attempt to fulfill the assignment and shows some promise but does not fully meet the requirements of the assignment. The essay may have one or several of the following weaknesses. It may have a general or implied thesis, but the idea may be too broad, vague, or obvious. The organizational plan may be inappropriate or inconsistently carried out. Evidence may be too general, missing, not interpreted, irrelevant to the thesis, or inappropriately repetitive. Documentation may be incomplete or inaccurate. The style may be compromised by repetitive or flawed sentence patterns and/or confusing syntax and grammatical errors that may interfere with readability and indicate a less-than-adequate attempt at editing or an unfamiliarity with some aspects of Standard Written English.

**F** An **F** paper is substantially below average for the assignment. It exhibits one or several of the following. It may be off-topic. It may be an attempt to meet the requirements of the assignment, but it may have no apparent thesis or a self-contradictory one, or the essay's point is so general or obvious as to suggest little thinking-through of the topic. It may display little or no apparent sense of organization; it may lack development; evidence may be inappropriate and/or off-topic or may consist of generalizations, faulty assumptions, or errors of fact. This essay may fail to handle borrowed material responsibly and/or to document appropriately. The style suggests serious difficulties with fluency which may be revealed in short, simple sentences. Grammatical errors may interfere with reader comprehension or indicate problems with basic literacy or a lack of understanding of Standard English usage.