

Freshman English Standardization

Grading Policies and Evaluation

Instructors grade written assignments on a formal basis, unless otherwise stated. When submitting a written assignment, you should assume that you need to follow the rules of the assignment as directed. These assignments expect a quality composition that employs sound content, organization, grammar, and mechanics. Typically, college writing engages both the writer and audience in critical thinking, interpretation of meaning, understanding of texts and other relevant media, and appropriate channels of communication.

The following provides a grade scale and a holistic interpretation of that scale. This is followed on a college-wide basis in each freshman composition course.

Grade Scale

89.5-100 = A

79.5-89 = B

69.5-79 = C

59.5-69 = D

0-59 = F

Grade Interpretations

An 'A' paper does an exceptional job that more than meets the requirements of the task. This writing addresses the issue in an innovative way, with an insightful thesis, a clear sense of audience and purpose, and appropriate and effective organization. The structure is carefully planned where each section develops the thesis with logical arguments and specific and conclusive evidence that has been interpreted and clearly related to the writer's point. The style is energetic and precise, the structure of the sentences is varied, and the words are carefully selected. The writer describes details in a way that can be considered as what the writer intends. There is evidence of careful editing as the essay contains few grammatical and/or mechanical errors and, if necessary, is properly documented using the MLA format.

A 'B' paper is clearly above average and far exceeds the requirements of the task. Like the 'A,' it has a clear thesis and an organizational strategy, and each paragraph provides unified, coherent, and developed support for the thesis and supporting statements. If necessary, it properly documents sources. Although the writer takes certain "risks," employs complex development strategies, and properly addresses the audience, it does not correspond to 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 implementation; support may not be uniformly conclusive and convincing; and the style may not be as energetic or the diction as thoughtful. Additionally, the essay shows strong proof of editing because there are relatively few grammatical and/or mechanical errors.

A 'C' paper is an average job that satisfies the requirements of the task in a solid way. The writing has a thesis and an organizational plan that demonstrate the writer's thinking, a generally clear style, an awareness of the audience, and, if necessary, adequate documentation. The paragraphs provide a unified and consistent support, but the writer may have difficulty with one of the following: the thesis may be too general; the evidence may be predictable, may not be fully interpreted, or may not be clearly related to the writer's point; or paragraphs can be irregular in development and transition. Even in the 'C' paper, there should be relatively few grammatical or mechanical errors that are not enough to interfere with readability; the student has made some changes through the editing process although they may be superficial.

A 'D' paper is below average work that demonstrates a serious attempt to accomplish the task and shows some promise but does not fully meet the requirements of the task. The writing may have one or more of the following weaknesses: it may

have a general or implicit thesis, but the idea may be too broad, vague, or obvious; awareness of the audience may not be evident; the organizational plan may be inadequate or inconsistently executed; evidence may be too general, absent, confusing, irrelevant to the thesis, or improperly repetitive; documentation, if necessary, may be incomplete or inaccurate; or style may be compromised by repetitive or faulty sentence patterns or inappropriate diction and confusing syntax. Grammatical and mechanical errors can interfere with readability and indicate a less appropriate attempt at editing or unfamiliarity with some aspects of Standard Written English.

An 'F' paper is much lower than average for the task. It shows one or more of the following: It may be off topic. It may be an attempt to meet the needs of the task, but there may not be any apparent thesis, or the point of the essay is too general or unclear as to how it reflects on the topic. It has little or no organizational expression; development may not exist; evidence may be inappropriate or off topic; or there may be generalities, defective assumptions, or factual errors. The paper has little or no audience awareness. This writing may fail to handle sources responsibly or appropriately. The style suggests that there are serious difficulties with fluency, which could be revealed in simple and ineffective sentences. Grammatical or mechanical errors may interfere with the reader's understanding, or the writer may have problems with basic literacy or lack of understanding Standard Written English.